

TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION
Tolland High School Library
One Eagle Hill
Tolland, CT 06084

REGULAR MEETING

7:30 – 10:00 P.M.

AGENDA
March 28, 2018

VISION STATEMENT

To represent education at its best, preparing each student for an ever-changing society, and becoming a full community of learning where excellence is achieved through each individual's success.

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting – March 14, 2018

Special Meeting – March 15, 2018

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2-minute limit)

The members of the Tolland Board of Education welcome members of the public to share their thoughts and ideas at this time. When appropriate to do so, members of the Board and the administration may respond to comments during "Points of Information". However, in consideration of those in attendance and in an effort to proceed in a timely manner, follow-up discussion may need to take place outside of the meeting setting.

D. CORRESPONDENCE

E. POINTS OF INFORMATION

F. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT - Alexandra Simon and Mallory Goldsmith.

G. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- G.1 CRE Presentation (no enclosure)
- G.2 Central CT Conference Sportsmanship Award for the Winter
- G.3 2018 – 2019 School Calendar
- G.4 Human Resources Workload
- G.5 Board of Education Goals (Part I/Part II - no enclosure)

H. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

I. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

J. BOARD ACTION

K. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2-minute limit)

Comments must be limited to items on this agenda.

L. POINTS OF INFORMATION

Town Council Special Meeting- March 14, 2018

Town Council & Board of Education Special Meeting- March 15, 2018

Town Council Special Meeting – March 20, 2018

Town Council Special Meeting – March 22, 2018

M. FUTURE

N. NEW BUSINESS

O. ADJOURNMENT

TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

Tolland Public Library
Program Room
Tolland, CT 06084

REGULAR MEETING – March 14, 2018

Members Present: Ms. Colleen Yudichak , Chair; Ms. Karen Moran, Vice Chair; Ms. Michelle Harrold, Secretary; Mr. Jeff Schroeder, Mr. Bob Pagoni

Members Absent: Ms. Susan Seaver, Ms. Jane Pasini, Mr. Sam Adlerstein, Ms. Christina Plourd

Administrators Present: Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent of Schools; Mark McLaughlin, Business Director

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Yudichak called the meeting to order at 7:30PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Regular Meeting – February 28, 2018

Mr. Pagoni motioned to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2018 regular meeting.

Ms. Harrold seconded the motion. Changes: none. All were in favor. Motion carried.

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - none

D. CORRESPONDENCE

- Multiple e-mails were received regarding the calendar and snow days

E. POINTS OF INFORMATION

Ms. Harrold took her family to see the THS performance of *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*. She said it was excellent and gave kudos to all.

F. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT – Alexandra Simon & Mallory Goldsmith

- *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* was well done and the pit had a fabulous performance.
- Today at THS, students participated in the National School Walkout by attending an assembly. In this forum students were able to express their views and it went well. The students were very involved and respectful. The student representatives thanked Dr. Willett for the session and his presentation. It was noted that participation in the assembly was optional and an alternative was available for those who did not wish to take part.
- Today's assembly got many people talking. The students the representatives spoke with noted that they have never felt unsafe in Tolland schools.
- Student Council will meet on March 15th.
- In regard to the calendar and the snow days, students have said they are happy the decision was made to take days from the April break and not extend the school year.

G. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

G.1. Monthly Financial Report

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment G1.

The available balance is \$2,836,244 or 7.21%. It was noted that the first excess cost funds payment was received. The next is due in May.

G.2. 2018-2019 School Calendar

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment G2.

The calendar provides for 11 early release days, not including Parent Teacher Conferences, which allows for professional development without the need for a lot of substitute teachers which saves money for the district. Additionally, the early release days allow for some flexibility in scheduling. It was noted that a significant portion of the professional development is front loaded. Further, this is included in the Teacher Contract (Article 7, Section B).

Vacations in the calendar were, as is required, aligned with the EASTCONN calendar.

Tolland is a member of the EASTCONN Region or RESC (Regional Education Service Center) and must adhere to the regional calendar in accordance with CGS 10-66q.

It was noted that a disclosure that addresses snow and emergency days as well as the relevant state statutes (Connecticut General Statute 10-15 and 10-259) has been added to the calendar.

This item was opened for discussion.

- Ms. Harrold noted that one suggestion received was in regard to this year when there was an early release (ER) scheduled. There was a delay on that day and in turn school had to be cancelled. Could it be noted on the calendar that should there be a delay on an early release day that the day could become a regular release day? *Dr. Willett responded that this could indeed be done. If not noted on the calendar, it will be communicated via the quarterly notices.*
- Ms. Harrold noted that another suggestion was to not have any ER days in January or February.
- Ms. Harrold noted that there were some suggestions that recommended making the February break longer (beyond just President's Day). She added that she is in agreement with this, adding February 19th, as a day off, even if it meant adding to the end of the year as it would be beneficial to younger learners and provide an opportunity for schools to be disinfected. Further, the students have a long span of being in school without a break. Dr. Willett explained that it the Board can make any changes it deems necessary, however all decisions have tradeoffs, and any new days off would extend the June end day unless taken from somewhere else such as the day before Thanksgiving in November. As of now, if they had done this this year and had two additional days in the February break, the last day of school would be well into the final week of June. Dr. Willett noted that in the past when school was in session on the day before Thanksgiving families shared that it was difficult for them. He noted that he understands that there is a long period without a break but added that they are virtually guaranteed to have snow days. Ms. Harrold noted that snow days cannot be planned.
- The current proposed 2018/19 end date is June 7th. Mr. Pagoni concurred with Ms. Harrold.

- Ms. Moran inquired about reducing the school year from 181 days to 180 days (the minimum required by the state) and having February 19, 2018 as a day off. Dr. Willett stated that he could inquire with the Teachers Union about it, in the past people have been against this kind of change because it means the loss of an instructional day, and there isn't enough time for the material as it is.
- Ms. Moran inquired if February 19th and 20th were days off if the schools would be disinfected. Dr. Willett noted that the health statistics, recently published, are within reason and while schools are cleaned as a matter of course, he does not believe the change would have a significant impact.
- Mr. Pagoni asked if there would be a savings in transportation costs if school was not in session on February 19th and 20th. Dr. Willett responded that there would not be since they would be extending the year by two days.
- Mr. Schroeder suggested having school in session on October 9th and November 21st and in turn they could schedule February 19th and 20th as days off. Dr. Willett noted this could be done. October 9th is an in-service day and in turn wherever that day off was moved, the in-service day would follow.
- In regard to an ER day where school is cancelled, Mr. Schroeder inquired if professional development is done. Dr. Willett clarified that if school is cancelled, students and teachers are off. He added that the ER dates are strategically arranged based on other constraints so while they would try to reschedule the professional development, he cannot guarantee that they would be able to do so.
- Ms. Harrold asked how the early release on Fridays is working. Dr. Willett said that no scenario is perfect, but that this one tends to be good for younger learners and families.
- Ms. Harrold recommended adding asterisks in the 2018/19 calendar to indicate that April vacation days may be used as make up days. Dr. Willett stated he can add asterisks but clarified that any day that has not already passed is in play to be a potential make up day. This year, ten days were added in June but they still had to take from the April break. He explained that there are items other than snow that can cause cancellations such as high winds that bring down trees and wires making it impossible for busses to pass.
- Mr. Schroeder noted if the snow days are not used, February 19th and 20th could be days off and then two days could be added to the end of the school year.
- Dr. Willett will add language to the calendar regarding ER dates and add asterisks to the April vacation dates.
- In regard to Good Friday, Dr. Willett noted that this is a contractual day and in turn the cost would be approximately \$12,000.
- If the June 7th date is moved, the ER aligned with it would follow.
- The Board agreed that it would like input from the public and tabled taking a vote.

G.3. Contribution

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment G.3.

A private and anonymous donation has been made to the Tolland Public Schools in the amount of \$200,000. The funds are to be utilized for struggling learners and the

development of academic assistance programs. Dr. Willett noted that he could not be more grateful and this will benefit Tolland for 10 -20 years.

G.4. MBR FY 2018 and FY 2019

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment G.4.

Overall, enrollment has declined by 19 students and the drop is slowing considerably as compared to the last few years. Based on the equation, the Town would be able to reduce its educational spending by \$144,618 for the fiscal year 2018-19. That said, the district is still bound to follow the maintenance of effort requirement of the IDEA.

G.5. POCD Input Request

Dr. Willett explained that the Board has been asked to respond to a POCD (Plan of Conservation and Development) survey. It is due by April 12th. A brief discussion took place. Ms. Moran will put the survey in a Google document and the Board members will submit feedback. Ms. Moran will synthesize the information.

G.6. CRE Presentation (no enclosure)

Ms. Moran motioned to postpone item G.6 CRE Presentation to March 28th. Ms. Harrold seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

H. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

Negotiations – The committee discussed the paraprofessionals' contract.

CABE – The Day on the Hill was rescheduled for March 15th.

I. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Ms. Yudichak noted that the Board received an e-mail regarding working on goals with the Town Council. In turn, there will be a 6 member subcommittee (3 members from the Board and 3 members from the Town Council) which will work on action items from the joint BOE/TC workshop.

A brief discussion took place regarding items in the minutes of the joint meeting. Given that it is a draft document, Dr. Willett recommended that the respective Chairs work together to ensure that items have reflected correctly.

J. BOARD ACTION - none

K. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Liz Costa, 54 Josiah Lane, commented how wonderful it is that the schools received the \$200,000 donation. She believes there is a natural dynamic tension between the boards [BOE and Town Council]. She added that Dr. Willett and the schools' principals did a great job today [item F, 2nd bullet] and she received very good feedback that everyone's viewpoints were respected. In regard to the calendar, she inquired if there have been custodial staff cuts and if so how it has impacted the post-storm clean up. Further, how is professional development made up so teachers are not lost to other schools? She asked if the Board has considered having half day Wednesdays. Additionally, she inquired why there is not a specific graduation date like at other schools and why did the district go from 183 days to 181. Lastly, she is against adding vacation days in February.

Kate Vallo, 80 Tolland Green, spoke in favor of including two days off in February. She believes it is more realistic to assume that the end of year calendar will be extended by a couple of days. It keeps stability and if they can keep the two off days in February it is a bonus and nice break, particularly for the younger students. She added that she is in favor of revisiting having half days on Wednesdays rather than Fridays for professional development. The rhythm this year has not been as good as in the past. Further, she inquired if there were more half days this year than last.

L. POINTS OF INFORMATION

(Town Council Meeting – February 27, 2018)

(Town Council/Board of Education Special Meeting – March 6, 2018)

Dr. Willett addressed the questions:

- A custodial cut was not made. Typically, the cleanup is a collective effort. Taking a snow storm with a lot of accumulation as an example, the DPW will work on the roads first and then the lots. The schools' custodial staff will work on this but if there is not enough time to provide egress and overall safe access then a snow day is needed. Additionally, frozen or black ice conditions need to be considered as well. Decisions are made based on the information available at the time and it is always a collective process involving the DPW, facilities, transportation officials, area resources if we had to call on them, and others.
- In regard to having half days on every Wednesday, Dr. Willett does not believe there is an appetite in Tolland to do so as it causes more disruptions for families. Further, general feedback has been that the flow is more interrupted when a half day is on a Wednesday rather than a Friday but he is willing to consider all input.
- In regard to having a specific graduation date, the district must have 180 days of school for students and if you have a graduation and need students to return 2-3 days after that day, it can be a difficult situation credit, course completion, and state requirement-wise. Further, some students may be at the edge for credit and need the days to complete assessments so they can graduate. If graduation was held before the work was done, those students might not be able to walk at graduation.
- In regard to cutting from 183 days to 181 days, Dr. Willett believes it was due to funding.
- In regard to the number of half days, there were more this year than the prior year but not as many as there have been in the past. For 2018/19 it is pretty much the same as this year.

Mr. Pagoni commented that when the Wednesday/Friday discussion came up in the past, the half days on Wednesday were consistently seen by staff and families as more difficult.

Mr. Pagoni inquired about the RAGE Robotics program and clarified that it is not technically a Tolland school club. It is an organization that works with students from multiple schools and is run by Mr. Davidson who does an outstanding job. Tolland does provide space for the group. Mr. Pagoni explained that the group does a great job, represents the community, and often meets on Saturdays in a back room. Mr. Pagoni asked if there is a way they could facilitate not charging the group in regard to the custodian fee. Dr. Willett explained that they are not

charged for the space and if the Town's recreation department or others are in the building they are not charged the custodian fee. To his knowledge, they are only charged when they are the only ones there. A custodian being on duty when the building is utilized like that is in the unit agreement and is for key access, cleanup, and safety. Dr. Willett explained that if the group is not charged, the funds need to come from somewhere else for the custodian. Further, if the exception is going to be made for this group, the Board needs to be prepared to make the exception for all others in a similar situation.

M. FUTURE

- Culturally responsive education (March)
- Goals
- Strategic prevention partnership (April)
- Analysis and review of shared services

N. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Legal Matters

Mr. Schroeder motioned to go into executive session at 8:57PM for the purpose for discussing legal matters and invited Dr. Willett to attend. Ms. Harrold seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

The Board exited the executive session at 9:21PM.

Ms. Moran motioned to accept the settlement regarding claims against the Tolland Public Schools BOE and Dominique Fox as discussed in the Executive Session of 3-14-2018. Ms. Harrold seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

N. NEW BUSINESS - none

O. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Schroeder motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:24PM. Mr. Pagoni seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Pascuzzi
Clerk

Summary of Board Meeting 3.15.18

March 21, 2018

Board Members present:

Colleen Yudichak, Chair
Michelle Harrold
Karen Moran

Approximately 5:40 p.m.

Meeting called to order.

Motion to go into executive session made by C.Yudichak, seconded by M.Harrold.
Approved 3 -0.

Moved that the Board enter executive session to discuss a confidential student matter.

The Board invited the following individuals (in addition to Board members and its counsel, Jessica Ritter) into the executive session:

Walter Willett, Superintendent
Attorney Elissa Bartlett for the Administration
Student who is the subject of the hearing and his mother and father
Ms. Fox, Administration
Mr. Hernandez, SRO

Approximately 6:35 p.m.

Everyone excused for Board deliberations, except for Board counsel, Jessica Ritter.

Approximately 6:40 p.m.

Meeting resumes. All meeting participants return. C.Yudichak (read by Ms. Ritter) makes the following motion in open session:

Moved, that the Tolland Board of Education finds, based on the evidence in the record, that the student who is the subject of this hearing, did on or about March 5, 2018, engage in behavior in violation of Board Policy 5080. Specifically, the student generated and distributed pictures containing individuals with a gun pointed at them; possessed a controlled substance on school grounds; was belligerent towards school administration and the school resource officer; resisted arrest, and; engaged in a breach of peace.

Such conduct violated a publicized policy of the Board, endangered persons, and was seriously disruptive of the educational process. As a result of the above findings, the Tolland Board of Education concludes that the student who is the subject of this hearing did commit an expellable offense.

Approximately 6:42 p.m.

C.Yudichak makes motion to reconvene executive session to discuss a confidential student matter, M.Harrold seconded.

Motion approved 3-0.

Approximately 6:50 p.m.

Everyone excused for Board deliberations, except for Board counsel, Jessica Ritter.

Approximately 7:00 p.m.

Meeting resumes. All meeting participants return. C.Yudichak (read by Ms. Ritter) makes the following motion in open session:

That the student who is the subject of this hearing shall be expelled from the Tolland Public Schools for one calendar year from the date of the incident, on or about March 5, 2018. During the period of the expulsion the student who is the subject of this hearing shall not be allowed to enter any school property and/or participate in any school-sponsored events and activities. During the expulsion period, the Student shall receive an alternative educational opportunity as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent.

The Student may be permitted early readmission to the TALC program on the first day of the 2018-19 school year if the Superintendent finds, in his sole discretion, that the student has met the following conditions:

- 1) The Student regularly participates, is cooperative, and receives passing grades in the alternative education program;
- 2) The Student avoids any serious disciplinary incident that would result in a school suspension or expulsion as determined by the Superintendent;
- 3) The Student avoids any action that results in an arrest.

If readmitted early, the Student will be on probation for the remainder of the original expulsion period. During the probation period, the Student must:

- 1) Maintain passing grades;
- 2) Avoid any serious disciplinary incident that would result in a school suspension or expulsion as determined by the Superintendent;
- 3) Avoid any action that results in an arrest.

If the Student violates any of the conditions of this probationary period, the Superintendent is authorized to reinstate the remaining term of his expulsion without the necessity of any further action by the Board.

Seconded by K.Moran

Motion approved 3-0.

Approximately 7:05 p.m.

Meeting adjourned.

SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

ITEM: Central CT Conference Sportsmanship Award for the Winter

ITEM SUBMITTED BY: Walter Willett, Ph.D., Superintendent

For BOE meeting: March 28, 2018

ITEM SUMMARY:

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR ATHLETICS PROGRAM AND COMMUNITY!

On Monday evening, Tolland High School Athletics program was awarded the Central CT Conference Sportsmanship Award for the Winter season at the CCC Winter Awards banquet. Tolland High School was ranked #1 out of 31 CCC schools in sportsmanship voted on by coaches and Athletic Directors based on the following criteria:

- a. Organization – How well is visiting team received at site of a game. i.e., directed to dressing room, general instructions on bus, parking, etc.
- b. Enthusiasm of spectators, cheerleaders, supporting team in a positive manner regardless of apparent outcome; response to cheerleaders.
- c. Spectators sportsmanship – No booing or heckling, general courtesy (timing of yells and routines with respect for opposing school, etc.)
- d. Player sportsmanship – Keenly competitive but without animosity, belligerence.
- e. Coaching sportsmanship – Awareness of crowd control responsibility, bench conduct, cooperation with officials.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

N/A

BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW: [N/A or put in a summary]

BOE ACTION DESIRED:

Recognition of Athletics program, the Athletic Supervisor Todd Zenczak, and the community.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:

None

SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

ITEM: 2018-2019 School Calendar

ITEM SUBMITTED BY: Walter Willett, Ph.D., Superintendent

FOR BOE MEETING: March 28, 2018

ITEM SUMMARY:

Please see the Tolland Public School 2018-2019 calendar. The calendar provides for 11 Early Release days for professional development, curriculum, and organizational time for teachers and paraprofessionals (not including parent teacher conference days). Early release days are useful for training and professional activities without having to acquire substitute teachers to cover classes, thereby keeping this expenditure lower. The ER days are organized on Fridays so as to be less disruptive to the educational process and helpful to families.

A significant portion of professional development is front-loaded in the beginning of the school year before classes begin. Training implemented in the beginning of the year is crucial for phonics programs (such as Foundations) administrative programs (such as Power School products) and overall allows for a better opportunity to apply information and skills learned over the scope of the entire year, vs. having a workshop mid-year or later that could have provided information that would have been useful earlier in the year (for example, a program on Autism teachers could utilize the knowledge from right away). In addition, this practice is in accordance with Article 7, Section B of the Teacher Contract: *Four (4) days, and 5 hours and 15 minutes will be used for professional development prior to the start of the student school year. The Board agrees to provide one (1) full day and two hours in the afternoon of one of the days before students return, of uninterrupted teacher work-time/classroom preparation time.*

The Regional calendar was reviewed and vacations were, as is required, aligned with the EASTCONN calendar. Tolland is a member of the EASTCONN Region or RESC (Regional Education Service Center) and must adhere to the regional calendar in accordance with CGS 10-66q.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

None unless a contractual day is utilized. As an example, a contractual day (such as Good Friday) would be about \$12,000

BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW:

N / A

BOE ACTION DESIRED:

The Board of Education discussed this calendar in previous meeting(s). This meeting would constitute the second reading and move to action if so desired.

- 1) Move to Action (J item)
- 2) Motion to accept the Tolland Public School 2018-2019 Calendar.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:

2018 - 2019 Draft Tolland Public School Calendar

Tolland Public Schools

Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent



Tolland High School
Tolland Middle School

Tolland Intermediate School
Birch Grove Primary School

Total Student Days: 181

Total Faculty Days: 188

School Calendar 2018-2019

August/September					Important Dates					February				
M	T	W	Th	F	Aug 22-28 Faculty In-Service					M	T	W	Th	F
20	21	22	23	24	Aug 29 First Day of School									ER
27	28	29	30	31	Sep 3 (NS).....Labor Day					4	5	6	7	8
NS	4	5	6	7	Oct 8 (NS).....Columbus Day					11	12	13	14	15
10	11	12	13	14	Oct 9 (NS).....Faculty In-Service					NS	19	20	21	ER
17	18	19	20	21	Oct 26 (ER).....Faculty In-Service					25	26	27	28	
24	25	26	27	28	Nov 1 (ER).....K-12 Conferences					(19 days)				
(22 days)					Nov 2.....K-8 Conferences									
				K-8 No School									
				THS Full Student Day									
					Nov 21-23 (NS).....Thanksgiving Break									
					Dec 7 (ER).....Faculty In-Service									
					Dec 21 (ER).....Winter Break									
					Dec 24- Jan. 1 (NS).....Winter Break									
					Jan 11 (ER).....Faculty In-Service									
					Jan 21 (NS).....Martin Luther King Jr Day									
					Jan 22 ★.....THS Mid-Semester Day									
				THS No School (Tentative)									
				K-8 Full Student Day									
					Jan 23 ★.....THS 1 st Day 2 nd Semester									
					Feb 1 (ER).....Faculty In-Service									
					Feb 18 (NS).....President's Day									
					Feb 22 (ER).....Faculty In-Service									
					Mar 7-8 (ER).....K-12 Conferences									
					If the March 7 &/or 8 PTC are postponed they will be held on March 14 &/or 15.									
					Mar 22 (ER).....Faculty In-Service									
					Apr 5 (ER).....Faculty In-Service									
					Apr 15-18 (NS).....Spring Break									
					Apr 19 (NS).....Contractual Holiday									
					April 26 (ER).....Faculty In-Service									
					May 10 (ER).....Faculty In-Service									
					May 27 (NS).....Memorial Day									
					June 7 (ER) Last Day of School									
					Dates are TENTATIVE as they may change if snow/ emergency days occur during the first semester.									
					ER Early Release									
					THS 7:15- 10:45 a.m.									
					TMS 8:00- 11:45 a.m.									
					BGP/ TIS 8:50- 12:45 p.m.									
					If there is a school delay on an ER day, that ER will be cancelled and the school day will end at the normal dismissal time(s).									
					No School = NS									
					PTC= Parent/ Teacher Conferences									
					*Snow/ Emergency Day Make Up (applies to any days as needed through June 30)									

- The last day of school is scheduled for Friday, June 7, 2019. Please note, where possible, snow or emergency days will first be made up through June days. If, however, such snow or emergency days push the last day of school potentially into the last week of June, days may need to be taken from April or other vacations as needed. According to Connecticut General Statute 10-15 and 10-259 the school year must be at least 180 days and cannot extend past the last day of June. The school calendar is posted on the Tolland Public Schools website at <http://www.tolland.k12.ct.us>

DRAFT

SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

ITEM: Human Resources Workload

ITEM SUBMITTED BY: Walter Willett, Ph.D., Superintendent

For BOE meeting: March 28, 2018

ITEM SUMMARY:

Currently the district HR Generalist is working additional hours nearly every day, and at least one Saturday a month, to keep up with clerical components of Human Resource processing. The HR Generalist has been working up to 60 or 70 hours a week. Much of this is exacerbated by new requirements such as ACA compliance as every new hire and new retiree needs additional information in the payroll system as well as 1095C processing, annual reports, and IRS resolutions. In addition to this Public Act 16-67 requires that all new staff including substitutes who have either worked directly with children in the private sector or for a BOE within the last 20 years are required to complete an A1 form, requiring printing, tracking, and logging of response forms. Retirement processing and improved hiring protocols as well as improved evaluation processing and filing require additional clerical assistance to execute with fidelity. The Human Resource Generalist is becoming increasingly challenged by the paperwork processing and clerical processes and this is drawing time away from the more important and crucial aspects of the job. Therefore, a part-time (.5) secretary is being requested to support the HR Generalist position to the end of FY18 with a re-evaluation of the situation in the summer as retirements are processed.

In addition to this, because there is a retirement at the high school, this position could also spend time in that location as a .33 secretary through the end of FY18. This would allow the position to become acclimated to HS operations and provide for some cross training should the position be utilized at that level in the future to replace a retirement.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

A 0.83 ten month Administrative Assistant (0.5 FTE to assist HR Generalist, and .33 to assist at the high school) requires approximately \$6,220.94 in salary and \$475.91 in Medicare/FICA benefits (total \$6,696.85).

BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW:

N/A

BOE ACTION DESIRED:

Consideration and if so inclined, an informal endorsement of the hiring of a 0.83 ten month Administrative Assistant (0.5 FTE to assist HR Generalist, and .33 to assist at the high school) for approximately \$6,220.94 in salary and \$475.91 in Medicare/FICA benefits (total \$6,696.85) to the end of FY18 with a re-evaluation of the situation in the summer.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:

None

**SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL
HICKS MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER
6th FLOOR COUNCIL ROOM
MARCH 14, 2018**

Present: Bill Eccles, Dave Skoczulek, John Reagan, Paul Reynolds, Tammy Nuccio, Christine Vincent and Brenda Falusi

Also Present: Steven Werbner, Town Manager
Michael Wilkinson, Director of Administrative Services
Kevin Eklund, Admin. Resident Trooper
Heidi Samokar, Director of Planning and Community Development
Beverly Bellody, Director of Human Services
Lisa Hancock, Director of Finance and Records
Scott Lappen, Public Works Director
Bruce Watt, Recreation Director
Jason Lawrence, Assessor
Sheila Bailey, Town Clerk
Chris Jordan, Asst. Finance Director
Jim Paquin, Building Official
Barbara Pettijohn, Director of Library Services
John Littell, Director of Public Safety
Michelle Manas, Collector of Revenue

Meeting called to order at 7:02 pm.

Town Manager Steven Werbner started the meeting by talking about the three year revenue comparison and that his recommended budget has a 0.81% increase or \$450,450. He then talked about the potential adjustment in State Aid. The impact of the FY19 Governor's Adjusted Budget with no change to current year Town and Board of Education expenses would be an increase of 1.15 mills or 3.35%. He used a blended figure for ECS in the amount of \$9,308,625. His suggestion is should we receive more in revenue after the budget is adopted that the money be held in reserve to address potential mid-year revenue adjustments. He stated another potential change in State Aid is the second payment of the (TAR) Grant as well as the full amount for FY18-19 (\$339,335). The overall tax increase is 2.49% on an overall budget increase of 0.81%.

The Town Manager went into a discussion on the use of fund balance. Fund balance in Tolland over the last ten years has increased some 2 million dollars or from 10.9% to 12% with the most recent percentage being 11.5%.

POTENTIAL USE OF FUND BALANCE

• Fund Balance as of 7/1/17:	\$ 8,153,976
• Programmed use of Fund Balance in 17/18 budget:	-\$ 400,000
• Possible use of Fund Balance to address Governor's Holdback of ECS revenues offset by other revenues:	-\$ 636,864 est.
• Estimated funds not expended in FY 17/18 including \$290,000 for funds from the State Trooper budget	+\$ 339,752 est.
• Programmed use of Fund Balance in 18/19 budget Including the use of the \$290,000 from prior year to fund Police improvements:	<u>- \$ 690,000</u>
	\$6,766,864

He stated in future years the Town should be careful in utilizing Fund Balance as a mechanism to offset lost revenue without an established plan to restore Fund Balance to prior levels.

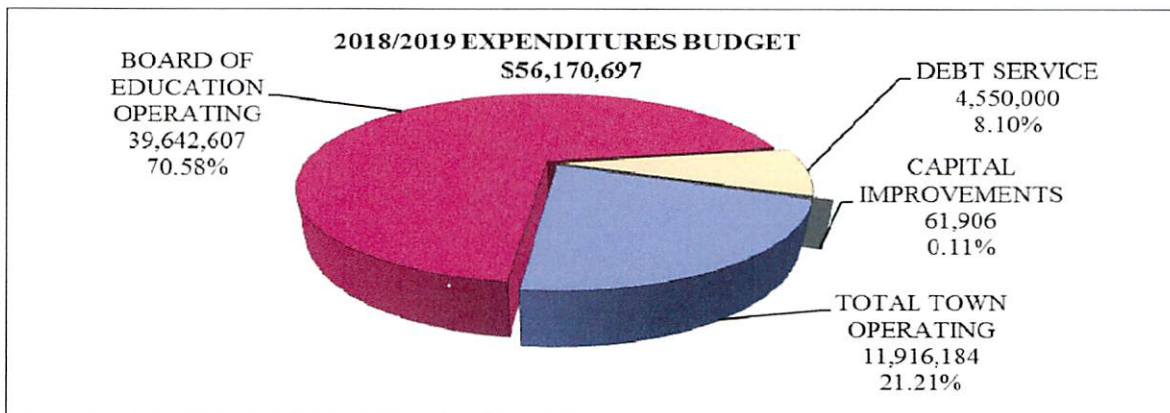
Also, the Town should also consider revising its Fund Balance policy to ensure that the overall Fund Balance stays between 10% and 17% of expenditures and as a further goal to reach a level recommended by the Government Finance Officers Association of at least two months of operating revenue or expenditures. Unassigned Fund Balance should be as a minimum range from 10% - 15% of expenditures.

He then discussed the expenditure drivers in the budget. The increase in the Board of Education budget is 0.78% or \$308,659 as requested in their adopted budget. Funding option 1 of the Police Study prepared by Municipal Resources Inc. at a total cost of \$449,430. A portion of this expense is offset by funds budgeted this fiscal year which will not be spent (\$290,000). Expenditure reductions were as follows: Reduce the Solid Waste budget by \$23,992 based on savings negotiated in our Solid Waste contract. This includes adding back \$29,711 for one free bulky waste pick-up. Reduce the snow & ice materials by \$29,959 based on lower price and less material used. Eliminate the use of contractors during snow events as well as a vacant Part-Time Custodian for a total savings of \$78,572. Add back a Laborer budgeted in FY18/19 for 10 months as well as add hours to an existing Part-Time Custodian at a total cost of \$44,594. Reduce the Planning & Zoning budget as well as Contingency account by a combined \$64,855 due to the completion of certain studies or use of other funding sources.

The Town Manager's overall budget numbers and recommendations are highlighted as follows:

The budget which I am presenting to you retains basic services, both in the Town as well as the Board of Education, and provides for an increase in overall expenditures of 0.81% with Town operation expenses increasing by 1.14% or \$134,463, the Board of Education increasing by 0.78% or \$308,659 and Capital Improvements by \$7,328. The tax increase necessary to support this budget is 0.86 mills or a 2.494% increase in the mill rate. The use of Fund Balance is budgeted at \$690,000 which includes the use of \$290,000 budgeted this fiscal year for Police improvements that will not be spent.

This budget again is heavily impacted by the potential loss of State revenue and the modest growth in the Grand List.



Each year as part of this budget message I show the tax impact to the average low-middle-higher assessed homes. After Revaluation the average assessment for these categories of homes was \$117,093 - \$188,285 - \$360,369.

Property Tax Impact of the Town Managers Proposed Budget for Three Average Assessments				
2014 Assessment	Market Value	Taxes at 34.48	Taxes at 35.34	Difference
\$117,093	\$167,276	\$4,037	\$4,138	\$101
\$188,285	\$268,979	\$6,492	\$6,654	\$162
\$360,369	\$514,813	\$12,426	\$12,735	\$309

The Town Manager also talked about the concern of a high mill rate in comparison to the other Towns.

Throughout the presentation there were questions from Town Council members and statements of residents on the following topics: Fire training; police services; police staffing; foundation assessment reductions; regional training; police overtime; change in line items from Department budget to Manager Proposed among other questions.

Meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Wilkinson
Director of Administrative Services

TOWN COUNCIL & BOARD OF EDUCATION

BUDGET MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MARCH 15, 2018 - 7:00 P.M.

Council Members Present: Bill Eccles, Dave Skoczulek, John Reagan, Paul Reynolds, Tammy Nuccio and Brenda Falusi.

BOE Members Present: Colleen Yudichak, Karen Moran and Michelle Harrold.

Others Present: Steven Werbner, Town Manager, Walter Willett, Superintendent.

Members Absent: Council-Christine Vincent, Board of Education-Sam Adlerstein, Robert Pagoni, Jane Pasini, Christina Plourd, Jeff Schroeder and Susan Seaver.

- 1) **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.
- 2) **Discussion with Board of Education regarding their Proposed Budget:**

Bill Eccles supports overall BOE budget but is concerned about the Health Insurance portion of the budget.

Brenda Falusi supports plans of the BOE and the forward looking budget.

Dave Skoczulek is in support of the BOE budget.

Discussion of the BOE business academy was outlined by the Superintendent which is just one area of interest for students.

Tammy Nuccio asked which line item the reduction from the proposed to the adopted BOE budget came from.

A question was asked about the LEEP program. Parent feedback is good.

A question on the Open CHOICE Program – 10 seats total (5 additional). The BOE received \$42,000 from this program this year, about \$8,000 per child. There is a lot of training associated with this program.

3) **General Discussion of Town's Budget**

There was a discussion on the 17/18 Budget versus the monthly expenditure report as well as the large amount of unspent funds.

There was a discussion of certain items in the school bond package that perhaps could be paid for out of General Fund dollars.

There was a discussion of how the BOE achieved the large savings in the prior fiscal year.

Bill Eccles requested that some of the things we need which are not really bondable items should be purchased with efficiencies achieved rather than pre-purchasing operating expense items.

Bill Eccles raised the question about what to do about future holdbacks. Michelle Harrold is concerned the holdback could be so great that it would be hard to agree upfront on a percentage split. If this happens again, there should be discussion. Dave Skoczulek suggested that perhaps in the future the two Chief Executives should come up with a plan and then present it to the two Boards.

Paul Reynolds also raised a concern that if there are holdbacks we can't continue to use the Fund Balance or raise taxes and we need to agree to come together to make the necessary adjustments.

Brenda Falusi has seen the BOE come to the table and look for efficiencies. We should have this discussion as part of the working agreement discussion.

Colleen Yudichak said that the BOE is always willing to work with the Town Council and needs to continue to communicate.

Karen Moran said when we discuss we should speak to all of the components of the budget including Fund Balance, Debt Service, Capital Budget, etc.

Paul Reynolds asked about the financing of the Utility Fund.

4) **Public Comment**

Jon Crickmore, Kenny Trice and Katie Murray all spoke.

5) **Adjournment:** Paul Reynolds made a motion to adjourn at 9:35 PM. Motion was unanimously approved.

**SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL
HICKS MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER
6th FLOOR COUNCIL ROOM
MARCH 20, 2018**

Present: Bill Eccles, Dave Skoczulek, Paul Reynolds, Tammy Nuccio and Brenda Falusi

Also Present: Steven Werbner, Town Manager
Michael Wilkinson, Director of Administrative Services
Lisa Hancock, Director of Finance and Records
Chris Jordan, Asst. Finance Director

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm.

Town Council Chair Bill Eccles started the meeting as an open discussion on the budget. Brenda Falusi stated she liked the budget setup. Tammy Nuccio stated the process was informative but was concerned about the State revenue issue. Bill Eccles stated the budget was a safe and prudent course. Dave Skoczulek stated his concern about what is to come beyond the budget. Town Manager Steve Werbner stated at some point down the road the Town may need to go to priority based budgeting. Tammy Nuccio stated at some point we need a marketer of developable land in Town and that she ran for the Town Council promising to understand the budget. Paul Reynolds stated the low cost of services at Town and BOE can allow us to use fund balance to market to other Towns to regionalize. Dave Skoczulek commented on the desire to see the ratio between commercial and residential tax base for the Towns we use as comparisons. Steve Werbner suggested a realtor symposium relating to input on the crumbling foundation issue. Steve Werbner clarified that the BOE budget he forwarded to the Town Council had an increase of five positions. Steve Werbner stated the next meeting on the budget is the Public Hearing at Tolland High School on Thursday, March 22 at 7pm. Several residents had questions/comments relating to the Town's appetite for development; no magic bullet with business development; need to tell residents the true picture of development; and if there were going to be future employee cuts at BOE.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Wilkinson
Director of Administrative Services

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL
TOLLAND HIGH SCHOOL - AUDITORIUM
MARCH 22, 2018 - 7:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: William Eccles, Chair; David Skoczulek, Vice-Chair; Brenda Falusi; Tammy Nuccio; John Reagan; Paul Reynolds and Christine Vincent

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Steven Werbner, Town Manager; Walter Willett, Superintendent

1. Call to Order: William Eccles called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. PUBLIC HEARING ITEM:

2.1 2018-2019 Budget Proposed by the Town Manager

Town Government	\$11,916,184	
Capital Improvement Reserve Fund		\$ 61,906
Board of Education		\$39,642,607
Debt Service		<u>\$ 4,550,000</u>
Total Proposed Budget		\$56,170,697

Mr. Werbner gave his presentation tonight with the use of a PowerPoint. The first slide was an overview of the budget and a summary of where they stand:

Town Government:	1.14% increase
Board of Education:	.78% increase (which was the request of the BOE)
Total Town Revenues:	.81% increase
Mill Rate:	2.49% increase

He reviewed the seven categories of revenue, and showed a three year comparison. The categories are: property taxes, state & federal grants (losing \$303,106), licenses, permits & fees (losing \$11,300), charges for current services, investment income/other, education grants (losing \$864,389) and contribution from fund balance. He is projecting a \$1.1m dollar loss in funding.

A slide was shown outlining the property tax revenue. Every year, Tolland has had to become more self-sufficient. The state aid has been decreasing over the years.

A snap shot was shown of where Tolland has been over the last year, and what is being projected for the next fiscal year. Mr. Werbner spoke about the effects that the ECS funding has had upon Tolland. Currently, the Governor is at \$8.7m for ECS funding. Werbner has used a blended figure for ECS in the amount of \$9.3m. If Tolland receives more money from the State, he suggests that the Council hold that money for future reductions in revenue that may happen after the November elections.

Another significant potential change in state revenue is the TAR grant. Tolland is schedule to receive \$339,335 this year. The funds come in two payments. He has been told the second

payment may not be made. The State Legislature would need to find significant dollars in order for the state to release those funds.

The overall expenditure is 0.81%, with Town operation expenses increasing by 1.14% or \$134,463, the BOE increasing by 0.78% or \$308,659 and Capital Improvements by \$7,328. The tax increase necessary to support this budget is 0.86 mills or a 2.494% increase in the mill rate. The use of Fund Balance is budgeted at \$690,000, which includes the use of \$290,000 budgeted this fiscal year for Police improvements that will not be spent. This budget is heavily impacted by the potential loss of state revenue and the modest growth in the grand list.

Mr. Werbner showed the tax impact to the average low-middle-higher assessed homes. After revaluation, the average assessment for these categories of homes was \$117,093 - \$188,285 - \$360,369.

A slide was shown detailing the percentage changes of mill rates and expenditures. The average, excluding revaluation years, is a 0.6 mill rate increase or a 1.78% increase in the mill rate. He showed current mill rates in surrounding towns, and mentioned that people need to realize that they need to compare apples to apples when they review them.

Discussion of expenditures occurred next. The town's operating expenses remained pretty much flat or negative. The BOE's increase over the last three years has been less than what was requested in previous years. The total operating expenditure increase is 0.87% or \$443,122.

Significant expenditures increases are:

- Increase the BOE budget by 0.78% or \$308,659, as requested in their adopted budget;
- Fund Option #1 of the Police Study prepared on behalf of the town. The total cost is \$449,430. As a future goal, Mr. Werbner is recommending the town explore the option of using part-time constables to maintain two officers on duty days / evenings. In addition, the town should continue to look at the option of contracting for police services with surrounding towns which may prove more economical in future years.
- Reduce the solid waste budget by \$23,992 based on savings negotiated. This will include adding back one free bulky waste pick-up.
- Reduce the snow and ice material based on lower price and less material used.
- Eliminate the use of contractors during snow events as well as a vacant part-time custodian. Add back a laborer for 10 months as well as add hours to an existing part-time custodian.
- Reduce the Planning & Zoning budget as well as Contingency account due to the completion of certain studies or use of other funding sources.

A slide was shown listing Departments with no significant changes to their budgets. Those included the following:

Agriculture Commission
Animal Control, Emergency Preparedness, Fire Prevention
Conservation Commission
Finance
Health
Human Services
Inland Wetlands

Library
P&Z, Building Inspection
Probate
Recreation
Senior Center
Town Council
Town Manager
WPCA
ZBA

The use of fund balance in the budget process comes up yearly. Mr. Werbner outlined some facts regarding the fund balance. It is primarily the town's emergency fund. The fund has risen over the last ten years. During that same time, Tolland's bond rating has gone from an AA- to AA to AA+ and now to an AAA. The AAA rating is the highest attainable rating and assists in obtaining lower borrowing rates of interest. The recommended practice for fund balance reserves is to have an unassigned fund balance at a minimum of either 2 months of operating revenues or operating expenditures. He showed how the potential use of fund balance can go from \$8.1m to \$6.7m. He outlined that the town should be careful in utilizing fund balance as a mechanism to offset lost revenue without an established plan to restore fund balance to prior levels.

He believes the town should consider revising its Fund Balance policy to ensure that the overall Fund Balance stays between 10% and 17% of expenditures, and as a further goal to reach a level recommended by the Government Finance Officers Association of at least two months of operating revenue or expenditures. Should it be necessary at any time to use Fund Balance, which results in levels below 10% for either overall or unassigned Fund Balance, the Town and BOE will reduce recurring expenditures to eliminate structural deficits or increase revenues or some combination of the two. Also, any deficiencies shall be replenished in a period not to exceed five years, and the Fund Balance should not be used as a revenue source during that period of time.

The last slide showed the remaining budget schedule. The annual budget referendum will be held on May 1, 2018. If the budget does not pass on May 1st, a referendum will be held every two weeks until a budget passes. He encouraged the community to come out and vote.

3. Public Participation: None.

4. Adjournment: David Skoczulek moved to adjourn the meeting; Seconded by Brenda Falusi at 7:40 p.m. All were in favor.

William N. Eccles, Chairman

Michelle A. Finnegan
Town Council Clerk