Seymour Board of Education  
SPECIAL BOE MEETING MINUTES – BUDGET WORKSHOP 2  
Seymour Middle School  
January 31, 2022  
6:00 to 8:30 pm

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:  
Stephan Behuniak  
Kristen Bruno  
Christopher Champagne  
James Garofolo  
Kristen Harmeling  
Jay Hatfield  
Shannon Levey  
Beth Nesteriak  
Ed Strumello

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:  
Dr. Susan Compton, Superintendent of Schools  
Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent  
Salvatore A. Bucci, Business Manager  
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk  
Kris Boyle, Director of Special Services  
Derrick Martin, Technology  
Jim Freund, Principal, SHS  
Jodie Roden, Principal, SMS  
Kathleen Reynolds, Assistant Principal, SMS  
Mary Sue Feige, Principal, BS  
David Olechna, Principal, CLS  
Stacey Albertson, Assistant Principal, CLS  
First Selectwoman Ann Marie Drgonis  
Selectman Fred Stanek

I. CALL TO ORDER  
A. Pledge of Allegiance  
Mr. Champagne called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:06 p.m.  
The members of the Board introduced themselves.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT  
Public Comment provides the opportunity for the public to make a comment. It is not a dialogue between the Board and the public. Based upon what is heard during Public Comment, the Board may choose to add a topic to the agenda. If questions are posed that the Chairman is able to answer, those questions may be addressed under the Chairman’s Comments portion of the agenda. The Board will not discuss personnel matters. Comments should be respectful and no longer than 3 minutes in length so that all who wish to comment may have the opportunity to do so. All public wanting to comment will need to state their name and address for the record prior to addressing the Board.  
None
III. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION
   A. Seymour Education Budget 2022-2023
      Dr. Compton started her presentation by sharing a video showcasing Bungay Elementary School. Dr. Compton said each school has done a video and they will be available on the website. She said she would share the other videos at subsequent meetings. Dr. Compton reviewed her PowerPoint presentation. She explained that Central Office is looking at all the expenditures. The grants are being scrutinized closely. We are looking at the technology expenses. $200,000 has been spent from the ESSER grant for computers at the high school that were very much needed. We are working on a plan B to be prepared should we not get the requested amount. She said we are in this together and the quality of education is the most important. Mr. Bucci said he has spent hours and weeks looking at where we are financially. He talked about the rising costs. He said the Teachers Contract is a fair contract. We have 23 million in salaries in addition to the employer cost of insurance, Medicare costs and MERF. MERF is a statutory program that the State decides the cost. We are working to recalibrate the budget so we can start out on the right foot. It is a fix to catch up; otherwise, we will have to ask for the amount again next year. He confirmed that we are not adding anything from the Administrators Wish List and we are limiting hiring. Mr. Champagne thought it was a good idea to have more than one plan. Ms. Bruno asked if enrollment was leveling off and Dr. Compton confirmed this. Ms. Harmeling said it was not easy to show where the enrollment decreases are. If they were spread across the district, it would not be feasible to reduce staff. Dr. Compton said enrollment would be closely looked at.
      MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Stephan Behuniak) move to adopt the presented 2022-2023 Seymour Public Schools Budget
      SO VOTED
      AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Levey, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Strumello
      MOTION PASSES: 9-0

IV. REPORTS
   A. Chairman’s Report
      None
   B. Superintendent’s Report
      Dr. Compton reminded the Board of the Town Finance Committee meeting.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT
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   Ann Marie Drugonis, First Selectwoman – said she understands the deficit. We need to work together and overcome this as a Board and as a Town. She believes in Dr. Compton. We need to overcome this. We want transparency. We are in this together. We are a good team; we will get through this together.
   Fred Stanek, Selectman, 22 N Benham Rd., - Would like to reiterate what Ann Marie Drugonis said, we need to work together to solve the deficit. There are two things to solve, the deficit and the budget. We need to get a plan in place. Whatever he can do to help and Ann Marie is here to help. We need to remember that this is for our children, which is paramount.
Jamie Bailey – She said she does not understand how we got to this point in the budget. She is very concerned. She hopes this will not be continuance in the future.

Susan Sobahowski (sp), 28 Ortho Street (?) – Here to speak on behalf of parents. Speaking on behalf of the man who yielded his time to her. There was a short discussion regarding if she is able to speak during public comment. She talked about mask mandates and the parents’ wishes to unmask their children. She said everything but the mask mandate are just guidelines and could be decided at the local level. She feels the time is long past due that the Board take back control from Hartford.

VI. ADJOURNMENT
MOTION: (Ms. Harmeling/sec., Mr. Strumello) to adjourn

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Behuniak, Ms. Bruno, Mr. Champagne, Mr. Garofolo, Ms. Harmeling, Mr. Hatfield, Ms. Levey, Ms. Nesteriak, Mr. Strumello

MOTION PASSES: 9-0

The meeting adjourned at 6:53 pm

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk

YouTube Link:
https://youtu.be/VuscoR6tyUg