

Middletown Public Schools

Middletown, Rhode Island

March 9, 2016

SPECIAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Michael S. Pinto Conference Room

Members Present:

Theresa Spengler, Chairman

Kellie DiPalma Simeone, Vice-Chairman

Douglas Arnold

Liana Fenton

William O'Connell

Also Present:

Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Superintendent of Schools

Linda Savastano, Assistant Superintendent

Raquel Pellerin, Business Manager

The Special School Committee Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

MOTION: 1) Kellie DiPalma Simeone, 2) Liana Fenton. That the Budget Amendments be moved up on the agenda. Unanimous vote.

APPROVE 15/16 BUDGET AMENDMENTS

MOTION: 1) Kellie DiPalma Simeone, 2) Liana Fenton. That the School Committee approve the 15/16 Budget Amendments. Unanimous vote.

Business Manager Raquel Pellerin reported that the amendments are being done quarterly now. We are currently in the third quarter of the fiscal year. We are looking at a format to do the same as the Town. They will be sending us their template. All amendments will be done by fund and object code. We will have to go before the Town Council because there will be an effect the bottom line.

General Fund – There are no changes to the General Operating Fund Revenue. Middletown should be receiving another current and prior year Impact Aid payment. We will request that Special Education give their reallocations quarterly. There has been a favorable change in OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits). There had to be a \$100,000 adjustment in legal expenses and there was an increase in out-of-district tuition cost. The overall budget will increase by \$472,524, with Town Council approval.

The Consolidated Resource Plan will total \$1,279,100.88. This

includes Title I (Literacy), Title II (Professional Development), Title III (English Language Learners), IDEA B (Special Education and Early Intervention) and IDEA PreSchool (Special Education PreSchool).

The next step is to go before the Town Council to get approval of the bottom line amendments.

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RIDE STAGE II APPLICATION

MOTION: 1) Kellie DiPalma Simeone, 2) Liana Fenton. That the School Committee approve the RIDE Stage II Application. Unanimous vote.

Approval is needed to submit the RIDE Stage II Application. This will have zero effect on the tax rate and will essentially replace an old bond that will be paid off.

BOND RESOLUTION

MOTION: 1) Kellie DiPalma Simeone, 2) Liana Fenton. That the School Committee approve the bond resolution, pending Town Council approval. Unanimous vote.

This was enabling legislation that was drafted and has been reviewed by the Town legal counsel. RIDE needs to be notified by March 15th that Middletown will be putting the bond on the November ballot.

ENERGY CONTRACT

MOTION: 1) Kellie DiPalma Simeone, 2) Liana Fenton. That the School Committee authorize the Superintendent to enter into an energy supply commodity agreement. Unanimous vote.

Facilities Director Peter Anderson said that to get the best price for utilities, the school department will be working with SilentSherpa, a provider of market guidance solutions. They go out for bid for the school department, then contract with electricity and natural gas providers. Energy rates change daily, so once the School Committee gives approval, they can lock in a rate. SilentSherpa is projecting an approximate \$29,000 saving in natural gas and a \$40,000 savings in electric costs annually.

MOTION: 1) Kellie DiPalma Simeone, 2) Liana Fenton. To adjourn from the Special School Committee Meeting at 6:10 p.m. Unanimous vote.

A brief recess was taken. The Budget Workshop was called to order

at 6:15 p.m. All School Committee Members were present.

Community member Ronald Heroux spoke in favor of having librarians reinstated in the schools. Mrs. Kraeger said there is a plan to phase-in three librarians, two intervention specialists, and one guidance counselor. Mr. Heroux will advocate for the Town Council to fund the school budget.

A 2.62% increase would level fund services and leave no dollars for contract agreement or positions. Legal fees are also an unknown with pending arbitration. Concern about enrollment increases needs to be considered as well.

The Superintendent suggested including one librarian and one intervention specialist into the budget. A 4% increase would total an additional \$348,000. Two positions would cost \$187,000, leaving \$161,000. Dollars for contracts and legal expenses for arbitration would need to come out of those remaining funds.

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Another suggestion was to fill positions with the \$348,000 and when the contracts are settled, come up with a reduction plan. The special education process needs to be understood more. A high needs student could cost the district up to \$150,000 per year. If a student

moves to Middletown during the year, services need to be provided.

MOTION: 1) Kellie DiPalma Simeone, 2) Liana Fenton. To adjourn the Budget Workshop at 7:20 p.m. Unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Clerk