

Middletown Public Schools

Middletown, Rhode Island

Thursday, February 15, 2007

MICHAEL S. PINTO CONFERENCE ROOM

BUDGET WORKSHOP

Members Present: Michael F. Crowley, Jr., Chairman

Liana F. Fenton, Vice-Chair

Edward K. Draper

Theresa M. Spengler arrived at 5:40 p.m.

William Coogan

Also Present: Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Superintendent of Schools

Joseph Maruszczak, Assistant Superintendent

Catherine McLeish, Business Manager

The Budget Workshop was called to order at 5:28 p.m. by Chairman Michael Crowley. Administrative staff members present were Linda Savastano, Gail Abromitis, and Vincent Giuliano. Steven Ruscito arrived at 7:46 p.m.

The Budget Subcommittee met today. The council representatives recognize the long-term impacts of the decisions that are made. The community needs to be informed of where the expected shortfalls

are. The town, based on the new tax levy, could allocate \$1,057,724 to the schools, or a 5.25% increase.

Blue Cross rates increased over 10% for the last five years. The loss of Impact Aid puts the School Department at a \$2,172,688 shortfall. With the shortfall, the School Committee will ask the Council to explore the possibility of exceeding the tax cap. Military student enrollment has decreased.

Items that have been looked at to be reduced are:

- Staffing reductions due to retirements, attrition, and lower enrollment - 13.1 teaching positions could be eliminated.
- One bus and one bus monitor
- One non-certified position – a clerk or a teacher assistant

After these reductions, \$1,079,235 still needs to be cut. The Project Success program would possibly be eliminated. Mr. Maruszczak said we need to make some decisions as to what electives to keep. Mrs. Spengler said that there are programs available outside of school that students can participate in instead of running classes with very low enrollment (guitar for example).

Mr. Coogan asked how do we determine how many classes are needed to know how many teachers are needed. Is there a way to poll students to determine what classes they want to take? What does the schedule look like in real FTE's and dollars? Reorganization has to figure in as well.

MOTION: 1) William Coogan, 2) Theresa Spengler. To adjourn from Budget Workshop at 6:30 pm. Unanimous vote.

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. To go into Executive Session 42-46-5 (a) 1, 2,5,8,9 at 6:30 p.m. Unanimous vote.

The Regular School Committee Meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Chairman Michael Crowley. Administrative staff members present were Linda Savastano, Gail Abromitis, and Vincent Giuliano.

Mr. Crowley announced that a vote taken in Executive Session to deny a Level 3 grievance was unanimous.

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) William Coogan. To seal the minutes of Executive Session. Unanimous vote.

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. To move "Reduction In Force" action item in the agenda. Unanimous vote.

Mrs. Kraeger said that R.I. State Law requires teachers to be notified by March 1st of possible layoffs and they need to prepare for the worst case scenario. Mrs. Kraeger said the School Committee hopes to rescind as many non-renewals as possible and will ask the Town

Council to consider exceeding the tax levy based on the shortfall of Impact Aid dollars.

ACTION ITEMS

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. The Superintendent recommends to the School Committee the termination, effective at the end of the 2006-2007 school year, Section 1, teachers 1-5, due to being reduced to less than full-time, or less than their current position. Unanimous Vote.

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. The Superintendent recommends to the School Committee the termination, effective at the end of the 2006-2007 school year, Section 2, teachers 1-10, due to the expiration of their limited employment contracts, unless terminated sooner by a teacher returning from leave, as well as the uncertainty of sufficient local, Federal and State funding for programs for the 2007-2008 school year. Unanimous vote.

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. The Superintendent recommends to the School Committee the termination, effective at the end of the 2006-2007 school year, Section 3, teachers 1-10, due to their present positions being recommended as eliminated. Unanimous vote.

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MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. The Superintendent recommends to the School Committee the termination, effective at the end of the 2006-2007 school year, Section 4, teachers 1- 14, due to being displaced by a more senior teacher. Unanimous vote.

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. The Superintendent recommends to the School Committee the termination, effective at the end of the 2006-2007 school year, Section 5, teachers 1-16, due to displacing (bumping) a teacher with less seniority due to position elimination, or be terminated. Unanimous vote.

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. The Superintendent recommends to the School Committee, effective at the end of the 2006-2007 school year, Section 6, teachers 1-8, return to their original 2005-2006 position, or earlier position held. Unanimous vote

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. The Superintendent recommends to the School Committee, effective at the end of the 2006-2007 school year, Section 7, teacher 1, return to a full-time position for which they are certified. Unanimous vote.

Unanimous vote.

Mr. Tom Alose, NEAM Vice-Chair, said that the town needs to go

beyond the tax cap and fund educational programs. Educational programs need to be upheld to keep Middletown High School's NEASC standing.

Mr. Crowley said he speaks for all when he says that the issues are beyond the School Committee and Administration's control. New State laws and Impact Aid funding that was lost are contributing factors. All need to work together to figure out ways to alleviate this.

SPOTLIGHT ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

No "Spotlight on Teaching and Learning" for February 15, 2007.

PROCLAMATIONS/AWARDS

No "Student Awards" for February 15, 2007.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

No "Student Activities" for February 15, 2007.

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INFORMATION

Mrs. Kraeger listed items of information in the School Committee package:

- Congratulations to National Board Certified Teacher Laura Pasyanos.**
- Minutes from the Career and Tech Education Coordinating Committee Meeting.**
- Meeting was held with the Joint Island group headed by Dr. Shoemaker from Newport. Frank Caprio addressed the group on retirement issues.**

CORRESPONDENCE

No Correspondence for February 15, 2007.

CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. To approve the Consent Agenda. Unanimous vote.

- Approval of Minutes of January 18, 2007 School Committee Meeting**
- Approval of Minutes of February 1, 2007 Budget Workshop**
- Approval of Financial Report, dated January 31, 2007, in the amount of \$14,122,496.08**
- Approval of Invoice Register, dated January 9, 2007, in the amount of \$915,345.75**
- Approval of Invoice Register, dated January 11, 2007, in the amount**

of \$4,314.50

•Approval of Invoice Register, dated January 18, 2007, in the amount of \$2,000.00

•Approval of Invoice Register, dated January 23, 2007, in the amount of \$245,364.71

•Approval of Invoice Register, dated February 2, 2007, in the amount of \$1,838.35

•Approval of Invoice Register, dated February 6, 2007, in the amount of \$623,422.42

•Approval of Special Grants Register, dated January 10, 2007, in the amount of \$10,139.11

•Approval of Special Grants Register, dated January 23, 2007, in the amount of \$36,739.52

•Approval of Special Grants Register, dated February 6, 2007, in the amount of \$14,558.55

SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION ON PERSONNEL

RESIGNATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF RETIREMENT

Kathleen R. Barrette Career Technology Department Head

Jacqueline Gorman Speech-Language Pathologist

Elizabeth D. Hughes Elementary Teacher

Elizabeth N. Ivy School Nurse/Teacher

Linda Lapointe Elementary Teacher

Janet K. McCarthy Guidance Counselor

Madeleine J. Panaggio Career Education Teacher

Phyllis L. Wilson Teacher Assistant, Regional Special Education

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RESIGNATION

Anne M. Howell Career Pathways Coordinator, MHS

Arthur J. Sherman Health/Physical Education Teacher, MHS

APPOINTMENT

Ruiany Sirois Teacher Assistant, Aquidneck School

David Beebe Custodian, Forest Avenue School

EXTENSION OF LEAVE OF ABSENSE

Jeannine K. Magliocco Grade Four Teacher, Aquidneck School

RETURN FROM LEAVE OF ABSENSE

Margaret F. Palmer Grade Four Teacher, Forest Avenue School

Maureen Sullivan Multi-Age Teacher, Forest Avenue School

Tracey L. Whitehead Grade Seven, J.H. Gaudet School

MATERNITY LEAVE - ARTICLE XIV, C, OPTION #1 (NEA/Middletown)

Cheryl Wenzel Science Teacher, J.H. Gaudet School

For the 2007-2008 School Year

WINTER VOLUNTEER COACHES

William J. Nash, Jr. Varsity Hockey

Michael Biestek Varsity Wrestling

Katherine Woolbright Varsity Girls' Basketball

Shane Fennessey Varsity Boys' Basketball

Reyanna J. Klein Varsity Gymnastics

Deb Tungett Varsity Gymnastics

Bonnie Willis Varsity Gymnastics

Sue Dugan Varsity Cheerleading

Paul Murphy Gaudet Girls' Basketball

Greg Gizzi Gaudet Boys' Basketball

Rick Lombardi Gaudet Wrestling

BUDGET REDUCTIONS

MOTION: 1) Edward Draper, 2) William Coogan. That the School Committee approve the proposed FY07-08 budget reductions in the amount of \$1,093,453. Unanimous vote.

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TAX LEVY

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Edward Draper. That the School Committee request the Superintendent to explore with the Business Manager and Town Finance Director the possibility of exceeding the tax levy based on the significant loss of Impact Aid revenue. Unanimous vote.

HIGH SCHOOL POLICY – 2nd READING

MOTION: 1) William Coogan, 2) Theresa Spengler. That the School Committee approve the High School Policy – 2nd Reading. Unanimous vote.

Several minor changes were made to the 1st reading of this policy as a result of staff input.

VIRTUAL COURSES POLICY – 1st READING

MOTION: 1) Edward Draper, 2) Theresa Spengler. That the School Committee approve the Virtual Courses Policy – 1st Reading. Unanimous vote.

COMPUTER USAGE POLICY REVISION

MOTION: 1) Edward Draper, 2) William Coogan . That the School Committee approve the Revision of the Computer Usage Policy.

Unanimous vote.

This is a policy revision and only needs one reading.

SPORT VOLUNTEER POLICY – 1st READING

MOTION: 1) Edward Draper, 2) Theresa Spengler . That the School Committee approve the Sport Volunteer Policy – 1st Reading.

Unanimous vote.

Mr. Draper suggested adding hierarchy to the policy and providing a way for feedback to be done on coaches and programs as an evaluation. The Athletic Director would evaluate the coach, but players and parents would provide feedback on the program.

Mr. Coogan said that a background check should be part of policy or contract.

BUDGET GOALS 2007-2008

MOTION: 1) William Coogan, 2) Liana Fenton. That the School Committee approve the Budget Goals 2007-2008. Unanimous vote.

1. Provide a detailed cost analysis budget by school and by program.

2. Expand the School Committee Budget Subcommittee to include two Town Council representatives.

3. Meet the challenge of the Rhode Island Senate 3050 statute.

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4. Articulate to both the school community and community at large the specific expected shortfalls in local, State and Federal dollars and the impact on programs and personnel.

HOME SCHOOLING

MOTION: 1)Liana Fenton, 2) Edward Draper. That the School Committee approve Home Schooling 06-07-14. Unanimous vote.

OLD BUSINESS

•Capital Improvement Plan – The Capital Improvement Plan was approved last month. Shawn Brown has requested Mrs. McLeish and Mr. Collins to look at spreading projects out. This will not change bottom line or projects, just the order of completion.

•Legislative Meeting – A meeting with the Town Council and Legislators will be held tonight. During Budget Subcommittee meeting with Mrs. Mello and Mrs. Santos today, Mrs. Kraeger requested that they bring up the issues of group homes, special education costs and career tech.

NEW BUSINESS

•**Fact Finding Committee for Funding Student Activities – Mrs. Kraeger has been approached by a group of community members about a fact finding committee to fund student activities, grades K-12.**

The group recognizes how budgets are being stretched. This committee will be different from MEC because it would target specific programs.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS

•**Curriculum – NECAP results have been received. As a district, the overall results were flat. Mr. Maruszczak will present a complete report broken down by schools and grades at the March 22nd meeting. There are great things going on in classrooms and it is puzzling why students are not doing as well on testing. Mr. Maruszczak said there is a need to ensure there is curriculum coherency K-12 and targets are specific for grade levels and curriculum is monitored on an on-going basis.**

•**Financial – A Budget Workshop was held on February 1st. The budget continues to be refined based on suggestions. 43.21% of the budget has been expended, which is conservative from prior years.**

•**Facilities – The Core Facilities Committee has held four meetings to date, with an average of 40 people at each meeting. Positive**

feedback has been received from these meetings. Generators are 30% done and will be completed in the spring. Mr.

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Collins said the Facilities Department is taking the next step in energy conservation by putting out three gas bids. Larger electrical accounts will be next. Mr. Crowley suggested sending invitations to the next Core Committee Meeting with Prakash Nair to Representative Amy Rice's group and Charlie Shoemakers group.

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Edward Draper. That the School Committee receive the Superintendent's Reports. Unanimous vote.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

Mr. Crowley said the RIASC Board Meeting was cancelled yesterday due to inclement weather. The committee asked for feedback on the impact 3050 is having on School Committees and budgets this year. RIASC has scheduled a meeting with Teresa Paiva Weed to provide feedback to her regarding the impact.

Mr. Draper said the Safety Advisory Committee has been a very involved effort. On behalf of the town Substance Abuse Task Force, a grant has been submitted for \$700,000 over a three-year period to

reduce the consumption indicators and substance abuse for students ages 12-18 in the community. Middletown is 1 of 14 targeted communities in the State. Realistically, \$520,000 - \$550,000 would be received. Grant notification is April 30th.

Mr. Maruszczak said there are a lot of alarming statistics. This is not only a school issue, but a community wide position. Newport County ranks 10th in the United States for substance abuse problems. Middletown statistics have gone up while the rest of the state has gone down. Why?

Mrs. Fenton attended a Career Tech Forum. There was discussion about how to get Career Tech Centers involved with the Department of Labor and how they would be structured. Funding is an issue.

Mrs. Fenton also attended a Southern Legislator Forum at the Education Collaborative. Discussion revolved around having East Bay and Southern legislators collaborate on issues.

Mrs. Fenton attended a K-16 Council Meeting today where there was discussion about math and science, adopting a robotics program, as well as business, education and government working together K-16.

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ADJOURN FROM MEETING

MOTION: 1)Theresa Spengler, 2) William Coogan. To adjourn from School Committee Meeting at 8:09 p.m. Unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Clerk