

***Town of New Fairfield
Board of Finance
4 Brush Hill Road
New Fairfield, CT 06812***

**MINUTES
Board of Finance Meeting
Wednesday, March 25, 2009
7:30 PM
New Fairfield High School Library**

Members present:

Joe Hart, Chairman
Lucy DiRocco
Jane Landers
Al Mardis
Wes Marsh
Tom Wahlig
Art Azzarito, Alternate
Tony Sanches, Alternate

Members not present:

Brian Shea, Alternate

Other Town Officials Present:

Dr. Joseph Castagnola, Superintendent of Schools
Alicia Roy, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
John Hodge, First Selectman
Tom Corbett, Selectman
Ron Oliveri, Selectman
Jay Waterman, Finance Director
Ed Sbordone, Accounting Manager
Craig McClain, Director of Management Services
Phil Ross, Director of Buildings and Grounds
Mariana Coelho, High School Principal
Mike Chapleau, High School Assistant Principal
Scott Rohwedder, High School Assistant Principal
Diane Hartman Chesley, Middle School Principal
Sarah McLain, Meeting House Hill School Principal
Carrie Kilian, Meeting House Assistant Principal
Wendy Seeley, Consolidated School Principal
Lynn Fichtel, Consolidated School Assistant Principal
Aimee Turner, Director of Elementary Special Education
Kim Culkin, Director of Secondary Special Education
Karen Chance, BOE member
Kevin Hearty, BOE member
Vic Flagello, BOE member
Ralph Langham, BOE member
Ron Lyons, BOE member
Various teachers

Call To Order Chairman Joe Hart called the meeting to order at 7:30pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Appointments- None

Correspondence and Announcements

Chairman Joe Hart read an e-mail from resident Darlene Anderson-Alexander regarding the school budget.

Public Comment

Resident Rudy Bahrens spoke of the school budget and the status of the economy.

Approval of Minutes

Joe Hart made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2009 meeting as presented. Tom Wahlig seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Review and discuss 2009-2010 Board of Education requested budget

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph Castagnola and Director of Management Services Craig McClain spoke of potential cuts to the requested 2009-2010 school budget. Many school administrators were also available to answer questions.

Dr. Castagnola provided the board with answers to questions that were brought up at the Public Hearing regarding the budget on March 1st. A list of potential cuts in priority order was provided as requested by the Board of Finance. Dr. Castagnola noted that he attended a meeting regarding the stimulus money for New Fairfield but the intent of the stimulus money is still unclear. Members of the Board of Finance asked questions of Dr. Castagnola and the administrators. Specific topics included projected enrollment, test scores for both the elementary and secondary schools and medical benefits for teachers and other school employees. There was a lengthy discussion about standardized test scores and their significance and special education in New Fairfield as opposed to other towns.

Dr. Castagnola asked for a volunteer from the Board of Finance to be on the negotiating committee for the teachers and administrators contracts. Dr. Castagnola thanked the entire Board of Finance for all their hard work with the budget.

Jane Landers thanked Dr. Castagnola and all the administrators for getting the BOF the requested information in a timely manner.

Change in agenda

Lucy DiRocco made a motion to move agenda item #12 "Public Comment" to item #7A. Al Mardis seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Joe Hart made a motion to table agenda items #8-10 ("Other budget discussions", Legal update, and Medical update") until the next meeting. Al Mardis seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)

Budget calendar discussion

It was decided that the Board of Finance will meet on Wednesday, April 1st, Monday, April 6th and Wednesday, April 22nd. The final mark-up of the budget will be during the Wednesday, April 22nd meeting.

Public comment

Members of the Board of Education as well as many teachers gave their comments regarding the proposed school budget. Members of the public asked that the taxpayers be able to decide on the budget.

Board member comments

Jane Landers reminded board members that if they have any questions to e-mail them to her and she will send them to the appropriate people.

Adjournment

Joe Hart made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:10pm. Al Mardis seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0-0 (Motion approved)