

Seymour Board of Education



FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES (revised)

Seymour Middle School

Auditorium

6:30 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Kristen Harmeling, Chairman
Jennifer Magri
Yashu Putorti

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Christine Syriac, Superintendent of Schools
Rick Belden, Asst. Superintendent, Finance & Operations
Lee-Ann Dauerty, Board Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Harmeling called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:31 p.m.

II. REPORTS AND INFORMATION

A. Information and Recommended Action

1. Review and recommendation to the full Board of Education to approve the Financial Management Summary ending October 31, 2014

Mr. Belden reviewed the Financial Management Summary reporting that the auditing field work has been done. The desk audit findings were released today. The ED001 will be completed before December 31, 2014. We are currently trending on budget in most line items. In the Employee Benefits line item, Mr. Belden continues to work to move more retired teachers to the TRB Plan which is about 1/3 of the cost for them. So far he has had a favorable response. The Workers Compensation line item continues to be monitored. We lost an appeal on a case that had costs of \$113,000 plus the amount of the settlement. We will be over by \$125,000 which he said can be covered by savings in the Employee Benefits line item. However, we have a couple of other cases that could add to the workers compensation line item. Mr. Belden mentioned that the school and town "self-fund" their workers compensation insurance and that the town sets aside reserves that they can use in these situations. Ms. Harmeling thought this was a useful piece of information. He will continue to monitor Workers Compensation claims. Mr. Belden hopes for no new claims once the current ones are settled. Ms. Magri asked how aggressive are we in pursuing if the claim is legitimate. Mr. Belden said when we suspect there is something we utilize the resources available to us through PMA. PMA analyzes the cases but he pointed out that Connecticut is an employee friendly state. There is also a Commissioner Review which for the most part, sides with the employee. Regarding the outstanding claims, we are coming close on two claims that have almost reached maximum exposure, which Mr. Belden explained to mean that they will reach the stop loss threshold. Once the stop loss is reached, secondary insurance takes over and there are no further costs to the Board of Education. Any settlement amount is separate from the claim. Ms. Magri pointed this is something we cannot plan for and have very little control over. The other area of concern is the out placed students special needs/transportation. We have had two students move into the district who have been out placed which increased the line item. We will wait for the Special Education Excess Cost Grant money in the spring to determine where we are on this line item. We

will continue to monitor. Ms. Harmeling asked what type of situation would warrant a placement for a regular education student in a private facility. Mrs. Syriac said it could be that a student has a need for a therapeutic setting and that students without IEPs or special education classification can require this type of placement. Mr. Putorti asked how a family would be handled if they were removed from their home due to some situation like lead paint in the house, who picks up the cost? Mrs. Syriac said we pay the transportation which is covered as a homeless situation. They can live where they want but we would be responsible for their transportation to and from school.

MOTION: (Mr. Putorti/sec., Ms. Magri) to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Financial Management Summary ending October 31, 2014 as presented.

SO VOTED

AFFIRMATIVE: Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti

2. Security Grant Discussion

Mr. Belden reported the good news which is we have been awarded money from the second round from the Security Grant. The bad news is this is a matching funds grant and the money needs to be spent by June 30, 2015. This has not been budgeted. Ms. Harmeling asked if we can ask the Town for it. This is not a decision that needs to be made at this time. The amount is \$107,000 and we need to come up with \$64,000 matching funds. We can scale back if we need to but the matching funds would be the same percentage.

3. 2015-16 Board Education Budget Communication Discussion

Mrs. Syriac reported that she and Mr. Belden are beginning the work for the 2015-16 budget in December and January. She will be selecting dates in early January for the budget workshops to discuss the Superintendent's budget. Mr. Belden said the budget will need to be submitted by the second week of January. Ms. Harmeling asked if the budget can be presented to the committee before presenting to the full Board. Mr. Putorti had a concern about time. Mrs. Syriac said she has not done this in the past. Mrs. Syriac is not opposed to it if this is what the Board wants to do. Ms. Harmeling talked about the time frame of presenting to the Board of Finance and the document that is submitted. Mr. Putorti said he felt the backup information should be ready by the time we present to the Board of Finance. Mrs. Syriac reported that she has met with the First Selectman and he has given her some direction with regard to the budget and a target number. She said she continues to be dedicated to reallocating positions and funds but is concerned about being about to meet the First Selectman's target number without a reduction in staff. She also spoke with him regarding the Security Grant.

B. Reports

1. Chairman's Report

None

2. Superintendent's Report

None

III. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: (Mr. Putorti, sec., Ms. Magri) to adjourn

SO VOTED

Affirmative: Ms. Harmeling, Ms. Magri, Mr. Putorti

The meeting adjourned at: 6:59 pm.

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk

