

Seymour Board of Education



FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

November 8, 2017
Seymour Middle School
7:00 pm

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Kristen Harmeling, Chairman
Yashu Putorti
Peter Kubik
Jennifer Magri

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Michael Wilson, Superintendent of Schools
Vonda Tencza, Associate Superintendent
Rick Belden, Assistant 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 7:02 p.m.

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- * **MOTION:** (Ms. Magri/sec., Mr. Kubik) move that the board enter Executive Session for personnel discussion. The Board invites Michael Wilson and Richard Belden into the Executive Session

SO VOTED

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

- * *It is anticipated that the asterisked items will be discussed in Executive Session from which the public will be excluded*

The Finance Committee entered Executive Session: 7:02 pm

The Finance Committee came out of Executive Session and entered regular session: 7:24 pm

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IV. CORRESPONDENCE

- A. Letter dated October 12, 2017 from Christine Syriac, former Superintendent of Schools to Ms. Kristen Harmeling, Chairperson of the Finance Committee regarding fiscal year end purchases and encumbrances

Ms. Magri stated that she understood that Bridgeport can charge tuition now? Mr. Belden confirmed this is the case and we budgeted for this and it is included in the budget.

V. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

- A. Information and Recommended Action

- 1. Financial Management Summary ending October 30, 2017

Mr. Belden reported that the auditors are way ahead of where they were this time last year. He said that Mr. Miller has asked that we continue with a soft freeze on discretionary accounts until spring 2018 to accommodate possible unforeseen winter expenditures. He reported that they have begun preparation of the 2018-19 budget.

MOTION: (Ms. Magri/sec., Mr. Kubik) to recommend to the full Board the approval of the Financial Management Summary ending October 30, 2017 as presented

SO VOTED

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

B. Reports

1. Chairman's Report

Ms. Harmeling acknowledged the beginning work on the budget and indicated to Mr. Wilson that he can do this process any way that he wants and if he wants to set a new process he is welcome to do so. This is in no way a negative on how it was done in the past. She just wants him to have the freedom to present this in the way he feels is best for him.

2. Superintendent's Report

None

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

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

SO VOTED

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm

Submitted by:
Lee-Ann Dauerty
Board Clerk

RECEIVED

OCT 16 2017

Superintendent of Schools
Seymour Board of Education

Christine Syriac

October 12, 2017

Dear Kristen Harmeling,

I am writing this letter as follow up to my previous letter. I reviewed the encumbrance list that you mailed to me that was presented to the Finance Committee on September 5, 2017. The following is my review of the encumbrance list.

153018-153097 - Most likely approved prior to my leaving.

153111 - The computer purchases from the technology line item that were approved at the BOE meeting in June (my last meeting).

153118/153124 - The textbooks for World Language that the BOE also approved in June.

153125 - The yearly consumable math textbooks for K-5.

Starting with 153131 to 153153 none of the items listed were ordered nor entered into the system prior to my leaving on June 30, 2017. I was the only Central Office Administrator working on June 30, 2017, a date for many of the entries. The items purchased were not discussed with me, not approved by me, and I was unaware that amount of money remained as the monthly trending reports and my ongoing conversations with Rick Belden indicated that while we would be able to purchase the textbooks and computer items we were over budget in special education tuition and some other lines items. Had we discussed this amount of money remaining I would have recommended to the BOE possibly returning some of the money to the town and fixing the front entry way to Bungay school.

153131 - electrical work/unknown to me

153132 - new floor mats/unknown to me

153133 - This electrical issue had been discussed previously in the year as too expensive for the 16-17 budget, I would not have opposed the work being done once funds were available at years end.

153134 - The purchase of the Kloter Farms shed was denied by me. I stated it had to be brought to Facilities for discussion and awareness. I stated I did not want a BOE member driving up the hill to the high school and seeing a shed without previous knowledge. I did not agree with the need for the shed nor with the purchase of this level of shed. I was told by Mr. Belden at the time that he did not need BOE approval to purchase items under \$25,000. I stated I felt informing the BOE was the right thing to do as we were "tight" on funds due to other line items trending over and the 17-18 budget was not as yet passed. I placed it as an agenda item on the next meeting and informed Yashu of the situation. Rick then came back to me after seeing it on the agenda and stated the shed would be purchased from next year's budget (17-18) so there was still time to discuss the matter at the next regular facilities meeting, no need for a special meeting. I discussed this very shed with accounts payable personnel on June 30, 2017, my last day, and it had not been ordered. The reason stated to me for the custodians wanting this shed is because the Fire Marshall doesn't want the gators parked inside the building and I enforced that request. The individuals who use the gator do not want to walk up the hill to the field house to get a gator when needed.

153135 - This curtain purchase or restoration of existing curtain was never discussed and I do not recall it being on a Fire Marshall report (which are on file). This was not brought up as an expense during budgeting.

153139 - Unknown to me and not requested by me...I never requested or mentioned display cases for awards, I did tell them to clean out the locker room multiple times.

153141-153151 (excluding 153149) - All unknown to me, I imagine the uniforms would have been purchased using 17-18 funds however due to the 16-17 budget having remaining funds the purchases were made using the 16-17 funds, if asked I would have supported the purchase. I would suggest discussing the other equipment purchases with Tara Yusko. Would those items have been the priority for the program? The purchase of \$14,000 worth of hurdles was not discussed and these were not ordered on June 22 as listed, these were not ordered prior to my departure, the date is not accurate. At one-point last year the coach requested new hurdles so the hurdles would all match and look nice for competitions and have a logo added...it was my understanding at the time that he was informed by the Athletic Director that the hurdles we had were all functional and the expense was not warranted with a tight budget. To then see \$14,000 in hurdles ordered from Blanchettes is surprising.

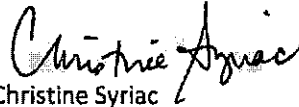
153149 - The purchase of all new tables for the Bungay cafeteria was never discussed and if they were needed would be in the 17-18 budget.

153153 - The BOE should have been informed, this is a major purchase (\$35,000), policy 3320. Was this the next purchase in the priorities of the technology replacement plan? Was the Associate Superintendent who oversees technology and the Director of Technology consulted prior to this purchase? The state bid list is different than what Central Office Administration brings to the BOE as a pre-approval waiver list for purchasing, such as utilities, etc. each year.

There appears to have been \$182,000 spent from the 2016-2017 budget after I left on June 30, 2017. Purchase order dates on the provided encumbrance list are not accurate. Some were entered as dates prior to June 30, 2017 and some were entered as June 30, 2017. Purchase orders 153131-153145 were not ordered prior to my last day although dated as June 14, June 13, June 15, June 22. Purchase orders 153146-153153 were not ordered prior to my last day although dated June 30, 2017. I simply wanted to clarify previous minutes that implied I had approved the purchase orders as I did not.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Respectfully,



Christine Syriac
Retired Superintendent

cc: Yashu Putorti, BOE Chairman

Jen Magri, Finance Committee Member

Peter Kubik, Finance Committee Member

Michael Wilson, Superintendent