

Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee-Budget Workshop

Tuesday, January 25, 2011

East Greenwich High School Library

300 Avenger Drive

East Greenwich, RI 02818

ANY ITEMS ON THE AGENDA MAY BE SUBJECT TO A VOTE

The budget workshop of East Greenwich School Committee was called to order in the library of the East Greenwich High school at 6:10 p.m. by School Committee Chair Dr. Deidre Gifford. Those in attendance were Mr. Bob Durant, Vice Chair; Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters; Mrs. Susan Records; Mr. Jack Sommer (arrived 7:10 pm.), Mr. David Green, and Mr. Paul Martin(arrived 6:30 p.m.).

Also present were Director of Administration Mrs. Maryanne Crawford, Elementary Principals Mrs. Christine Uhrin; Mr. Domenic Giusti; Dr. Ron Areglado, and Mrs. Cheryl Vaughn. Superintendent Dr. Victor Mercurio was absent. Finance Committee members present were Mr. Henry Kates; Mr. Ed Pieroni, and Mr. Steve Miranda.

I. Meeting called to order at 6:10 p.m.

II. Public Comments

Mr. David Gecawich and Mrs. Kristin Wheeler asked clarifying questions regarding the floor, roof, and HVAC system at

Meadowbrook. They also questioned whether RIDE funds would be available in the future for repairs that are not initially approved as priority items by the School Committee.

III. Discussion and vote on Meadowbrook School and other Building Committee recommendations

Dr. Gifford noted the School Committee will bring their proposed recommendations to the Town Council for discussion and vote on January 31, 2011. The School Committee has already voted on the following recommendations for repairs using unallocated funds: EGHS roof replacement (\$1,813,512), Frenchtown roof replacement \$225,264), and Technology Modernization at EGHS (\$665,000).

Unallocated funds from the \$52 million bond due to lower than expected cost equal \$7,790,200. The Committee is also recommending replacing the roof at Meadowbrook (\$1,047,840) using unallocated funds. Recommendations for allocated, but unspent funds, can be used for Meadowbrook (reserve \$1,600,700 for possible future HVAC/floor repairs), and the School Committee may ask the Building Committee to review needs at Eldredge, Hanaford, and Frenchtown. The Committee also recommends further items be studied at Meadowbrook including options for the flooring, HVAC, etc. They also recommend the studying of design and price options for the EGHS library which include lighting, space utilization, computers, etc. The approximate cost for these studies is \$70,000 which will be deducted from the \$1.6 million allocated for Meadowbrook.

Mr. Jon Winikur (SBS) discussed the timeline/process for reimbursement at RIDE. He noted it may be best to bring the entire recommendation of repairs to RIDE rather than portions. Based on his previous experience, Dr. Areglado noted it is best to have the comprehensive plan in tact before going to RIDE for reimbursement.

Mr. Durant made a motion to approve \$1.1 million to replace the roof at Meadowbrook Farms, to recommend further studies of Meadowbrook Farms and the High School Library authorizing \$70,000 to complete the studies, and to direct the Building Committee to prioritize their recommendations. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Winters and unanimously approved by the Committee.

IV. Action Items

a. Appointment of Mr. John Gray, Interim Principal, EGHS

On a motion by Mr. Green and seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the appointment.

b. Leave of absence-Sharon Ceresi

This item was withdrawn because it only needed Superintendent approval.

V. Budget Workshop-Elementary Schools and other budget issues

Mrs. Crawford gave an overview of UCOA and the line item adjustments that still need to be made due to the grade 6 transition to Cole. She commended Principals Meyer, Uhrin and Giusti for their collaborative efforts. Itinerant staff at Hanaford, Eldredge, and Cole

will be shifted as needed for coverage with employees maintaining full time status. Mrs. Crawford noted the teacher contract calls for a 2.5% raise and step increase totaling approximately \$525,000 district-wide. Negotiations for the paraprofessional contract will begin in 4-6 weeks as the current contract expires June 30, 2011. The custodial contract was signed last summer and runs through June 30, 2013. Raises were flat and co-shares were 20%. BlueCross claims have been lower than expected. Based on projected enrollment, Frenchtown School will need an additional grade 4 teacher for the upcoming school year. Potential savings due to possible retirees have not been factored into the budget. Potential retirees need to notify the district by the end of January. There was discussion regarding bus ridership and possibly eliminating one bus at the middle/secondary level. Secondary ridership has decreased and tends to drop in the spring. The elementary schools have seen an increase in ridership. The bus company and the principals perform a student head count to gather data. The cost per bus is approximately \$50,000 and we currently have 15 buses.

Mrs. Crawford commended the elementary principals for their work on their individual budgets.

Principal Uhrin gave an overview of the proposed Hanaford budget. The majority of her budget is level funded. Grade 4 & 5 Social Studies textbooks were purchased through a grant. The largest increase is due to programs such as TINET, PLP, I-Plan, Skills Tutor and the new program, NWEA. NWEA covers grades K-12 and costs

approximately \$12.50 per student. The Principals discussed the new teacher evaluation tool and the time constraints that it will pose for Principals especially if they are the sole evaluators. Principals also discussed the possibility of NEIT interns working in the district to develop software training manuals for staff. Mr. Kates, of the Finance Committee, commended the elementary principals for their collaboration and entrepreneurial attitude in developing their budget. He noted the additional dollars generated from the pre-k programs (\$20,000). Mr. Kates also discussed additional areas to save money, i.e., in-house professional development, grant writing, etc.

VI. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Durant and seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:03 p.m.

CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO

SECRETARY