

APPROVED-4.24.14

There was a special meeting of the Cumberland School Committee held on Monday, April 7, 2014 at the Cumberland High School Transitional Building Cafetorium, 2602 Mendon Road, Cumberland, Rhode Island.

Members Present: Lisa Beaulieu, Jeff Mutter, Linda Teel, Paul DiModica, Craig Duffy, Mark Fiorillo, Ray Salvatore

Administration Present: Dr. Phil Thornton, Superintendent, Robert Mitchell, Assistant Superintendent

Agenda Item #1: Chairperson Convenes Meeting
Chairwoman Beaulieu convened the meeting to order at 6:26 p.m.

Agenda Item #2: Pledge of Allegiance

Agenda Item #3: Approval of Agenda
Mr. DiModica made a motion to approve the agenda, 2nd Mr. Fiorillo, approved 7-0.

Agenda Item #4: FY15 Budget Discussion and Vote
Mrs. Beaulieu started off by stating that the budget in front of the SC members identified or spelled out, in different line items, the core and non-core for UCOA codes – the back of the spreadsheet had the UCOA items broken out and she thanked Mr. Prignano for doing this. Items changed from the initial budget are in bold print. She went on to say that after the last meeting the SC members had a chance to think about all of their questions and hopefully get most of them answered by tonight's meeting. She asked if any member still had questions and no one did – but then Mr. Duffy asked Dr. Thornton if changing the start time at the high school could somehow be included in the BEP because transportation is not – but Dr. Thornton said that although they could provide a very good argument regarding the benefits to changing the start times, that in the end it is still a bus that is needed and it probably would not be covered. Mr. Mutter stated that legislatively the FY15 budget is in front of us – highlighted expenses – this is on the website – this is different from the original budget and that one was on the website too – but now he was asking if the SC was ready to accept what was in front of them – it would be an amendment to the original budget. He went on to say that this would be a starting point. Mr. Mutter then made a motion to have the document in front of them (the SC), to represent the school department's FY15 budget, 2nd Mrs. Teel, approved 6-1 – Mr. Fiorillo in the negative. Mr. Mutter then made a motion to change the line item on the budget that reads (the second one) Town Appropriation Additional to read **BEP Compliance Revenue** (all in bold letters), 2nd Mrs. Teel, Mr. Mutter noted that he feels by doing it this way the SC will get an answer as to whether or not we will be BEP compliant – this will allow the finance director to strike it or approve it and it does not obligate the SC to anything – he then read statute 16-2-21 in regards to the meeting that they had on March 15th and how the SC had at least 60 days but not

more than 90 days to submit – and then he also referenced the town charter section “A” which talks about the SC submitting estimates – so after reviewing the statute and the charter he felt that what they would be submitting tonight would force a decision by the finance director – motion was approved 7-0. Mr. Mutter went on to say that this was a difficult decision – lot of thought on how it should be handled and how it will be handled by the town of Cumberland – he said they have to send estimates – so we do not need to vote – but we will submit it tonight – the bold items will be in the BEP – we will stay in compliance by submitting it – the meeting was March 15th, 60 days would be May 15th – hopefully there will be a conversation on this issue soon – but it could be ignored again – maybe with Mayor McKee coming to this Thursday’s meeting we will get some answers. Mrs. Beaulieu asked if anyone in the public had questions and no one did. Mr. Fiorillo stated that he thought we all agreed that we are lacking in the BEP and we need to create more opportunities for students but the problem that he has with the document in front of him is that he thought the SC should have started over a month ago discussing the 4% increase and then come up with a game plan over the next 2-3 years and also talk about the levy, the surplus with the town, the surplus with the school department, etc. Mr. Mutter stated that there was a meeting on March 15th and we did ask a question and we asked the council and got nowhere. He also asked Mrs. Beaulieu if she tried to get that meeting scheduled prior to March 15 to get more time and she said she did try. Mrs. Beaulieu stated that collaboration is easy, but it is also easy to walk away and she felt that the SC has a program in front of them for the students and she felt that we are just looking for the minimum, just the basics – the state had a formula that would be equitable but there are a lot of statutes in the way that have had a detrimental effect on our programs – she said that we all identified topics that we wanted to talk about and based on tonight’s vote the SC wants to discuss this and solve this situation. Mr. Mutter noted that until this point the town has not denied funding the BEP – and just because we did not make the argument in the past doesn’t mean that we should not be doing this – because that had nothing to do with this year – he went on to mention how there were at least three meetings that had slides presented regarding the BEP, so people should not be saying that they are not familiar with it or are surprised to hear about it – he feels they should have been listening – this was not a surprise. Mrs. Beaulieu said that our argument is credible and that the SC members are advocates for the students. She then asked Mr. Mutter if there was something else to do this evening – in addition to the two items that they had voted on. Mr. Mutter said that we would move to forward the budget to the finance director as we are supposed to do per the town charter. Mr. Mutter then made a motion to submit to the finance director, our FY15 budget, per section 804 of the charter, for his review, this is version #3 – bolded items ask the question – the sooner we get the answer the sooner we vote on the budget, 2nd Mrs. Teel, Mr. Fiorillo then asked if the original budget had a resolution number and Alex said it did not. Mr. Duffy then wanted to clarify – looking to vote to send the budget to the finance director for review (since we do not have an answer from the town if we are in compliance of the BEP) we are working with Dr. Thornton and Alex Prignano to help make us compliant – but the Mayor will decide BEP – if it gets zeroed out we will then take a formal vote with what is left but there has to be something sent

tonight – and then more changes will be made. Mr. Mutter went on to say that there is a lot going on – the people that need to make the decisions will do so within the 60 days and then we will come back and make decisions and changes. The finance director should be answering the question. Mr. Duffy said because we don't have an answer from the finance director we violating the town charter or the BEP – so which one do we violate. Mr. DiModica stated that we had asked Dr. Thornton to bring us a budget that was BEP compliant and he did that and we are here for the students in the district and he said that he supports the students so he hopes that we get it all, we need to try. Mrs. Beaulieu agreed, she stated that we are advocates for the students; we put a lot of thought and effort behind all of our votes. Motion was approved 6-1, Mr. Fiorillo in the negative.

Agenda Item #5: Adjournment

Mr. DiModica made a motion to adjourn, 2nd Mrs. Teel and Mr. Mutter, approved 7-0.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Linda A. Jackvony