



TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

Hicks Municipal Center

Council Chambers

Tolland, CT 06084

REGULAR MEETING

7:30 PM

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.

2018-2019 GOALS

- *Support and encourage specialized programs that can serve as alternatives to outplacement*
- *Support and encourage the development of tuition programs*
- *Support the implementation of Mastery Learning and Responsive Education initiatives*
- *Support and encourage Curriculum Development, and Teaching & Learning best practice*
- *Engage in the Strategic Prevention Framework*
- *Engage the Superintendent to explore and research shared service opportunities*
- *Engage Town, State, and Federal officials to discuss and advocate for education*
- *Foster the continued development of instructional technology*

AGENDA

February 12, 2020

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- January 22, 2020 – Special Meeting
- January 22, 2020
- January 28, 2020-Special Meeting
- February 6, 2020-Special Meeting

D. 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.

E. CORRESPONDENCE

F. POINTS OF INFORMATION

G. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT – Fisher Thompson and Alexandra Costa

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- H.1 Budget (BOE FY21 Budget)
- H.2 Monthly Financial Report
- H.3 Birch Grove Drawing Package Approval
- H.4 First Reading of Policy 9060 Modifications

I. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

J. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

K. BOARD ACTION

- K.1 Second Reading of Policy 9190 Modifications

L. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2-minute limit)

Comments must be limited to items on this agenda.

M. POINTS OF INFORMATION

- January 18, 2020 – Town Council Special Meeting
- January 28, 2020 - Town Council Special Meeting
- January 28, 2020 - Town Council Meeting

N. FUTURE

Dr. Willett will set up:

- School rounds / tours / starting with TIS (briefings/tours/debriefings)
- Mental Health Services Initiatives (presentation and discussion)
- School Bus Stop Safety (presentation)
- Portrait of a Graduation / Visioning (presentation and discussion of initiatives)
- Pathways and Lighthouse Programs
- Understanding By Design (presentation and discussion)
- Regionalization (presentation and discussion)
- Board of Education Goal Setting (working session and establishment of goals)

O. NEW BUSINESS

P. ADJOURNMENT

TOLLAND, CT BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
HICKS MUNICIPAL CENTER COUNCIL CHAMBERS
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2020

Board Members Present: Ashley Lundgren, Christina Plourd, Jacob Marie, Kate Howard-Bender, Renie Besaw, Christina Griffin, Anthony (Tony) Holt, Karen Moran, Dana Philbin (Phone)

Board Members Absent: None

Others Present:

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:06 pm
2. Executive Session
 - Ms. Plourd motioned to enter executive session for the purpose of a discussion regarding a confidential student matter. Dr. W. Willett was invited to join.
 - Ms/ Howard-Bender seconded the motion.
 - All were in favor. Motion carried.
3. Exit Executive session
 - Ms. motioned to exit executive session at 7:33 pm
 - Ms. Plourd seconded
 - All were in favor. Motion carried.
4. Board Action
 - Ms Besaw motioned to empower the Superintendent to offer a Stipulated Agreement in a confidential student matter.
 - Mr Plourd seconded
 - Yay: 8, Nay: 0 Abs: 1
 - Motion passes

Anthony (Tony) Holt
Board Secretary

TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

Hicks Municipal Center
Council Chambers
Tolland, CT 06084

REGULAR MEETING – January 22, 2020

Members Present: Ashley Lundgren, Chair; Christina Plourd, Vice Chair; Anthony Holt, Secretary; Renie Besaw, Christine Griffin, Kate Howard-Bender, Jacob Marie, Karen Moran, Dana Philbin

Members Absent: none

Administrators Present: Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent of Schools

Others Present: none

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Lundgren called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Plourd motioned to approve the agenda. Ms. Besaw seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- January 8, 2020
- January 15, 2020

Ms. Plourd motioned to approve the minutes of the January 8th and January 15th meetings. Ms. Philbin seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Melanie Goodin, 406 Buff Cap Road, commented in regard to Mastery-Based Learning. She inquired as to what is being done in regard to reviewing the results of how Mastery-Based Learning is working. She is speaking for herself as well as on the behalf of her ex-husband who is a teacher in another district. She is speaking in regard to the high school level and is concerned that there is no accountability for the formative assessments. If students do not have accountability to the formative assessments then there does not seem to be a road to mastery. She added that other successful schools have used the formative assessments as 10% of the Mastery Learning. Ms. Goodin would like to know what the Board is doing to look at the results of 100% mastery when only the summative assessments are counted.

Colleen Yudichak, 12 Blueberry Hill Road, commented that she read the minutes from the last Board meeting. She has heard and personally witnessed great things about the administrators. They give 110% everyday. They have taken on additional responsibilities when staff and funds have been cut over the years. The administrators care deeply about the students and staff. Ms. Yudichak listened to the administrators' concerns at the last workshop. They expressed concern about the budget and if it goes any lower it will have lasting effects on the students. In regard to the special education caseworker, Ms. Yudichak inquired how it is ok to reduce a special education case manager and then split one between schools. This is not quality service. Case managers are needed for students with a variety of social, emotional, or academic challenges. Who is responsible for them if the case manager is at another school? Are we

becoming a stagnant district? Ms. Yudichak is hoping this Board will want to continue to move forward and make gains. Nothing in the proposed budget shows the district is moving in that direction and she does not see any new investments. She hopes the newly elected Board will recognize that this is a subpar budget. She asked that the Board take a chance and ask what a level budget would look like without cuts to sports, teachers, or programs.

Kathy Pagan, 19 Pine Hill Road, presented a success story. Her son with autism was one of the most challenging students at Birch Grove and is now a sophomore at THS who has recently transitioned out of special education and is an honor student because of the amazing effort and dedication of his teams and paraprofessionals. Any family of a special needs student will understand how huge this is. Every parent, whether of a typical or atypical child, lives hoping for their child's success but without the aids and support the children will slip through the cracks. With one special education teacher leaving and one being split between two schools she feels the district is moving backwards. Ms. Pagan believes any more cuts will fundamentally be stealing hope from individuals whose hearts are already heavy with their daily lives. She added that families move here with confidence their children can grow but we know that with these cuts it will effectually be a lie. The truth will be that the Board has subjugated the welfare of real lives to numbers on a paper. If they are persuaded to reduce the quality of life for the increasing number of students in the school system that rely on the teams then she is afraid that they may be personally removed from the reality of what it takes for an atypical student to be that success story.

Amy Duff, 127 Robin Circle, commented that the Town has given a recommended budget for this year but asked that the Board advocate for the students. Behind every program and every line item is a child that is affected either positively or negatively. The Board has the control and the means to advocate for the students, ask questions, talk to the educational experts so they can find out what is really needed for a quality education in Tolland so they can continue to move forward and provide a nice education for the students.

Liz Costa, 54 Josiah Lane, expressed concern and has been taught to ask, "why, why, why, how, how, how". She commented that if one attended the budget workshop and asked about losing two art teachers one would find that they are not only losing two art teachers but they are going to take two of the teachers that work in industrial education and move one to teach in the arts program. Thus, they are losing classes along the way no matter what. Ms. Costa expressed concern about losing sports. She commented that sports may be the only thing that draws a student to go to school and if it is a freshman who is nervous about attending a new school and wants to play a sport they have played their entire life, it may be their only opportunity to play in high school. Ms. Costa asked the Board to look at the math behind the freshman sports decision. She provided the example of basketball where there are only ten students playing at one time between varsity and junior varsity. The freshman team adds five more spots for forty one athletes right now. Freshman baseball adds nine more spots. Volleyball adds six more spots. Ms. Costa commented that the special education teacher likely touched 75-80 lives in a single day – close to 5% of the school population. They want more people touching and impacting their students' lives, not less.

E. CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Holt reviewed the correspondence (attachment E1).

F. POINTS OF INFORMATION

Ms. Philbin thanked everyone for the e-mails. As a new Board member and a member of the community for four years, she appreciates the outpouring of interest in the budget. Dr. Willett and others do respond and she encouraged everyone to continue to send communications. It helps guide the Board which is there to be the voice of the entire Tolland community. They cannot do this if they do not hear from everyone. She implored everyone to communicate what they want the Board to advocate for and ask their neighbors to do so as well so the Board members can do the job they were elected to do.

Ms. Plourd thanked everyone for the e-mails as well. She has responded to approximately 1/3 of them so far and will continue to reply. She asked that anyone who sent a communication requesting a reasonable and responsible increase submit ideas where items can be moved around in the budget. They are open to hearing suggestions. It is fairly early in the budget process and she, like others, has a lot of questions and concerns. In response to Mastery-Based Learning the Board is working on establishing a curriculum committee and this is something they can review. Dr. Willett recommended that Ms. Goodin set up an appointment with him so they can discuss her concerns. There is a Mastery-Based Learning plan online under Superintendent. It has resources as well as the district's plan which explains how it has been implemented and the rationale.

Ms. Howard-Bender read the letter signed by thirty eight members of the community into the record:

"January 17, 2020

Dear Tolland Board of Education Members,

We are writing as a group of concerned parents and voters. One of the biggest reasons residents moved to Tolland is because of the excellent school system. Year after year we have watched continued cuts to our schools and the trend seems to continue. In the proposed budget the following positions that are being discussed as potential cuts are: a high school art teacher, 5th grade teacher, and a special education case manager. There are also expected cuts to educational programs and freshman sports. We are sure the Superintendent and administrators do their very best to continue to offer the best educational experience under extreme budget requests. Everyone that sits on this Board needs to be honest with themselves and ask themselves, "Does the presented budget give every student an opportunity to be a well-rounded student as they head into the future?" We hope your answer would be "no". Yes, two art teachers are retiring but this should not be the reason not to fill a position. Many students use the offerings of art electives to further their education with the future of working in the field of art may it be in photography, graphic arts, drawing/painting and many other careers. A loss of the 5th grade teacher could jeopardize teams, add to larger class sizes, and result in students falling further behind and some that may end up with intervention because of this. A loss of a special education caseworker will add to the workload of the teacher. This special education caseworker position is one that is particularly skilled in working with students with learning, mental, emotional, or physical disabilities. Their responsibilities include writing IEPs, testing, and attending PPT meetings. A loss of an additional caseworker adds a load to the teachers and the extra skilled attention these special students require will be jeopardized. Losing freshman sports is another big concern. Many young athletes use this opportunity as an outlet; an opportunity for a better school environment. Some of these kids may not make the JV team and if they do not they will lose interest in the sport. We are asking that you have a conversation on what it would look like to have a level service budget not removing any staff or programs. Any

further cuts to the school system could jeopardize the integrity of our education system. Tolland Public School District should have the support of the Board of Education with a fully funded budget without significant cuts."

G. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT – Fisher Thompson and Alexandra Costa

- January Jazz Concert, THS, January 14th (included 6th grade, 7th/8th grade, and high school jazz bands)
- Quarter II High School Music Department Concert, January 16th (includes Women's Chorus, Chamber Choir, Jazz Band)
- Semester I Finals: January 29th and 30th; January 31st, Mid-Semester Day, THS (no school)
- Started planning and creating a subcommittee for Mental Health Week; Dr. Willett is supporting this initiative; date: TBD

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

G.1 Rebecca Adams, CABA – FOIA, BOE Roles and Responsibilities (no enclosure)
Dr. Willett welcomed Rebecca Adams Rieder, Esq., CLRP, Senior Staff Attorney Labor Relations Director and Nick Caruso, Senior Staff Associate for Field Services and Coordinator of Technology.

Mr. Caruso presented Board of Education Roles and Responsibilities.

Attorney Adams Rieder presented the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act Essentials.

G.2 Budget

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment G2.

A discussion took place which included the following:

- Mr. Marie has been reviewing the budget and asking questions. He commented that there is room for improvement. There are several cuts to programs that he believes are harmful but if adopted it would be one of the largest increases over the past three years. He does not believe this is a good combination for the students or taxpayers; however, to Dr. Willett's credit who is working with them, Mr. Marie believes they can come up with a good budget that can be more efficient and hopefully put some of the items back.
- Dr. Willett is working on responding to the budget questions that have been submitted. The Board members' questions are addressed first and there is some overlap with questions posed by the public.
- Ms. Howard-Bender commented that the budget has a 1.87% ask. Last year it was .84%, the year before was .78%, and the year before was 0%. Previous to that it was in the range of 2.5% for a 5-year overall for an average of 1.63%. It is not a larger increase but they need to be sure the spending plan is in line with what the district needs. She asked Dr. Willett to speak to the contractual obligations and how much the increase affects the overall line. Second, Ms. Howard-Bender inquired which lines are outside of the control of the Superintendent and the Board.
 - Dr. Willett explained and reviewed the largest drivers: insurance, contractual obligations, transportation, and in part special education. He added that the budget is respectable and it would be a mistake to

bring the budget below 1.87% for many reasons. Wages currently for teachers have an 8.69% increase over three years. The recent settlement is the 59th lowest of 71 settlements. In terms of the budget, the large investments are in areas that are doing great things for students such as Structured Literacy. Such programs serve students and keep them in the district at a cost lower than that of outplacements. Dr. Willett expressed caution regarding what is posted on social media etc. The averages have been .54 over 3 years, 1.43 over 5 years and 1.63 over 7 years and CPI is higher in recent cases. This is not an exorbitant request. Sacrifices and concessions have been made. Other items that are also out of the Board's control include energy, debt service, and minimum wage impacts.

- Literacy How is currently in the special education and srbi/rti groups. Expansion into the general education population was taken out of the proposed budget.
- Mr. Holt commented that a significant number of questions have been posed by the public regarding line items and the analysis to reach 1.87% and expressed concern with getting responses to all of the questions within the time constraints that would allow them to make changes if they choose to do so.
 - Dr. Willett responded that he believes he can address most of the Board's questions, as well as many of those asked by the public, by early February.
- The budget schedule was discussed. Dr. Willett recommended holding a Special Meeting on February 6th.

Mr. Marie motioned to add, "Special Meeting, February 6, 2020" to the agenda as action item K.1. Ms. Plourd seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

- A discussion regarding the impact of the cut of a special educator took place. Dr. Willett noted that if he had the option to put a position back this would be his priority. He explained that he reviewed the budget overall, analyzed the programs, and tried not to make an impact that would cripple entire programs and provided examples. He believes the cut of the special educator can be managed. To add the position back the amount of about \$52K would need to be found.

Ms. Plourd motioned to extend the meeting past 10:00 p.m. Mr. Holt seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

- In regard to the budget reductions, Dr. Willett explained that when making the decisions for the reductions he took into consideration what would be required in order to adjust the workload to ensure it was doable and would minimize the impact on students. He consulted the administrators when making these decisions and respects that those in areas which are impacted have concerns.
- In regard to the 5th grade reduction Ms. Philbin expressed concern due to how the program is set up where teachers work in tandem to prepare students for middle school. She worried that while some students would get along fine others need the consistency and the partnership and may not be prepared properly for the next level. While it is "doable" it is concerning and Ms. Philbin inquired about the cost.
 - Dr. Willett responded that it would be \$52K (same as the special educator).

- Dr. Willett reviewed the enrollment sheet. (The final document will be posted on the budget page). The budget has two teachers coming out of the 5th grade. One will move to the 4th grade to offset numbers and one is reduced. He explained that there are options as to how the teams could be adjusted. At Birch Grove, a 2nd grade teacher will be moved into the 1st grade to offset numbers. Dr. Willett added that he plans 3-5 years out when making the decisions.
- Ms. Plourd inquired about Literacy How and noted that it seems they have many resources that do not include follow-up coaching and that Tolland is the only district participating in that component. She would rather have the special educator, the 5th grade teacher, and the tech education teacher than the funds spent on follow-up coaching.
 - Dr. Willett explained that without the consulting and coaching they will lose the opportunity to fully develop the structured literacy program needed for students and they will risk having students outplaced and gave the example of dyslexia. Such outplacements cost approximately \$70K + transportation costs per student. If he thought this could be sacrificed he would do so in order not to have the staff reductions but this is critical. As the Superintendent he is protecting the resources necessary for providing the best outcome for both the students and the district. There will be a short term loss of staff but a long term impact of being able to provide necessary services.
- Ms. Moran commented that it is Dr. Willett's job to send a positive message about the district. She believes the students will feel the losses as well as the staff. Ms. Moran noted that she attended the Local Prevention Council where she heard that the most important thing for struggling kids and adults is to have a connection, to have hope. She is seeing a loss of opportunity for students and a loss of adults in front of kids who make a connection. As they consider this budget, which is not a level services budget nor one that she wants, it is important to understand this perspective. She does not believe it is up to them to say they do not need positions like coaches because that is up to the professionals in the district. Ms. Moran asked Dr. Willett if he has everything he needs, as their Superintendent, for the students to succeed and for the district's work toward a Portrait of a Graduate in Tolland and toward student achievement. Taking a step back feels like they are not setting students up to succeed.
 - Dr. Willett responded that the budget he proposed is designed to maintain the district's offerings in a responsible way. He could go on about things the district needs and provide examples but most importantly they should not go below the 1.87% request. It is responsible and reasonable.
- Ms. Philbin commented that personally the 1.87% is not where she wants to see the budget but would not want to see it lower so the district can be competitive. A lot of the information needs to be clarified via questions and submissions. One question is in regard to travel and conferences and professional development. In particular, she inquired about professional development and the trip to Finland and its impact on the 1.87%.

- Dr. Willett explained that administrators, under article 6 C of their contract, fringe benefits, get \$1,100 toward an educational experience. Currently, two administrators have been involved over the past two years in the Teacher Leader Fellowship Program run by former Commissioner of Education Betty Sternberg out of Central Connecticut State University. An extension of the program is a global education experience program. These two administrators want to apply their \$1,100 toward the global education experience. They will return with a great deal of educational information and will be able to coach and develop the workforce. They are paying for the majority of the global educational experience themselves.
- In regard to health insurance, Dr. Willett is meeting with the consultant next week to get answers to additional questions.

G.3 Construction Drawings (no enclosure)

Dr. Willett distributed and reviewed attachment G3.

Katie Murray, Chair of the Birch Grove Building Committee, reviewed the January 2020 Report on the Status of the Birch Grove Primary School Project dated January 28, 2020 (attachment G3i). The Committee is awaiting the cost estimate which is expected to be released on or around February 3rd not to exceed \$46M, the total project cost. Eighty nine percent of this will be reimbursed by the State of Connecticut.

G.4 Educational Reserve Transfer (1% Fund)

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment G.4.

Ms. Plourd motioned to move item G.4 to item K.2 for action. Ms. Moran seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

G.5 Graduation Date – 06/18/2020

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment G.5.

G.6 Legislative Breakfast – 01/31/2020

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment G.6.

I. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS - tabled

J. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Ms. Lundgren read the following Chairperson's Report:

"I truly wasn't going to give a Chair report for the sake of saving time. However, after spending long weekends and nights reviewing this budget, it is clear to me that there is still so much work to be done. There's been a lot of rumors and public statements that the current BOE is out to make severe cuts. This is unfounded as we've just started to review the budget. Through the process of asking questions, only then can an understanding of what the budget needs are to be achieved. Information such as enrollment sheets, salaries schedules that tie to grand totals, insurance costs involving Lockton's report (Insurance details are above my pay grade). The Board has not added nor cut anything. We are basing these types of decisions as the Superintendent sees fit. Responsible budgeting comes with asking questions and verifying the data. I want to see the most responsible budget move forward that fulfills our district needs.

Conscience of where funds are and will be going. We need to work together to find areas when trend might not be high. I'm also a parent with kids in our school system, as many other members are too. I'm invested into keeping our schools strong. They are our future. Our goal is to ensure that our district can remain competitive."

K. BOARD ACTION

K.1 Special Meeting, February 6, 2020

Ms. Moran motioned to add a Special Meeting on February 6, 2020 to discuss Birch Grove and the budget. Mr. Holt seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

K.2 Educational Reserve Fund

Ms. Plourd motioned that the Tolland Board of Education, pursuant to Ordinance 86, Chapter 8, hereby makes the request that the Town Council transfer the BOE audited balance of June 30, 2019, in the amount of \$85,113, into the Educational Reserve Fund. Ms. Besaw seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

L. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Lou Luba, 1160 Tolland Stage Road, commented that he is also a member of the Birch Grove Building Committee. They are working to ensure the town will have an excellent building on time and on budget. Mr. Luba commented that Dr. Willett asked if they were looking for cuts what they would propose. He is asking the Board to review line item 325, Professional Development. The budget has gone from \$150K to \$350K, a 128% increase or \$194K. If the Board is serious about keeping the staff positions, he would ask them to review this item to see if efficiencies can be found here to save the teachers they all want to keep as educators.

George Ulrich, Fish and Game Road, commented that the Board is not listening to what is going on in town. There are 186 foundations that are chopped on taxes; only 17 have been returned. The town is receiving less money from the state and Dari Farms is not in business and was a top ten taxpayer. He assumes that in the new budget they will be paying for two Birch Grove schools. He believes they will have a significant tax increase to get to 0% because of all of these issues. The 1.87% is a "pipe dream". The Board is looking at little cuts. It needs to look at big cuts. Additionally, 75% of the people in Tolland do not have anyone in the schools – he has kids and grandkids and understands but he is also a taxpayer. Further, he thinks the 8.69% the teachers got "sucks" because he has been out of work for over five years and with social security he hasn't come up with half that yet. Additionally, his oil bill, taxes, food, and other bills are the same as those of the teachers "so don't tell me what a great deal it is unless you're giving me a raise".

M. POINTS OF INFORMATION

- Town Council Special Meeting Minutes – January 6, 2020
 - Town Council Special Meeting Minutes – January 11, 2020
 - Town Council Special Meeting Minutes – January 14, 2020
 - Town Council Meeting Minutes – January 14, 2020
-
- Dr. Willett noted that the programs in the budget are preventing other issues.
 - Ms. Howard-Bender commented that 24% of Tolland's population is under the age of 18.

- Ms. Besaw commented that the budget has gone up by \$4.6M, a 13.3% increase since 2013. Since 2017 there are at least 200 fewer students. She noted that a small percentage of a large number is still a lot of money.
- Ms. Philbin noted that from 2017-2018 there was 0%, 2018-2019 was .78%, and 2019-2020 was .84% indicating moderate and conservative budgets. They need to be aware that it is not keeping up with inflation or contractual obligations.
- Mr. Holt noted that the Board is not yet done with its review of the budget.
- Ms. Moran noted that the town's unassigned fund balance has steadily increased. Dr. Willett explained that both the Board and the town have been responsible and like the town the Board has an educational reserve fund. Both are doing responsible things and Dr. Willett believes the 1.87% is affordable from the standpoint of ensuring they are preserving many services.
- Ms. Philbin commented that the Board needs to provide a strong educational system while not ignoring the other needs of people in town. The Board's focus is being responsible and ensuring they have what they need for the students. What concern her are the alternate forms of communication that have misconstrued information. The Board is doing their due diligence and is passionate about the students and the town. They want to do the right thing without minimizing others' priorities.
- Mr. Holt commented that they are doing their due diligence and putting forward the best they can but not necessarily the one we think the town can afford. Dr. Willett noted that under 10-222 it is up to the Board to come up with what the students need. The Town Council's role is to decide what can be afforded. The Board's obligation is to provide what it feels in its heart and through its principles and ethics what is needed for the students.
- Mr. Marie commented that he understands that some people cannot afford it, particularly those who do not have children and/or are retired on a fixed income. One needs those people paying taxes in order for the school system to be relatively affordable. If those people are priced out it will be more expensive especially for people with kids in the school system. If people are priced out and need to move and send their kids to a poor quality school district then Mr. Marie does not think they are really serving the kids. He will continue to review the budget and if he believes the 1.87% is the best they can do he will support it but he believes they can look for efficiencies, dig deeper, and think about the taxpayers as well.

N. FUTURE

- Dr. Willett will create programs for the Board members
- Pathways
- 21st Century Learning
- Strategic Prevention Framework
- Mental Health Services
- Budget
- Regionalization
- Birch Grove Update
- Organization of a Vision Mission
- Community Budget Workshops
- Curriculum Committee
- Mental Health, Strategic Plan, Partnering with TPS
- Dr. Willett's school rounds/tours starting with TIS

- Presentation on process of assessing school bus stop safety
- Additional information on Birch Grove and the design review as it relates to the requirements the BOE and/or the Superintendent put forward at the outset to ensure the design will do what is needed
- Additional information on Understanding By Design
- Goal setting session
- Assigning target dates for Items in this list

O. NEW BUSINESS - none

P. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Besaw motioned to adjourn the meeting 11:22 p.m. Ms. Plourd seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Pascuzzi
Clerk

20200122 Tolland Board of Education Communication

Respectfully Submitted by Anthony (Tony) Holt – Board Secretary

- 1/10 Email concerning a mental health and addiction working group
- 1/10 Email questioning if staff additions between the 18/19 budget and the 19/20 budget. Email also thanks the board and chair for taking steps to increase transparency
- 1/13 Email expressing concern over the Superintendent's proposed Budget
- 1/13 Email expressing concern over Superintendent's Proposed Budget and asking for careful consideration of the cuts included
- 1/16 Email discussing concern for the Superintendent's Proposed Budget in light of the budget workshop. Stresses the need to trust in our Superintendent of Schools
- 1/16 Email discussing challenges with the google form when it comes to multiple questions. Email included a list of questions over the Superintendent's proposed budget
- 1/17 Email concerning question over teacher pay
- 1/17 Email concerning tuition
- 1/17 Email concerning the Superintendent's proposed budget
- 1/17 Email concerning pathways being created
- 1/17 Email concerning CBA for district programs
- 1/17 Email asking how many kids are on the teams reduced by the Superintendent's proposed budget
- 1/17 Email concerning technology in the budget
- 1/17 Email concerning athletic stipends in the budget
- 1/17 Email concerning Para's in the budget
- 1/17 Email concerning nurses' salaries
- 1/17 Email concerning Medicare/FICA costs
- 1/17 Email concerning open choice revenue
- 1/17 Email concerning travel and conference increases
- 1/17 Email concerning budget effects of reduced programs
- 1/17 Email concerning grant money in the Superintendent's proposed budget
- 1/17 Email discussing concerns with the Superintendent's proposed Budget. Electronically signed by thirty people
- 1/20 Emails discussing the value of Para-professionals in the district
- 1/21 Email concerning math books in the middle school and their lack of use
- 1/21 Twenty-two email supporting a modest and responsible increase
- 1/21 Three email requesting the Board to support a budget that maintains services at their current levels
- 1/21 Two Email supporting a fully funded BoE budget
- 1/21 Email requesting increased funding for staff
- 1/21 Email discussing concern over the Superintendent's Proposed Budget and requesting compassion and honesty in the process
- 1/21 Email questioning line 325 and 118 of the Superintendent's proposed budget
- 1/21 Email requesting the board to look at each and every line item to get the best value for our students

- 1/21 Email requesting an increase in the budget to keep freshman sports and current teachers
- 1/21 Email recognizing the effects of the Superintendent's Proposed Budget and requesting increases to eliminate the cuts
- 1/22 Email asking for information on the USIF account
- 1/22 Email voicing concern over the Superintendent's Proposed Budget and its effect on preparing students for college. Email also discusses the effect on mental health.
- 1/22 Email imploring the BoE to remember the silent majority and the mandate to perform the fiscal due diligence that this budget deserves
- 1/22 Email suggesting that the Board's focus should be identifying waste and applying those resources effectively. Email stresses that more is not always better and asked for a more detailed line item budget that is easier to read
- 1/22 Email asking the BoE to keep all of the citizens of Tolland in mind while looking for a more responsible budget.

- 1/22 Email asking the Board to increase the budget to keep teachers, programming, and supplies.
- 1/22 Email requesting an increase to the Superintendent's Proposed budget.
- 1/22 Email requesting that the BoE adopt the Superintendent's Proposed Budget as is.
- 1/22 Email expressing disapproval for the Superintendent's proposed budget. Writer requests further investigation into line item increases.

Town of Tolland, CT

21 Tolland Green, Tolland CT 06084

Birch Grove Building Committee

MEMO

To: Tolland Town Council
Michael Rosen, Town Manager
Tolland Board of Education
Walter Willett, Ph.D, Superintendent of Schools

From: Katie Murray
Chair, Birch Grove Building Committee

Date: January 28, 2020

Subject: January 2020 Report on the Status of the Birch Grove Primary School Project

Design of the New School

- Design of the new school is complete.
- Phase 3 Construction Documents - which include interior, exterior, playscape and landscaping specifications - were issued by the Project Architect, JCJ on 1/20/2020.
 - These documents will be reviewed and approved by:
 - Board of Education,
 - Building Committee,
 - Project Architect / Engineering firm,
 - Superintendent, and
 - Town officials for approval of various codes and standards.
- Approval deadline is 2/12/2020.
- On 2/13/2020 at 9am, JCJ will present the complete and approved Construction Documents to the Office of School Construction Grants & Review (OSCGR) for their review and approval.
- Phase 4: Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (FF&E) and Phase 5: Technology design will be finalized at the end of 2020.

Budget

Overall Project

- The Town has contracts with JCJ (architecture/design), D'Amato (construction) and CAP (owner's representative), all within the total project budget of \$46 Million.
- All initial budgets were drafted by the State OSCGR, and the construction budget was estimated based on square footage and the original Birch Grove School building.

Town portion

- There are some town-related costs (bonding, insurance, Testing & Special Inspections, etc), which are included the \$46M total project budget.
- We also have a modest contingency within the Town budget for unanticipated costs.

Construction portion

- D'Amato has presented a Schedule of Values - a defined break-down for the work as designed by the Architect - for Concrete and Site Work.
- D'Amato has not had sufficient information of the building details to cost out the remainder of the project.
- With the publication of Phase 3 Construction Documents on 1/20/2020, D'Amato can now begin compiling a realistic estimate, which will be compiled by 2/11/2020, and will be presented to the Building Committee on that date.
- OSCGR has been reviewing the drafts of the Phase 3 Construction Documents and is confident that the school can be built as designed within the \$46 Million total project budget.
 - OSCGR will continue to review updates of construction estimates with D'Amato up through 2/11/2020.
- There is a contingency within the construction budget for unanticipated construction costs.

Town Requirements

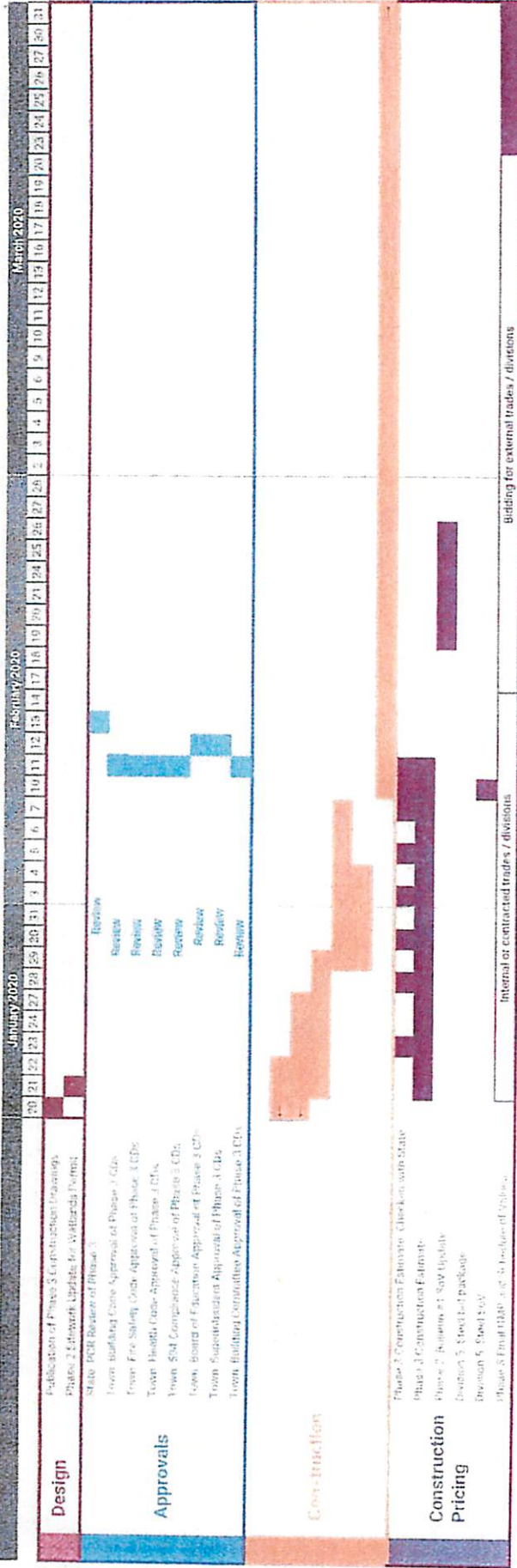
- Wetlands Permit
 - The project was issued a Wetlands Permit with conditions on 12/19/2019.
 - There are a few required changes to the Site plan to meet the conditions of the Wetlands permit, and JCJ has published a Bulletin to specify the details of these changes.
 - The Town must fulfill a number of the Wetlands Permit conditions and has provided details to the Inland Wetlands Commission of which condition items will be Town responsibility.
- Public Safety:
 - There have been requests from Tolland Public Safety with this project. The Building Committee and JCJ continue to work with Public Safety to ensure the project will result in a safe building within the overall project budget.
 - Emergency access road: The new building will have an emergency access road around the back of the building, providing emergency vehicles with 360° access.

- Hallway colors have been designed to assist in orienteering inside the building in case of an emergency.
 - Other safety measures as required by the State have been designed into the Building.
- Planning & Zoning 8-24:
 - Planning & Zoning issued 8-24 favorable review for the project in April 2019.
 - That was with the understanding that the new building / site would be substantially the same as the old building. Throughout design, we have made a number of changes which deviate from the old building layout and site.
 - Therefore, the Town Planning Office asked PZC for another 8-24 review.
 - I presented the updated design and site layout to the Planning & Zoning Commission on 12/23/2019 and the project was met with a favorable 8-24 review.
- Building Permit:
 - A foundation permit will be issued to authorize D'Amato to build the foundation as specified by JCJ Phase 2 Site, Steel & Concrete Construction Documents.
 - The building permit will be issued once the Phase 3 Construction Documents have been approved by the Town and State.
- Town Officials will review the Phase 3 Construction Documents between 1/20/2020 and 2/10/2020 and approve the plans and project manual. JCJ will work with and obtain approvals for the following items:
 - Building Code,
 - State Fire Safety Code,
 - State Health Code, and
 - 504 Compliance.

Construction

- Demolition of the old building is complete.
- Safe and appropriate removal of demolition debris is currently underway.
- Foundation and site work is scheduled to begin in February 2020.
- The School is scheduled to be ready for BOE staff move-in on 8/23/2021.
- Safety protocols have been put in place by D'Amato and reviewed by Town and BOE staff to ensure safe and appropriate delineation between the construction area and school / public area of the space.
 - D'Amato has a School Calendar, which will be updated as necessary, so they know which days school is in session and when the Summer Break begins.
 - D'Amato has been notified of the bus schedule and is coordinating deliveries and other high-traffic activities to occur outside of scheduled bus access times.
 - Construction items which impact the site outside of the Construction Zone will be scheduled with the Town and BOE to minimize impact to school operations and the public.
 - For example, driveway and parking lot construction.

Birch Grove Building Committee Timeline



TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Tolland Public Library
Library Program Room
Tolland, CT 06084**

SPECIAL MEETING – January 28, 2020

Members Present: Ashley Lundgren, Chair; Christina Plourd, Vice Chair; Anthony Holt, Secretary, Renie Besaw, Christine Griffin, Kate Howard-Bender, Jacob Marie, Karen Moran, Dana Philbin

Members Absent: none.

Administrators Present: Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent of Schools

Others Present: Public

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Lundgren called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2 minute limit)

Ms. Lundgren read the following statement: "Board of Education meetings are business meetings in public where the public has the right to observe the board doing business. Let us not confuse that statement. While the board wants the public to provide input, our budget discussions and deliberations must be based on data and clear understanding of the budget proposal and an exploration of the available options. These meetings are the only time the board members have together to debate and discuss the budget. Thank you to everyone for the civic engagement. We truly do appreciate and value it. In this budget cycle, there have been three community budget meetings, email correspondence, and portions of other meetings to collect the public thoughts. As much as we would love to have two opportunities for everyone to speak twice, the board needs this valuable time to work on this budget. Therefore, tonight's meeting will only contain one public comment section. We have received a host of correspondence concerning the placement of the public participation. The general consensus was that there is more benefit to the town voicing their thoughts after the budget discussion. I agree that would be a good idea.

In the very first meeting, I reviewed Robert's Rules. This is a reminder that under discussion, each member gets to speak if they have a say by raising a hand. Order will be given by going around the table. No one member should be able to monopolize the discussion. Everyone can speak once and will wait till all others have a chance to talk. Then a second pass shall commence.

In tonight's meeting, I will have one topic on the floor for discussion. That will be the only topic discussed at the time. Once everyone has shared views, another topic, for example, another line item will be chosen. By the end of the meeting, we need to give a direction to Dr. Willett as to what the board is looking for in the budget. My hope is that the goal will be, by the end of this budget discussion tonight, Dr. Willett will have the information and direction necessary to provide and adjusted budget for our February 6th meeting."

Ms. Plourd motioned to move Item B to G2 on the agenda, seconded by Mr. Holt.

Ms. Moran asked that they keep the public participation both before and after the budget discussion as not everyone in the public can stay for the entire meeting. She added that some people may be attending the Town Council meeting this evening and may come down to the Board of Education meeting later. She said limiting public participation limits the voices of Tolland residents.

Ms. Philbin agreed with Ms. Moran. She said public comments made before the budget discussion might spearhead solid conversations about the budget. She said they need to listen to and hear the public, adding that not everyone is able to attend the Round Robin discussions.

Ms. Lundgren said they cannot make an addition to the Agenda. Ms. Moran said they can move to continue it.

Ms. Plourd said they have not had a lot of time to dig deep into the budget and need that extra time to do so.

Ms. Griffin said they need to talk about the budget. She spoke in favor of holding one public participation after the budget discussion.

Ms. Philbin noted that there was a Special Meeting last year on February 4th which included a second public participation. She said they should consider the optics, as it could appear like they are not allowing the public to speak.

Ms. Besaw noted they also have additional meetings on the 6th and 12th of February, so there will be future opportunities for the public to speak. She said they have a lot to get through and was in favor of just the one public participation following the budget discussion.

A vote was taken on the motion. Ms. Lundgren, Ms. Plourd, Mr. Holt, Ms. Besaw, Ms. Griffin, and Mr. Marie voted in favor. Ms. Philbin, Ms. Moran, and Ms. Howard-Bender were opposed. Motion carried.

C. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

G.1 Budget FY21

Board members were asked to identify the line item numbers in the budget that they wished to discuss, and they went around the room from member to member compiling a list.

Dr. Willett noted that in a prior meeting he said he had requested a meeting with the insurance consultant at Lockton to review their trend. He said their trend is better than was anticipated and as a result they have picked up some additional funds. This is good news. He said he is grateful to the town and board staff for their work on this. Based on the updated trend information they are able to reduce their insurance line in the Superintendent's Proposed Budget by \$157,637. They are also able to reduce the Insurance H.S.A. by \$13,750. Non-Union BOE funded positions estimated wage adjustments will be reduced to 2% or \$21,481. He noted that 14 people typically receive no more than 2% and this does not include people on an ICEEE evaluation plan. There will be an adjustment to Line 111 of \$28,012. These changes result in a total savings of \$220,880 and allows the Board of Education some more flexibility.

Dr. Willett outlined four possible budget adjustments as a result of those savings: (1) Reduce the budget request to 1.32% (\$525,838); (2) Retain the positions (Special Education, Unified Arts, and 5th Grade) \$157,467 and then reduce the budget by \$63,413 to 1.71% (\$683,305); (3) Hire a Director of Curriculum (approximately \$138K) or Assistant Superintendent (approximately \$158K), bring back the Special Educator \$52,489, and use the rest (\$30,391) to lower the budget to 1.79% (\$716,327); (4) Retain the Special Education position (\$52,489) and use the rest (\$168,391) to lower the budget to 1.45% (\$578,327).

The Board moved to a discussion on the line items:

#111, 113, 118 – Salaries – Mr. Marie said he would want to see a rollover sheet. Ms. Plourd said she would want to see tallied salaries as they relate to the entire programs. She said she could not find the discrepancy between the school budgets and the staffing sheet. Dr. Willett suggested this is a question that should be submitted in the Q & A as it is quite detailed and something he cannot answer straight out at this time.

Ms. Howard-Bender said she felt it was dangerous and disruptive to the community if they try to lay blame and put more work on the Superintendent. She said they don't need to cherry pick items. Ms. Griffin said they have a \$40 million budget and salaries alone are over 50 percent of the budget so she is proud to be a bean counter. She said she wants a salary schedule and will continue to ask detailed questions. She said she wants to see schedules that tie to the numbers and will want to review that document. Mr. Holt said it is important to ask questions, as many as is necessary, and he credited Dr. Willett for doing this work. He said he looks forward to seeing the salary information.

#116 – Team Mentor – Ms. Moran clarified for board members that this is a cost to the BOE that used to be covered by the State, but is now an unfunded mandate. Dr. Willett said he is the facilitator for this, noting teachers have to go through five modules as part of the process and they have a mentor assigned to them. Reviewers and mentors must be compensated.

#202 – Health Insurance – Ms. Moran thanked Dr. Willett for being proactive in this area. She said they often plan around the health insurance number only to find out later in April or May that the number has changed. Board members all around were pleased with the effort and resulting good news.

#221 – FICA – Ms. Plourd said the trend was 550 to 600 over the last five years and is now going up to 727, but they are not adding staff. She said they may need to push to reduce the trend or recalculate. Dr. Willett said the spreadsheet offers a lot of answers, and he will look into it further. Ms. Plourd said she will submit a question on it to get a better explanation for who is not pension eligible and who they pay FICA for. Ms. Philbin said this may be getting too much in the weeds. Ms. Griffin said they need to look at it as they never went over 560 in past years, but are now at 727.

#250 – Course Reimbursement and Degree Change – Mr. Marie said this is a large increase and they should reduce it. It is \$30,000 up from \$20,000 and he suggested to keep it at \$22,000. Dr. Willett said the increase is the result of lane changes and it is a very difficult line item to project or estimate for as it reflects individual human decisions. Ms. Plourd said she felt they could bring the number down some. Ms. Moran said she was not comfortable with reducing it. Ms. Besaw asked for clarification if they are

reimbursing for the cost of a course or if this is for salary increases. Dr. Willett said the numbers are for changes to degree status, and covers those lane changes.

Ms. Besaw asked if there is any way to know who is in the pipeline moving toward a lane change. Dr. Willett said it is difficult and can catch them off guard because some masters' programs can be fairly quick to complete, and not all teachers share their plans for furthering their education. It is difficult to determine what individual teachers are thinking. Ms. Howard-Bender said it is necessary to provide some wiggle room for these expenses. Ms. Griffin asked if they could simply ask teachers if they have any plans to further their educations. Dr. Willett said they could, but many people make these decisions suddenly or on a whim. Others do not want to share that information. Mr. Holt said that the \$20,000 in the budget last year seems too low and suggested they raise it to \$30,000 or \$35,000.

#325 – Other Professional Education Services – Mr. Marie asked if Audiological Services falls under Special Education and if they could then take those expenses out of the 1 percent fund. Dr. Willett said it does fall under special education and it is a service they have to have, but they have to look at the nature of the fund and he is not sure they could do it. He said it is a good question for the matrix sheet.

Ms. Philbin read from the Board dashboard and she said it appears Literacy accounts for the bulk of the funds. Dr. Willett said if they don't have this, it could result in more outplacements, which is more costly for the town. Additionally, it is the morally correct thing to do for children. Ms. Moran said she would not want to cut this line item, as there could be legal ramifications. Ms. Plourd said this line item is for equipment and services and that she felt they could get the equipment from the 1 percent fund. Dr. Willett reviewed the process for the fund. He said you can't assume the money can just come out of it, as there are some conditions. He said it is a good question to ask, and he will need to research it first. Ms. Besaw said she supports looking into whether the cost of devices can be taken from the 1 percent fund. Ms. Howard-Bender said she disagreed. She said these individual devices are most likely articulated in the students' IEPs. She said they need to pay for the devices through the BOE budget. Ms. Griffin said there is a lot of money in the 1 percent fund and it won't hurt to ask if they can use it for those devices. Dr. Willett said they need to determine whether audiological services are an unanticipated special education expenditure. He said it does not refer to unanticipated technology. Ms. Philbin said it sounds like these are specific devices for specific students, and it is not like buying a large batch of iPads.

#342 – Legal Services – Mr. Marie said the increases appear to be due to outplacements and litigation. He is uncomfortable with the final number and would like to see it modestly reduced. Dr. Willett said they are running over on this line item this year and they may have a new trend. Ms. Moran confirmed that the line item includes consultation costs with Shipman & Goodwin. Ms. Plourd noted they are over by \$12K so far this year, and Dr. Willett said he expected that number will increase even more. Ms. Besaw asked if this looks like a shift in trend that would extend beyond next year. Dr. Willett said he anticipates the increases will continue.

#353 – CCM Energy Services – Ms. Moran noted that this line item is related to their geothermal projects' measurement and evaluation process. It helps them recoup some of the money from Honeywell. Ms. Howard-Bender said this appears to be outside BOE control.

#430 – Repairs and Maintenance Services – Mr. Holt asked why there is such a large increase. Dr. Willett said the 29.22 % increase relates to the Birch Grove Primary School project, such as disposal and waste disposal, snow removal, packing boxes and other costs.

Ms. Griffin asked why this is on the 20/21 budget. Dr. Willett said the costs will be incurred in the early summer before the fiscal year ends. Ms. Griffin said she would like to get some detail on the 440K in the budget, such as for security upgrades and paving. She asked if they have the money if they could push some of these expenses through the 1 percent fund as a capital or regular capital budget. Dr. Willett said the capital process wraps up in October. He said this is a collaborative process and what we put in our request is what we think can be actualized in capital. Ms. Griffin said she would like to see the BOE ask the Town Council if something can be capitalized. She questioned if there is anything in the 430 line item that we can push through as anticipated capital and she said she felt some repairs and maintenance costs are potential capital expenses. Dr. Willett suggested he will talk to Peter Sztaba, Facilities Director on this. Ms. Moran noted that some of the items were high priority items that the Town Council has let them pay for using other funds, rather than the Educational Reserve Funds. Ms. Howard-Bender said it may be time to revisit the difference between the 1 percent (ERF) fund and the tax stabilization fund.

#535 – Postage and Advertising – Mr. Marie said he would like to see this number stay flat. Dr. Willett said that some of their obligations related to state communications and sending reports and he understands these costs will increase. He said the biggest chunk of the expense is for the Business Office, and he wants to avoid creating any operational problems that might happen or even cascade if this line item is not adequately funded. Ms. Philbin said as both a taxpayer and parent she is concerned about some of the things that are tasked to the Superintendent. She felt this line item should be left alone. Ms. Griffin said while she agrees that 7K for postage is minutiae, she knows also that sports teams lose out because of a lack of funding. Dr. Willett reminded the Board that they do have some options now with the \$220,880 so they don't necessarily have to rob Peter to pay Paul for some line items. Mr. Holt said they ask questions not just to watch the bottom line but to better understand their budget.

#561 and #564 – Tuition – Dr. Willett said these are some of the largest and most complex line items, and that they have made a philosophical shift to what is morally right for the children. There is a shifting methodology. He said #561 refers to magnets, charters, and Tolland's transition program. He said the costs of outplacements are exponentially higher. Ms. Moran asked if tuition is going up. Dr. Willett said that in general, it is. Ms. Moran noted that their outplacements have reduced quite a bit in the last few years, and so it appears the things they have put in place are working. Ms. Griffin asked if Dr. Willett reviewed the amount due to transitions. Dr. Willett said the vast majority is for special education costs.

#641 – Textbooks – and #646 – Workbooks.- Mr. Marie noted these items show a significant drop. Dr. Willett said that whenever they can do end of year purchases that will save on the next year's budget, they try to do so. Additionally, there has been a shift from textbooks toward online resources. Mr. Marie asked if there is a feedback system for teachers if they are utilizing textbooks. Dr. Willett said supervisors do a good job of communicating with teachers, and, for example some books get outdated and they look for opportunities to sell them back. He said workbooks are always a consumable that

fluctuates. He said in general terms the focus is shifting to online resources and it is the supply companies that are shifting in that direction.

Dr. Willett discussed outplacements. He said in the 2015/16 year they had 35 outplacements, and the numbers each year have gone down so that we are projecting 13 outplacements for the 2020/21 year. Initiatives are providing excellent alternatives in the district. Ms. Moran said it is important for people to understand the significant improvements the Tolland education system has experienced. She noted many years ago there were a number of residents who came to a board meeting who were also educators in other school districts and they came with curriculum and other materials that Tolland needed. She noted how materials make programs and how much they make a difference in education.

Mr. Holt made a motion to extend the meeting beyond 10:00 p.m., seconded by Ms. Besaw. The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Griffin asked if the math workbook has changed. Mr. Willett noted the increase may be due to algebra as they are updating the program. He said these books and workbooks are expensive. Both Ms. Plourd and Mr. Holt spoke in favor of utilizing books and workbooks rather than iPads.

#731 – Equipment Non-Instructional – Ms. Besaw asked what this line item is for. Dr. Willett said this is for technology items such as hardware, blue-tooth units, firewalls, WAN equipment, etc. Ms. Griffin suggested they add this to the 430 review to see if any of it can be pushed through the 1 percent fund.

#733 – Furniture and Fixtures – Ms. Griffin said this amount is \$10K for tables and chairs. She said she felt this is a clear capital expense and she would like to put it through the 1 percent fund. Dr. Willett said typically these expenses are not looked at as capital. Ms. Griffin said they need to discuss this with the Town Council, and that they need to get it out of their operating budget. Mr. Holt said if they don't push some of these line items to other funds, then it may be time to revisit the verbiage of how these funds are characterized. They need to broach conversations with town staff.

Board members were each asked to name some things that they would like to see adjusted in the budget.

Mr. Marie said he would like to see the RAZ Kids program reinstated at Birch Grove Primary School. He would also like to see freshman sports not be cut.

Ms. Philbin said she supports hiring a Director of Curriculum or Assistant Superintendent. She would also like to see the Lexia and RAZ programs stay. She would like to see a focus on the reductions of staff and said she felt the majority of proposed cuts should be added back. She is in favor of the art programs at the high school, RAZ, Lexia, the Director of Curriculum, the Special Educator, and the 5th grade teacher.

Ms. Moran said she would prefer to start with a level budget. She is in favor of hiring an Assistant Superintendent, hiring a Director of Curriculum, and keeping sports.

Ms. Plourd said she was in favor of hiring an Assistant Superintendent and the curriculum as a whole. She said she is in favor of reducing the budget wherever they can

so long as it does not affect the children. She said right now she needs to better understand the salary schedule.

Ms. Besaw said she is in favor of hiring an Assistant Superintendent. She said she does not yet have enough information on the special educator to make a decision. She would like to use some of the saved money to reduce the overall cost of running the schools, and she would like to retain sports.

Ms. Howard-Bender said she would like to maintain their current level. She said she is in favor of hiring a special educator, an Assistant Superintendent, the 5th grade teacher, the art teacher, keeping sports and the RAZ program.

Ms. Griffin said she would like to see more information on the caseload for a special educator. She said she is in favor of hiring an Assistant Superintendent or a Director of Curriculum. She would like to keep the RAZ kids program and freshman sports. She said she needs to look through the salary numbers and would like to lower their budget if possible.

Mr. Holt said he favored Dr. Willett's Option 3 for the savings found in health insurance. He would like to maintain a 1.79 percent increase in budget.

Ms. Lundgren said she is in favor of hiring an Assistant Superintendent and keeping the RAZ kids program.

G.2 Public Participation (2 minute limit)

Kate Vallo of 80 Tolland Green said it is important to acknowledge learning styles and to make room for all voices. She said there should be a vision to support all schools and that vision should be reflected in the budget.

Deidre Goldsmith of 21 Marlboro Glade thanked Dr. Willett for his efforts and sacrifice he puts into the budget. She said she was in favor of hiring an Assistant Superintendent and that she was grateful to the Board members. She asked that they support and appreciate their Superintendent.

Liz Costa of 54 Josiah Lane read a statement on cultivation and the importance of continuing to invest in teachers and staff.

Colleen Yudichak of 12 Blueberry Hill Road shared her personal experience. She said both her children are in special education and have been since pre-school. She said they have made tremendous gains, particularly her son, and that she credits the support he gets from his team. She said it is important that they have the special education teacher position reinstated.

Jackie Cole advocated for a balanced, full budget. She said sports are important as a stress reliever for children, and she asked Board members to consider the impact when talking about reducing to trend. She said she liked the idea about using the 1 percent fund for some of their capital expenditures.

Bob Rubino of 296 Weigold Road said he was a little disappointed with the decision to move public participation to have it only after the budget discussion. He said he understood that the Board has a lot of work to do, but as a result the public got short-

changed. He said they should have focused on the big budget items first. He said they also should be shouting from the hilltops all the things that Dr. Willett has accomplished.

A fifth grade boy had planned to talk, but had to leave the meeting early. He and his mother Rebecca Risley reside at 103 Mountain Spring Road and she sent over a video of her son making a statement that was shared with the Board. Her son said he is a student at Tolland Intermediate School and that he feels all Tolland children deserve a quality education. He said the Board has a responsibility to students, teachers, and staff and he does not like to see line items being nicked and dined. He spoke in favor of keeping the RAZ program.

D. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Besaw made a motion to adjourn at 10:25 p.m., seconded by Ms. Plourd. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Annie Gentile
Clerk (substitute)

SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

ITEM: Superintendent Budget Recommendations 1-28-2020
 ITEM SUBMITTED BY: Walter Willett, Ph.D., Superintendent
 FOR BOE MEETING: 1-28-2020
 ITEM SUMMARY:

This item summarizes funds that I have determined to be available based on a follow up meeting with Lockton and a review of the Business Director's roll up. These funds can be considered as the Board of Education discusses the Superintendent's Proposed Budget of 1-8-2020 and provides direction to me for the Board of Education Budget that will hopefully be adopted on 2-12-2020. Please note that items in **red^** in the table below are funds made available for the Board of Education's consideration. **Total amount recovered is in blue-**.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

Item or Area of Fund(s)	Amount	Notes
Insurance	Reduction from the Superintendent's Proposed Budget (1-8-2020): \$157,637^	Based on updated trend information we are able to lower this line.
Insurance H.S.A	Reduction from the Superintendent's Proposed Budget (1-8-2020): \$13,750^	H.S.A. difference in what we plan to deposit to people's H.S.A.s
Non-Union BOE Funded position estimated wage adjustments	Reduced to 2%: \$21,481^ Note: 14 people typically receive no more than 2%. *This does not include people on an <i>ICEEE evaluation plan</i> .	*Staff on ICEEE can achieve performance based compensation of <i>up to</i> 4%. Seven employees in this group. Last fiscal year four of seven achieved 4% for about 7k.
Adjustment to Line 111 – Infinite Visions system calculation error	Adjustment: \$28,012^	In looking at the system printouts it occurred to me that a figure was not correct. Upon research, a system error occurred with respect to this one employee. It does not appear that this effects other records.
TOTAL	\$220,880-	

Possible Budget Adjustments:

- 1) Reduce the budget request to 1.32% (\$525,838).
- 2) Retain the positions (Special Education, Unified Arts, and 5th Grade) \$157,467 and then reduce the budget by \$63,413 to 1.71% (\$683,305).
- 3) Hire a Director of Curriculum (approximately \$138k) or Assistant Superintendent (approximately 158k), bring back the Special Educator (\$52,489), and use the rest (\$30,391) to lower the budget to 1.79% (\$716,327).
- 4) Retain the Special Education position (\$52,489) and use the rest (\$168,391) to lower the budget to 1.45% (\$578,327).

BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW:

N/A

BOE ACTION DESIRED:

Review and consider changes to Superintendent's Proposed Budget of 1-8-2020.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:

None

TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

Hicks Municipal Center
Council Chambers
Tolland, CT 06084

SPECIAL MEETING – February 6, 2020

Members Present: Ashley Lundgren, Chair; Christina Plourd, Vice Chair; Anthony Holt, Secretary; Renie Besaw, Christine Griffin, Kate Howard-Bender, Jacob Marie, Karen Moran, Dana Philbin

Members Absent: none

Administrators Present: Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent of Schools

Others Present: none

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Lundgren called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

B.1 Budget FY21

Ms. Lundgren read the following statement, "This is a reminder that the Board of Education meetings are business meetings in public where the public has the right to observe the Board doing business. While the Board wants the public to provide input, our budget discussion and deliberations must be based on data and clear understanding of the budget proposal and an exploration of the available options. These meetings are the only time the Board members have together to debate and discuss the budget. Under discussion, each member gets to speak if they have a say by raising a hand, going around the table. No one member should be able to monopolize the discussion. As a reminder, everyone can speak once and will wait until all others have a chance to talk. Then a second pass shall commence. I would like to start off tonight's meeting by giving each member a few minutes for an opening statement and where their position is. Then we will be discussing the three main topics. The three highlighted main topics are: personnel, programs, and reductions. There will be the one main topic discussed at a time. After the discussions on each topic, I will be conducting a straw poll of the members. By the end of the meeting, the straw polls will be used for a general vote to provide direction to Dr. Willett for the budget on February 12th."

Opening Statements

- Mr. Marie explained that the entire budget process has been about understanding needs vs. wants and very educational as a new member. He highlighted the following items that he liked about the Superintendent's proposed budget: supports special education services (in particular how it funds the LEAP program), supports the Tolland Business Academy and the personal finance classes at THS, supports Literacy How, and provides funding for the transportation contract. Dr. Willett and the Board have worked hard to find cost savings and the effort has been successful. Mr. Marie added that there are some programs that are slated to be reduced and he would like to add them back in if possible; however, the district is facing ECS cuts and a grand list devaluation. Further, there are several major bargaining agreements that are in place which will lead to contractual increases which will impact the budget. Additionally, he liked the proposed budget increase of 1.32% presented by Dr. Willett at the last meeting.

- Ms. Griffin thanked Dr. Willett for all of his work. She agrees with the 1.3% and would like to see the following items put back in the budget: the special education position and girls' volleyball. The latter due to there not being any rec or middle school options.
- Ms. Plourd commented that she is pleased not only with the options that have been presented and that they are having conversations not only about what could be added in but also work with the Town – the Town Manager asked for a 0% increase. A 0% increase is very difficult without sacrificing the needs of the students. Hopefully they can find a balance and provide direction to Dr. Willett. Ms. Plourd explained that she has heard a lot of good things about RAZ and in regard to the special education position she understands that while it may be something they can do without this year they would need to return the position next year. In turn, she is unsure if it is worth the "chaos" of not doing it and would like to see it added back. While she would like to have a curriculum director or assistant superintendent, with the structure Dr. Willett has in place it seems to be working and is an item she is willing to sacrifice. In regard to sports, she has seen positions recommended by Dr. Willett such as paraprofessionals and others. Perhaps by taking sports out it can alleviate some of these items and she is open to suggestions. In regard to cuts, they looked at line items that would not affect students or programs. While she would like to see a budget increase of less than 1.8% she is open to discussion.
- Ms. Besaw thanked Dr. Willett and everyone including Ms. Griffin who went through many of the line items. Ms. Besaw is pleased to see the offset is a little greater than when they last met and that questions and answers were addressed in public. She would like to discuss possibly keeping the special education position and is open on the other items including RAZ and sports – at least girls' volleyball. Further, she would like to consider Literacy How but is unsure if it is something that is needed this year.
- Ms. Howard-Bender commented that she fears in an attempt to be proactive toward a fiscally conservative new Board Dr. Willett has not put forth a spending plan that lays a path forward. He has given the Board a "bare bones", austere spending plan. He did not start with a plan that provides for level services anticipating the desires of the Board. The current 2020-2021 budget plan is not one that promotes moving forward. The Town and students deserve better. The education system in Tolland is one of the greatest assets and if the Board does not support education then it is not abiding by the oath of office or CGS 10-222 or doing its duty. The cumulative effect of multiple years has begun to take a toll on the schools with fewer services, larger class sizes, fewer programs, and more family financial obligations. If they continue on this path they will open themselves up to financial liability. Increases from the past few years have not kept pace with inflation despite static contractual expectations. Twenty four percent of Tolland residents are between the ages of 0 – 18 (data from 2018 survey) and is dependent on the Board for their readiness for college and careers. The residents have a right to expect this. Despite the challenges the Town has faced, Dr. Willett has created and implemented a plan to keep students with special needs in district netting a financial and human benefit. As people invest in their retirements to ensure their personal future, people need to invest in the schools to ensure the community's future. With anything less than a level services budget we are "kidding ourselves" and not setting up the community for success. It is not about the numbers but about the services.

Ms. Howard Bender read the following letter that was signed by 102 residents into the minutes: "We request that our Board of Education, the Board, focus on the quality of a Tolland education, make adjustments wherever possible to reinvest in ways that will provide for our current students. When we compare the opportunities that were provided to our students prior to emergency reductions of the summer of 2017, we recognize that there is more recovery needed. Some areas aren't currently sustainable and the slide in the quality of education will continue to decrease by suggested reductions this year. A budget is a plan far more than a laundry list of numbers. The Board is scrutinizing purchase, service, and supply accounts while the needs of our students have been deliberated far less. Variances were caused by the disruption of cuts not by overspending or from wrongdoing. To understand the context, especially for a new Board, one has to examine the complete picture not just the current line by line approach. Line item review must comprise perhaps 10 or 20% of the budgeting activities at most, not the current 100%. If need be, with the very limited time remaining, budget every non-staffing, non-special education budget line to trend and be done with it. Allocate the remaining time to asking, and this is bolded, to what degree are we providing for our students. We ask that the Board consider investing in Tolland schools by prioritizing the following into the school budget: (bulleted list) curriculum director or better yet an assistant superintendent of learning and instruction, special education case manager remain in place, art remains intact at the high school, freshmen sports remain in place, do not cut programs RAZ, Newsela, and the general ed implementation of Literacy How. The system has not recovered from the disruption just prior to the start of school in 2017. Sixteen point five general education positions were cut in 2017 see graph below. Six point seven special ed or student support additions enabled future savings in out of district special education. That plan is working and now paying back; however, general education has endured even further teacher reductions in more recent budgets especially impacting the middle school. At the same time the money saved from general education losses has been put into the Town's reserve bank account. That account increased over 20% by well over \$1 million dollars during the same timeframe funded by these cuts. Residents don't understand this because they have been told that through mailers that this Town's reserve bank account is decreasing. This discrepancy has been ignored in public meetings. Our general education now needs to recover. Concern over our students and the quality of education they receive should be the most important issue the Board discusses. After the budget has been adopted, please consider discussing how to improve the quality of education in Tolland by looking at programs and staff that have been lost. Consider the lack of technology at Birch Grove and how that impacts the class time spent on NWEA testing which is progress monitoring. Consider class sizes. Consider the impact of not having a social worker at every school especially in light of the mental health crisis. Consider increasing world languages, including at younger grades, to prepare our students for a global economy. Consider supporting one-to-one technology beyond the middle school to prepare our 21st century learners. These are what we can do to reinvest in our students. We must do better for our children and our Town to remain a place where families want to live. We the undersigned request that the Board of Education use the remaining time in the budget process to ask how can we improve the quality of education for all of our Tolland students." Ms. Howard-Bender commented that she agrees with what is being asked in the letter.

- Mr. Holt expressed his sincere appreciation to a few parties for their assistance during this budget process so far. To every person who took the time to voice their thoughts and opinions he thanks you. The messages helped identify facets that he needed to understand better when reviewing the budget. To Dr. Willett, thank you for being beyond willing to work through the myriad of questions and provide the short and the long answers. Without this information it would be impossible to make an educated decision. The mandate for the Board is to identify and fight for the needs of the district. He asks, how does this advance the academic success of the students? What aspects of the budget are best for the development of the district and through it the children? The members have reviewed those aspects of the Superintendent's proposed budget and the reductions in staff and services. Dr. Willett and his staff have been open in how they would adjust and what the effects would be. They have discussed the savings identified by the insurance professional and options. The best thing for the students is not as easy as adding back the items that have been removed. Dr. Willett's explanations show that the reductions were carefully chosen. The effects may have temporary pains but put them in the position to take the next steps. While the budget is focused on a single fiscal year, the vision is not. For this reason, he believes the conversation has to start with using the savings to reduce the budget request in the Superintendent's proposed budget down to the 1.17% presented by Dr. Willett.
- Ms. Philbin commented that Dr. Willett and his staff have been very forthcoming, flexible, and willing to accommodate and educate the Board members and it is appreciated. She appreciates all of the quality conversations that have taken place as well. In light of the insurance information provided at the last meeting, she would like to discuss how they can impact education by reinstating positions and programs and instituting new programs that will continue to drive a strong education system in the Tolland Public Schools. Ms. Philbin does not have a specific number but knows what she would like to see. She wants them to be fiscally responsible but they cannot have blinders and look only at FY 2020/21. They need to look at the ramifications and positive results for years down the road. The decisions made today will impact that. Ms. Philbin thanked everyone for communicating with the Board. Historical knowledge is paramount for them to understand. She is in favor of adding an assistant superintendent or director of curriculum based on need as well as the special education case manager, art at the high school, the Lexile programs, the RAZ program, and the general implementation of Literacy How. Ms. Philbin read a prepared statement which included the following: need to consider how they can impact the overall education of the children, her job as a Board member is to ensure a quality education for every person's child in Town, to improve and reinvest in the largest asset in Town – the school system including the tools and programs. Ms. Philbin thanked everyone for their communications and educating her through the process.
- Ms. Moran explained that it was her hope this evening that they would have conversations about the big picture and strategic plans for the future of Tolland schools, the gains that have been made, and how they will continue to move the district forward. The investments that have been made are working and it is important to focus on some of these items. She also wanted to discuss investments in LEAP, the Business Academy, and other pathways that have been previously discussed including the STEAM concept and what it looks like as part of the vision for the future of education in Tolland. Ms. Moran did not want to just focus on specific numbers this evening. She would like to discuss historical information. Going line by line and finding savings is understandable

but only one thing. She wants to discuss how they can invest the savings into the education goals for all of the students. She would like the Board to acknowledge that in 2017 they were being threatened with a \$3 million budget reduction. In response to this, and in an effort to be fiscally responsible, Dr. Willett and the Board had to make substantial cuts that they are still trying to recover from today. It did damage. It may not have been seen but it is there. An education system is directly linked to property values. They need to be cognizant that the school district has a long lasting effect on the community. The Board's job is to think about the students and be cognizant of the whole community and the asset of the schools. Ms. Moran presented information on freshman sports. This year the total number of students affected is 48 out of 183 in the freshman class (26%). Opportunity is being taken away from students and this is an item that connects them to the school and another adult. Sometimes this activity is the one thing that keeps students wanting to go to school. This can also be tied with efforts in regard to school culture and climate. Many students do not want to play in rec programs but typically want to play for their school. Also, in regard to art, Ms. Moran attended the art show at THS where she saw fantastic work. Many of the students are going to art school or minoring in art. In regard to the future and STEAM, it something they could invest in as an art pathway. It is sad when opportunities are limited. Art provides another form of learning and is an option where students can be creative. It is part of teaching holistically.

- Ms. Lundgren discussed her children's experience and noted that she is in support of the RAZ program at Birch Grove. In regard to freshman sports, athletics are exactly what some students want to do and there are no other girls' volleyball options available in the community. In turn girls' volleyball tops her sports list. In regard to special education, she would like to see the position added back based on her experience working in the schools.

Personnel

- 5th Grade Teacher
 - Mr. Marie – not in favor of adding it back due to declining enrollment
 - Ms. Griffin – not in favor of adding it back due to declining enrollment
 - Ms. Philbin- in favor of returning the position due to the dynamic of the 5th grade classroom and how some students need the structure/consistency
 - Ms. Moran – in favor of returning the position due to the possibility of having an influx of students and expressed concern with being in a position of fire/hire and its impact on morale and staff loyalty
 - Ms. Plourd – not in favor of adding it back based on data provided by Dr. Willett
 - Ms. Besaw - not in favor of adding it back based on data provided by Dr. Willett
 - Ms. Howard-Bender – in favor of keeping the position; instability is not good for students, teachers, or the district; next year another 5th grade teacher will need to be added
 - Mr. Holt – not in favor of adding it back based on discussions with Dr. Willett regarding student populations; when Dr. Willett brought the 5th grade teacher to the table for discussion the student populations were taken into account
 - Dr. Willett noted that the population may fluctuate up/down but class sizes would be approximately the same. He made this decision based on it being one that would have the least negative impact. A discussion took place.

- Unified Arts Teacher

- Mr. Marie – not in favor of adding it back based on the enrollment numbers not being very high based on the information provided by Dr. Willett
- Ms. Griffin – accepts that this may not be in the budget; even with the loss of this teacher they will still be able to offer many of the electives under the art and technology umbrella; graphic arts is not being cut – classes are being shifted to other departments; they may not have 3rd level of some classes but students will still have several opportunities to try various electives
- Ms. Philbin – in favor of adding the position back; this provides a flexibility, availability, and an opportunity to teach the whole student; while there will be classes, fewer will be available; some students will go to school for art and a solid foundation needs to be provided
- Ms. Moran – in favor of keeping the position; the loss of the position will may mean a loss of six classes including photography; she would like to see an investment in STEAM to keep Tolland competitive
- Ms. Plourd – not in favor of adding it back but if efficiencies were found she would consider it; she clarified that six sections (a combination of art and graphics) would be lost; the classes offered would be dependent on the background of who is hired
- Ms. Besaw – undecided; open to discussing it further; as the student population shrinks it may be difficult to offer all programs such as 3rd levels but hopefully it can be mitigated as best as possible
- Ms. Howard-Bender – in favor of adding the position back; the art program is advanced and she does not believe it is something students "test out"; it can be a professional vocation; concern about cutting the position due to the social and emotional aspect
- Mr. Holt – not in favor of adding it back; the payoff on the risk (classes offered are dependent on the strengths of the person hired) is not enough to return the position
- Ms. Lundgren – undecided; would like to see base courses at the 1st and 2nd levels to meet student needs but would not want to lose photography; Dr. Willett explained that it is based on the expertise of who is hired – they may not find someone with expertise in old school chemical photography but may find someone with a specialty in digital photography

- Special Education Teacher

- Mr. Marie – in favor of adding the position back; conversations have indicated that the position has tangible benefits; without adequate support it may affect the special and general education population; it will likely be needed in the following year
- Ms. Griffin – in favor of adding the position back; Dr. Willett and the previous Board have done a lot with special education and the LEAP program; she does not want them to take a step backwards
- Ms. Philbin – in favor of adding the position back; special education and LEAP are important and thriving programs; it would be a detriment to the program if the position was reduced; concerned that the person with the caseload would not be on site at the school when needed
- Ms. Moran – in favor of adding the position back

- Ms. Plourd – in favor of adding the position back
 - Ms. Besaw - in favor of adding the position back
 - Ms. Howard-Bender - in favor of adding the position back; she spoke to a staff member who said it would be problematic to provide services
 - Mr. Holt – not in favor of adding the position back; Dr. Willett's narrative was cited; Dr. Willett and his staff took into account that the budget maintains crucial programs that provide excellent educational supports to children in general and special education; during the round table discussion Mr. Holt questioned the administrators and while there would be effects every one of them was confident that they could adjust and the children would still be supported
 - Ms. Lundgren – in favor of adding the position back; it may be any position from K-12 and wants to ensure staff is available for the students
 - Dr. Willett noted that if a position was to be put back he would want it to be this one for maintenance of effort. It was selected based on it having the least negative impact and the ability to distribute caseloads
- Director of Curriculum
 - Mr. Marie – not in favor of adding the position; would like to wait a year before it is considered
 - Ms. Griffin – not in favor of adding the position; she believes one is needed but they need to review the roles and responsibilities of the curriculum supervisors; would like to see a reallocation of positions rather than adding an administrative position when they are discussing cutting teachers
 - Ms. Philbin – in favor of a director of curriculum or an assistant superintendent; does not want to see faculty cut; the position would take some of the workload off of the Superintendent; someone would be able to absorb ownership of tasks related to the position; the position would provide accountability and structure as well as align the curriculum
 - Ms. Moran – in favor of a director of curriculum/assistant superintendent of teaching and learning; the curriculum supervisors are invaluable and are doing a lot of work for the district and team up to address other areas; expressed concern regarding the risk if the Superintendent were unavailable
 - Ms. Plourd – in favor of the position this year only if one of the current curriculum supervisors would like to advance their career
 - Ms. Besaw – not in favor of adding the position unless it is a current curriculum supervisor who would like to advance their career; would not want to add an administrative position when cutting teachers; there is a benefit to having an overall person providing direction but since the position was lost they have had opportunities to fill the position but did not do so; would like to evaluate what is in place
 - Ms. Howard-Bender – in favor of the position – the district and Dr. Willett need this position; it will ensure all of the needs of the district are addressed including professional development, assisting with grant compliance, and assisting with maintenance of effort compliance
 - Mr. Holt – not in favor - they are discussing the budget, having conversations about reductions, and seeking efficiencies; cited that Dr. Willett stated that this may not be the time to look at expenditures such as this one; great curriculum

supervisors are in place; the Board should look to Dr. Willett to learn how they can assist him

- Dr. Willett expressed appreciation in regard to the thought the Board members are putting into this item. A title change would not make a difference with respect to the workload. The curriculum supervisors are crucial and he is willing to work without this position because he would not want to lose three interventionists in exchange. That said, he is willing to take on the responsibility but in turn asks for some compassion and understanding in regard to what the Board asks him to do and the timeline.

PROGRAMS

- Understanding By Design
 - Mr. Marie – not in favor of funding; other areas need services
 - Ms. Griffin – not in favor; does not want to see programs that directly affect students to be cut; Dr. Willett noted that they can do this on their own but would be done more efficiently if they work with the experts
 - Ms. Philbin – in favor of retaining the program
 - Ms. Moran – in favor of retaining the program; it positively effects students and their Portrait of a Graduate work
 - Ms. Plourd – not in favor of keeping the program; perhaps since this has already been done at the high school level a "train the trainers" or some other sharing of information could be done
 - Ms. Besaw – not in favor of adding the program back; she believes some of what was learned by those at the high school level could be shared with other staff
 - Ms. Howard-Bender – in favor of funding; directly effects quality of instruction in the classroom; supports mastery learning; high school and other levels are different mindsets; accreditation consideration
 - Mr. Holt – in favor of funding; looking toward and past accreditation; avoidance of cost
 - Ms. Lundgren – in favor of funding; proper implementation at the other levels
- RAZ
 - Mr. Marie – in favor of putting it back for Birch Grove; clarification that cost is approximately \$5K per school
 - Ms. Griffin – in favor of putting it back for Birch Grove
 - Ms. Philbin – in favor of putting it back for Birch Grove
 - Ms. Moran – in favor of keeping the entire program (Birch Grove and TIS)
 - Ms. Plourd – in favor of putting it back for Birch Grove
 - Ms. Besaw – in favor of putting it back for Birch Grove
 - Ms. Howard-Bender – in favor of keeping the entire program (Birch Grove and TIS)
 - Mr. Holt – not in favor of retaining the program
 - Ms. Lundgren – in favor of putting it back for Birch Grove
- Rekenreks
 - Mr. Marie – not in favor of funding; the district already owns several units
 - Ms. Griffin – not in favor of funding; the district already owns several units; research has indicated that units can be purchased at a lower cost

- Ms. Philbin – in favor of funding
 - Ms. Moran – in favor of funding
 - Ms. Plourd – not in favor of funding in the budget but supports researching options to purchase them as a one-time cost
 - Ms. Besaw – in favor of keeping funding for a lower dollar amount; Dr. Willett explained that a significant portion of the \$9,000 is for the teachers' units
 - Ms. Howard-Bender – in favor of funding; crucial for mathematical foundation knowledge; interested in finding a lower price
 - Mr. Holt – not in favor of funding; believes training and testing the associated skills may be able to be done with items already in the classroom
 - Straw Poll Result: in favor if cost remains at \$9K 3:6
 - Straw Poll Result: in favor if cost is reduced to \$4,500 3:6
 - Straw Poll Result: in favor if cost is scaled back to \$3000 8:1
- Newsela
 - Mr. Marie – not in favor
 - Ms. Griffin – not in favor; something similar can be done with other items in the curriculum
 - Ms. Philbin – in favor of the program; has seen phenomenal results with the Birch Grove students; part of the Lexile program
 - Ms. Moran – in favor of the program; a tool and resource for the educators
 - Ms. Plourd – in favor of the program
 - Ms. Besaw – undecided
 - Ms. Howard-Bender – in favor of the program; useful for all levels of readers
 - Mr. Holt – not in favor
 - Ms. Lundgren – in favor of the program

Mr. Holt motioned to extend the meeting past 10:00 p.m. Ms. Howard-Bender seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

- Freshman Sports
 - Mr. Marie – in favor of keeping girls' volleyball; would consider baseball and basketball if cost savings can be found elsewhere
 - Ms. Griffin – in favor of saving girls' volleyball if possible; while she does not want to cut sports, other items benefit all students
 - Ms. Philbin – in favor of keeping all three sports; some students thrive on sports
 - Ms. Moran - in favor of keeping all three sports
 - Ms. Plourd – not in favor; based on discussions on other items
 - Ms. Besaw – in favor of keeping girls' volleyball; would like to keep all but would need to find an offset to retain baseball and basketball
 - Ms. Howard-Bender – abstained; would like to save girls volleyball
 - Mr. Holt – not in favor; recognizes what it could mean but given decisions on literacy and other items he has difficulty in advocating for freshman teams
- Literacy How
 - Mr. Marie – not in favor of funding; believes can wait to expand it to the general population; some training for the general population is already being provided

- Ms. Griffin – not in favor of funding; understands that other programs are available; would consider for the following year if it is something that complements the other programs
- Ms. Philbin – in favor of funding; dyslexia is not just a special education problem; positive results have been seen with the program
- Ms. Moran – in favor of funding the expansion of the program; clarified the range of cost; \$60,000 would allow them to get a foothold in the general education population; helps identify students with dyslexia earlier; noted that everything listed with Literacy How at \$60K brings sums to \$276,698 without a director of curriculum; keeps proposed budget increase at just under 1.87%
- Ms. Plourd – clarified \$144K is in the budget for special education; clarified \$60,000 is an expansion of the same level of training to ELA staff district wide
- Ms. Besaw – undecided; has been an advocate for this program; it may be something to consider in future years
- Ms. Howard-Bender – in favor of funding at the \$60,000 level; the program is working in the special education population
- Mr. Holt – would support having this at the top of the list if efficiencies and additional savings can be found
- Ms. Lundgren – undecided; noted that the training is phenomenal; would like to see it in the general population

Additional Points

- Mr. Marie – would like to see course reimbursement decreased to \$30K; perhaps some of this savings could be used in other programs;
 - Dr. Willett noted that the line is not only for course reimbursement but also degree changes.
- Ms. Griffin – needs to review FICA
- Ms. Philbin – they have discussed cost savings, cutting, and reductions as well as how programs impact students; need to consider how they can impact students' education by reinstating positions and programs in addition to instituting new programs that will continue to drive strong education in the Tolland Public School system; disheartening to think of the staff reductions being considered – they mold everyone's future; people want the next generation to have a better education than they had; the budget which is presented will change the direction of the Tolland Public School system
- Ms. Moran – thanked Dr. Willett for all of his work and time; all of the items in the list can be retained; an education budget is a spending plan for the future; 1.87% is a responsible budget for Tolland for the Town's biggest asset – the education system; they are advocating for every family
- Ms. Plourd – expressed gratitude for what the district has even after a bad year and Dr. Willett putting forth low budgets; with those budgets many staff were hired that have made Tolland phenomenal; Dr. Willett's budget is very responsible; a reasonable budget can be presented to the Town Council
- Ms. Besaw – in agreement with Ms. Plourd
- Ms. Howard-Bender – thanked Dr. Willett for finding efficiencies in the amount of \$279,324; she has hope that the quality of education will continue to be very strong; the conversation began with what could be added back and that was faulty; she wishes this conversation about what students need took place a month ago; wished they did not

pick apart costs but what it looks like in the classroom; constituents are behind improving the quality of education for all Tolland students; supports using the \$279,324 toward the proposed cuts; cited the items constituents requested in the letter

- Mr. Holt – education is not free and an excellent education is even less so; he brought his family to Tolland during the hard times and was floored by the amazing things the districts offered even then; the proposed budget Dr. Willett and his staff have on the table is nothing short of wonderful; he believes the Board has the responsibility of looking at the details and seeking efficiencies

Straw Polls

	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
<i>5th grade teacher</i>	3	6	0
<i>Unified arts teacher</i>	3	6	0
<i>Special Education Teacher</i>	8	1	0
<i>Curriculum Director/Asst. Superintendent</i>	3	6	0
<i>Understanding by Design</i>	5	4	0
<i>RAZ (only BG)</i>	8	1	0
<i>RAZ (all)</i>	3	6	0
<i>Rekenreks (\$3K)</i>	8	1	0
<i>Newsela</i>	6	2	1
<i>F. Girls V.</i>	8	1	0
<i>F. Boys Baseball</i>	4	5	1
<i>F. Boys Basketball</i>	2	6	1
<i>Freshman Sports (all)</i>	2	6	1
<i>Literacy How Gen Ed (\$144K)</i>	0	8	1
<i>Literacy How Gen Ed (\$60K)</i>	7	2	0

Dr. Willett noted that the straw poll results in an estimated total budget increase of \$615,166 (1.54%).

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mary Rose Duberek, 37 Ryan Road, commented that it has been an eye-opening experience. She is the mother of a 6th grader who plays baseball, basketball, football, golf, and soccer and she understands pay for play. She asked that they provide an opportunity for families to be a solution as they are paying for it anyway. By cutting it they are not allowing families to be that

solution. It breaks her heart. Well-meaning parents coach every sport in the community but she wants her child to play for a coach that is not his buddy's dad or mom. They need structure and someone with whom they are not familiar. There is a big difference between freshman in terms of size and skill when compared to JV and Varsity. Further, they are taking a spot from someone who plays a sport but may not go further than the freshman level. A freshman sport builds skills and keeps the team competitive. She does not want her child to lose interest. Her son would rather throw a ball with his buddies than play a video game and she would like to see that continue. Lastly, she is the vice president of the TMS PTO. They run many fundraisers and need more support from the Board and the school's administration. They ran a fundraiser that raised very little money. It is disheartening because the teachers approach them looking for refunds and reimbursements and they would like to make the funds available. The Tolland Public Schools received a \$50,000 Department of Justice grant. Is this included in the budget?

Michelle Harrold, 256 Mountain Spring Road, commented that being a member of the BOE does not make you an expert in education and you do not know what is best for the students of Tolland. Some of your comments and recommendations this evening are nothing less than shocking. Ten thousand dollars is .00025 of the budget. You are allowed to ask for more. It does not have to be one thing over another. The community should feel great pride in contributing to the education of the children of Tolland. Educating children is an investment in the community that should be supported, not viewed as a burden. Nitpicking the pennies, without a view of the whole, while trying to achieve an unreasonably low increase is not supporting students or the quality of education we provide to them. Our students and the BOE staff deserve better than the negative impacts of the financial issues facing Tolland. When we continue to reduce opportunities to students, while the Town's reserve fund is increasing and also when a tax stabilization fund is created with education cost share money does not support a quality education. This is not investing in a quality education that our Tolland students deserve and that our community needs to make families want to live here. This is what the 102 and counting people who signed the letter have asked you to acknowledge and improve upon and I don't feel you have heard any of us.

Carl Rossow, 8 Hillcrest Drive, has resided in Tolland since 2007. He presented a sheet to the Board depicting, "#worthit" and inquired if the Board has seen it. He explained that it represents that "our students are worth it". This is why he is here. He is formerly from Ellington where he raised his family. He lives here as a proud grandparent of four children who have gone through the Tolland Public School system. He is very proud of each of them and the System for nurturing them and educating them. He is here to thank the Superintendent, the principals, the teachers, the staff, and all for their excellence, belief, love for young people and selfless giving. He is here on his own accord as a parent, a grandparent, and a professional educator. Of his four grandchildren one is at THS, another was awarded a scholarship by the Navy to extend his education beyond college, and one has been accepted to dental school. He is proud of each and every one of his grandchildren. He thanked the Tolland Educational System, the Superintendent, the teachers, the principals, and all of them for their dedication and standing by and with his youngsters. As an educator and parent of children with special needs he must also focus on those youngsters in the Tolland School System with special needs; that they each have the opportunity to reach their fullest potential - all children in our educational system from the very academically talented to the very challenged with special needs. He sees the Board's role as an advocate for everyone in the school system. He read information from the September 25, 2019 Board of Education meeting regarding the vision stated by the last

Board. He inquired if the Board members have the same vision. He added, advocacy for the students, for the principals, for the superintendent, and for the parents and listen to the parents.

Katie Murray, 8 Lisa Lane, commented that she hopes that when they publish the budget next week that the first page, first paragraph, explains to every single child in the school system why they are not worth it. Why are the children not worth a level services budget from this year? Ms. Murray spoke in regard to her seven year old son – a great kid who goes home excited every day about what he learned in school and the Board is asking her, as his mother, to send him to school next year where he will have fewer services than he has this year. Why is that ok? She asked that they answer that question for her as a parent and her child in the first page, first paragraph of the budget that they will vote on next week. Why is her son not worth it?

Lisa Burns, 214 Slater Road, reminded people in the audience that the Board of Education is there to help build a budget in response to what the State is providing. Maybe the anger should be more toward the State and Governor Ned Lamont and those people than some of the people sitting on the Board volunteering their time.

Tammy Nuccio, 71 Webber Road, thanked the Board and Dr. Willett for answering a multitude of questions and all the hard work being put in to make an educated and informed decision. She inquired if the Superintendent will get to any of the public's questions and if so when they will be posted. Thank you again.

Liz Costa, 54 Josiah Lane, commented that education pays; it does not cost. It is not a burden. She heard several times tonight that a person in a curriculum supervisor position can just move into an curriculum director or assistant superintendent as an 092. This proves to her that they do not know what they are talking about. She wrote a letter, listen to the educator. The art teacher has a trickle-down effect – one art teacher impacts an industrial arts teacher who will have to combine two computer classrooms. That person's assignment is also to teach keyboarding – this will go to a business teacher. It is a complete trickle down and the Board is only focused on art. There is no graphics III, only a graphic I two sections and graphics II one section. She directed them to look at the classroom and equipment that will not be utilized. There will not be any CAD III. Photography – old school and new should be taught. She heard a lot that "my children like it" but they are going to vote against it. She heard a lot also about supporting special education but there is a whole multitude of kids in the schools that need support. She would question freshman sports based on Title IX. She is unsure if anyone understands what all of the cuts made will mean. She would have expected everyone to ask for more, not less.

Andy Powell, 21 Clearbrook Drive, noted that his comments reflect that he is speaking only as a private citizen. In his time in being in Tolland for more than 20 years, he has seen a continuous decline in services available to students. His family has been fortunate that both of his sons have graduated and are in college. Part of how they got there was due to the dedication of the staff, teachers, and boards of education. In deference to the Town Council, the Board is not elected to be overly concerned about the cost of education. Members are to be a guardian of education, a custodian of education. The idea that they are spending one ten thousandths of a budget, while great to look at, means they have gone too deep in the woods. They need to look at the bigger pictures. The Board can ask for more. It is the Town Council's job to put that

forward to the town to make that decision. Talking about cuts become personal; it becomes very emotional. The reality is it is ok for the Board to be a leader and a guardian for education in the town and to ask for more - to dream big and do the additional work. Further, if the Board puts forth a budget that actually causes a teacher to pay out of their own pocket for services or supplies, he will actively campaign against you in the next election. No teacher should have to pay for supplies. Thank you for your time and dedication to Tolland education.

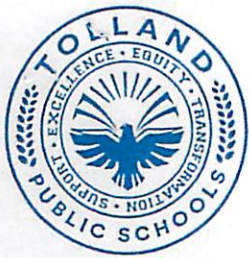
Colleen Yudichak, 12 Blueberry Hill Road, thanked the Board for their hard work. It is very difficult. She wished to echo Mr. Powell's comments. Further, she is pleased that the special education teacher was put back into the budget. The Board has another chance to revisit everything and vote on a higher budget. The Board does not have to decrease it. The job is to consider needs and increase it to address those needs.

D. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Besaw motioned to adjourn the meeting 10:54 p.m. Mr. Holt seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Pascuzzi
Clerk



TOLLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

51 TOLLAND GREEN • TOLLAND, CONNECTICUT 06084
860-870-6850 • FAX: 860-870-7737

OFFICE OF THE
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Walter Willett, Ph.D.
Superintendent

TO: Board of Education

H.2

FROM: Mark S. McLaughlin, Tolland Public Schools Business Director

RE: Monthly Financial Report for January 2020

Date: February 5, 2020

CC: Walter Willett, Ph.D. Superintendent of Schools

Please find attached the financial report for the FY 2019-2020 fiscal year. The month of January 2020 is the 7th month of the 2019-2020 fiscal year. The attached report is only a temporary financial snapshot identifying seven months of the FY 19-20 year. As with any financial report generated, not all purchase orders have been created, not all materials purchased and not all staff hired. This year's financial attachment is provided in an object format to clearly show the adopted budget and the YTD expenditures. This summary report provides the essential groups of accounts so the BOE can better understand the functional areas of the budget. The object line items follow the reporting format required by the State Dept. of Education. The line items show the approved budget, 7 months of expenses, encumbrances and available balances as generated through the financial software.

This report identifies, many line items such as salaries, health insurance, FICA/Medicaid & Social Security, retirements, legal and audit services, utilities, tuition, transportation, textbooks, professional services etc. have not all been encumbered or spent. This is normal for this time of year. The budget balance of \$797,066 will be converted to encumbrances or expenditures over the next several of months.

The attached January 2020 financial report shows an available balance of \$797,066 or 1.99% of the BOE's current budget. As previously stated, this amount will reduce over the next several months. It is important to understand that this available balance is a normal occurrence. Currently, the timing of budget spending for student needs and expense patterns are cyclical in nature. Health Insurances are booked after teachers return to school, substitute expenses start in September, special education student tuitions will continue to increase, utility transfer to the town is complete, transportation routes have been fully booked and instructional supplies will be spent as needed for the balance of the year. Some line items cannot be encumbered and will always have available balances. Accounts like substitutes, overtime, course reimbursement, consultants, unemployment compensation, workers compensation, and severance.

As part of the UISF agreement, the BOE transferred the energy budget to the town. The town pays the invoices based on the BOE funding and any residual balance that remains in the form of cost savings will remain in the BOE UISF reserve account.

In a typical year, the budget is built 18-20 months from implementation, based on the best know data and assumptions from the town, state of Ct, grants, interest rates, market conditions, contacts, negotiations, Department of Ed. mandates, and professional services etc.

The Budget for FY 19-20 was approved for \$39,975,605 only .84% higher than the previous year. The BOE is anticipating spending the allocated budget by year-end in accordance with CGS 10-222. Any balances that remain, as in the past, may be returned to the town or the BOE will request the balance be transferred to the Educational Reserve Fund after final approval by the auditors. Starting this year, the educational reserve threshold has increased to 2%. It is anticipated that the district will receive the first excess cost payment in February 2020 from the state. The second payment is due in May 2020.

The FY 20-21 budget cycle is underway. The Capital Improvement Plan is the first step in the planning process. The Superintendent has presented a Capital Improvements Plan to the BOE at the October 2019 meeting. The plan was forwarded to the town.

The "Initial Budget Development" for FY20-21 takes place in November and December. According to the budget calendar, the Superintendent has presented his budget during the January BOE meeting.

Tolland Public Schools

MM OBJ A Expenditure Report Summary (by OBJ - ???)

From Date: 1/1/2020

To Date: 1/31/2020

Fiscal Year: 2019-2020

☐ Subtotal by Collapse Mask
 ☒ Include pre encumbrance
 ☐ Print accounts with zero balance
 ☒ Filter Encumbrance Detail by Date Range

☐ Exclude Inactive Accounts with zero balance

Account Number	Description	GL Budget	Range To Date	YTD	Balance	Encumbrance	Budget Balance	% Bud
0100.0000.110.00.000.1	Salaries	\$22,383,307.09	\$2,609,984.79	\$11,824,855.37	\$10,558,651.72	\$10,282,458.96	\$276,192.76	1.23%
0100.0000.120.00.000.1	Substitutes	\$437,670.00	\$47,269.87	\$173,867.79	\$263,802.21	\$9,600.00	\$254,202.21	58.08%
0100.0000.130.00.000.1	Overtime	\$176,358.00	\$18,766.45	\$150,928.26	\$25,429.74	\$0.00	\$25,429.74	14.42%
0100.0000.150.00.000.1	Stipends	\$348,129.94	\$36,307.55	\$152,145.87	\$193,984.07	\$303,198.21	(\$109,214.14)	-31.55%
0100.0000.190.00.000.1	Pension/Severance	\$195,561.00	\$0.00	\$41,253.97	\$154,307.03	\$98,471.00	\$55,836.03	28.55%
0100.0000.200.00.000.1	Employee Benefits	\$567,750.00	\$243,250.00	\$530,677.45	\$37,072.55	\$0.00	\$37,072.55	6.53%
0100.0000.210.00.000.1	Health/Life/Disabl Ins	\$4,851,629.94	\$342,523.85	\$3,252,196.26	\$1,599,433.68	\$1,511,480.50	\$87,953.18	1.81%
0100.0000.220.00.000.1	FICA/MED/Soc Sec	\$693,223.97	\$72,047.44	\$336,865.51	\$356,358.46	\$252,934.11	\$103,424.35	14.92%
0100.0000.240.00.000.1	Retirement (ICMA)	\$251,884.43	\$28,971.04	\$137,107.88	\$114,776.55	\$93,819.03	\$20,857.52	8.28%
0100.0000.250.00.000.1	Course Reimbursement-Degree Ch	\$20,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$20,000.00	\$0.00	\$20,000.00	100.00%
0100.0000.260.00.000.1	Unemployment Compensation	\$56,681.00	\$2,555.00	\$14,653.00	\$42,028.00	\$17,997.00	\$24,031.00	42.40%
0100.0000.270.00.000.1	Workers' Compensation	\$265,612.00	\$0.00	\$202,847.25	\$62,764.75	\$67,615.75	(\$4,851.00)	-1.83%
0100.0000.300.00.000.1	Purch Prof & Tech Svcs	\$48,675.50	\$120.00	\$24,344.61	\$24,330.89	\$780.00	\$23,550.89	48.38%
0100.0000.310.00.000.1	Benefits Consultant Services	\$57,000.00	\$0.00	\$20,778.34	\$36,221.66	\$47,916.70	(\$11,695.04)	-20.52%
0100.0000.320.00.000.1	Prof Educ Svcs	\$239,271.00	\$30,193.50	\$88,998.41	\$150,272.59	\$115,492.16	\$34,780.43	14.54%
0100.0000.330.00.000.1	Professional Tech Svcs	\$34,482.00	\$1,061.70	\$10,452.71	\$24,029.29	\$3,840.35	\$20,188.94	58.55%
0100.0000.340.00.000.1	Legal/Audit/Consult Svcs	\$153,343.00	\$21,153.55	\$149,159.32	\$4,183.68	\$42,262.75	(\$38,079.07)	-24.83%
0100.0000.350.00.000.1	Tech Services	\$502,876.00	\$14,305.48	\$354,429.29	\$148,446.71	\$46,077.72	\$102,368.99	20.36%
0100.0000.410.00.000.1	Sewer/Water	\$34,762.00	\$0.00	\$34,762.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
0100.0000.420.00.000.1	Cleaning/Rubbish Services	\$135,080.00	\$5,764.62	\$38,375.34	\$96,704.66	\$39,359.10	\$57,345.56	42.45%
0100.0000.430.00.000.1	Repair and Maint Svcs (Facili	\$259,450.00	\$6,221.19	\$64,278.29	\$195,171.71	\$21,107.93	\$174,063.78	67.09%
0100.0000.440.00.000.1	Rentals	\$165,256.00	\$32,011.46	\$102,526.99	\$62,729.01	\$65,627.33	(\$2,898.32)	-1.75%
0100.0000.510.00.000.1	Student Transp Svcs	\$2,862,041.00	\$184,405.04	\$1,212,685.27	\$1,649,355.73	\$1,703,034.16	(\$53,678.43)	-1.88%
0100.0000.520.00.000.1	Property/Liability Insurance	\$202,427.10	\$0.00	\$159,559.01	\$42,868.09	\$45,750.50	(\$2,882.41)	-1.42%
0100.0000.530.00.000.1	Telephone/ Postage	\$57,905.00	\$13,871.38	\$37,345.21	\$20,559.79	\$22,331.35	(\$1,771.56)	-3.06%
0100.0000.540.00.000.1	Advertising	\$18,000.00	\$3,296.00	\$7,138.47	\$10,861.53	\$0.00	\$10,861.53	60.34%
0100.0000.550.00.000.1	Printing and Binding	\$18,405.00	\$1,805.00	\$5,593.72	\$12,811.28	\$748.00	\$12,063.28	65.54%
0100.0000.560.00.000.1	Tuition Educ Agency	\$2,163,282.00	\$287,910.25	\$1,600,700.67	\$562,581.33	\$1,315,128.95	(\$752,547.62)	-34.79%
0100.0000.580.00.000.1	Travel and Conference	\$33,942.00	\$7,932.32	\$41,969.14	(\$8,027.14)	\$20,850.66	(\$28,877.80)	-85.08%
0100.0000.590.00.000.1	Public Officers & State Troops	\$92,994.00	\$3,395.22	\$31,226.95	\$61,767.05	\$42,939.09	\$18,827.86	20.25%
0100.0000.600.00.000.1	General Supplies	\$191,452.00	\$8,937.37	\$42,784.08	\$148,667.92	\$38,511.83	\$110,156.09	57.54%
0100.0000.610.00.000.1	Instr Supplies/Mat'ls	\$367,242.00	\$33,569.67	\$182,538.55	\$184,703.45	\$57,686.77	\$127,016.68	34.59%
0100.0000.620.00.000.1	Energy	\$1,621,810.00	\$12,122.44	\$1,498,715.10	\$123,094.90	\$120,360.90	\$2,734.00	0.17%
0100.0000.640.00.000.1	Textbooks	\$127,861.70	\$8,661.40	\$45,474.64	\$82,387.06	\$4,391.75	\$77,995.31	61.00%
0100.0000.650.00.000.1	Films and Videos Supl	\$550.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$550.00	\$500.00	\$50.00	9.09%
0100.0000.660.00.000.1	Computer Software	\$81,677.72	\$0.00	\$43,688.80	\$37,988.92	\$200.00	\$37,788.92	46.27%
0100.0000.690.00.000.1	Misc Supplies	\$55,286.00	\$952.22	\$14,968.86	\$40,317.14	\$15,214.36	\$25,102.78	45.41%
0100.0000.730.00.000.1	Equip Instruct - New	\$150,208.00	\$1,118.15	\$86,288.68	\$63,919.32	\$5,256.77	\$58,662.55	39.05%
0100.0000.760.00.000.1	Equip - Spec Ed - Instr - New	\$1,590.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,590.00	\$0.00	\$1,590.00	100.00%
0100.0000.810.00.000.1	Dues and Fees	\$52,928.00	\$1,786.74	\$46,018.90	\$6,910.10	\$3,495.21	\$3,414.89	6.45%
Grand Total:		\$39,975,605.39	\$4,092,270.49	\$22,761,999.96	\$17,213,605.43	\$16,416,538.90	\$797,066.53	1.99%

End of Report

SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

ITEM: Birch Grove Drawing Package Approval

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

FOR BOE MEETING: February 12, 2020

ITEM SUMMARY:

The Birch Grove Drawings / Specifications for Phase 3 of the Birch Grove Primary Project were made available on 1/21/2020 (as well as previous iterations on 1/6/2020) along with the "Bulletin No.1" document from JCJ Architects. The discussion in the Board of Education meeting 2/12/2020 will constitute the second such discussion (the first being January 22, 2020 – Agenda Item #G3).

Accordingly, the SCG-042 form now requires approval.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

Project funding not to exceed 46 million dollars.

BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW:

N/A: Working closely with the State Office of School Construction Grants.

BOE ACTION DESIRED:

Motion: Move H2 to action item as K.2. Second. Discussion. Vote.

K.2 Proposed Birch Grove Drawing Package Approval

Motion:

Motion to approve the final Birch Grove Primary School Phase Three Plans and Project Manual(s) as prepared for bidding and dated January 20, 2020, not to exceed \$46 million total project cost, for State Office of School Construction Grants and Review Project Number 142-0083N. This motion authorizes the Chair of the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools to sign State Form SCG-042 - Request for Review of Final Plans.

Second. Discussion. Vote.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:

SCG-042 Request for Review of Final Plans (DAS-OSCG&R) Form.



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES (DAS)

Office of School Construction Grants & Review (OSCG&R)

REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF FINAL PLANS FORM SCG-042

STATUTORY REF.: C.G.S. Sections 10-282, 10-283, 10-291, 10-294, 10-292

DISTRICT NAME: Tolland	FACILITY NAME AND ADDRESS: Birch Grove Primary School 247 Rhodes Road, Tolland, CT 06084	STATE PROJECT NUMBER: 142-0083 N PHASE NUMBER: Phase 3 of 5: Building, Landscape Architecture, Playscape
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Estimated date* to begin construction 10/01/2019 Estimated date to complete construction 8/31/2021

* NOTE: Construction must begin within 2 years of grant commitment date to maintain grant eligibility.

Certification of Approval dates:

	Final Plans & Prof. Cost Estimate	Site Approval (if applicable)
Local Board of Education	<u>02 / 12 / 2020</u>	<u> / /</u>
School Building Committee	<u>02 / 11 / 2020</u>	<u> / /</u>

We hereby certify that these final plans and project manual(s) as prepared for bidding and dated 01/20/2020, not to exceed \$46 million total project cost, have been reviewed and approved for this project on the dates shown above.

For the Town or Regional Board of Education:

Chairperson's Name (Type or print)	Signature	Date
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For the School Building Committee:

Chairperson's Name (Type or print)	Signature	Date
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** Signature dates cannot precede the date on the submitted plans.

For the Project Architect/Engineering Firm:

JCJ Architecture Firm Name (Type or print)	Signature	Telephone No.
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We hereby request a review of the final Project Plans, Project Manual, Ineligible and Limited Eligible Costs Worksheet (ICW) FORM SCG-4000, and professional cost estimate as noted above. Copies of all the above referenced documents are either attached, or available.

Dr. Walter Willett Superintendent's Name (Type or print)	Signature	Date
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NOTE: NO PHASE OF THIS SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROJECT SHALL GO OUT TO BID, AND NO PURCHASE ORDER OVER \$10,000.00 SHALL BE ISSUED, UNTIL YOU HAVE RECEIVED WRITTEN NOTIFICATION FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES (DAS) INDICATING APPROVAL OF FINAL PLANS, PROJECT MANUAL, AND COST ESTIMATE.

FORM SCG-042 Request for Review of Final Plans

State Project No. 142-0083 N

Project Name: Birch Grove Primary School, Phase 03: Building, Landscape Architecture, Playscape

Name of Contact Person: Bruce Kellogg	Telephone (860) 240-9316	Date: 02/13/2020
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Certifications of Local Approval:		
I certify that I have local jurisdiction over the State Building Code and that the plans and project manual dated <u>01/20/2020</u> for the above referenced project comply with all applicable building codes.		
Jim Paquin		
Local Building Official's Name	Signature	Date
I certify that I have local jurisdiction over the State Fire Safety Code and that the plans and project manual dated <u>01/20/2020</u> for the above referenced project comply with all applicable fire codes.		
Robert DaBica		
Local Fire Marshal's Name	Signature	Date
I certify that I have local jurisdiction over the State Health Code and that the plans and project manual dated <u>01/20/2020</u> for the above referenced project comply with all applicable health codes.		
Holly Hood		
Local Health Official's Name	Signature	Date
I certify that I have local jurisdiction over Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 , and the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS). I further certify that the plans and project manual dated <u>01/20/2020</u> for the above referenced project comply with all applicable accessibility codes.		
Peter Sztaba		
Local Federal 504 Official's Name	Signature	Date

- NOTES:**
- 1.) THE CERTIFICATIONS OF LOCAL APPROVAL NOTED ABOVE MUST BE OBTAINED, AND ARE REQUIRED TO BE PROVIDED, PRIOR TO RECEIVING APPROVAL-TO-BID BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES (DAS) FOR THIS PROJECT. IF THESE CERTIFICATIONS CANNOT BE OBTAINED LOCALLY, PLEASE CONTACT THE DAS, OFFICE OF SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION GRANTS & REVIEW (OSCG&R) FOR ASSISTANCE.
 - 2.) THE OFFICE OF SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION GRANTS & REVIEW (OSCG&R) APPROVED PROJECT PLANS, PROJECT MANUAL AND COST ESTIMATE MUST BE KEPT ON FILE AT THE LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION OFFICE UNTIL THE FINAL GRANT PAYMENT HAS BEEN MADE AND THE DAS AUDIT IS COMPLETE ON THIS PROJECT.
 - 3.) ORIGINAL SIGNATURES ARE REQUIRED ON THIS FORM. IF ORIGINAL SIGNATURES ARE NOT AVAILABLE AT THE PLAN REVIEW MEETING, MAIL OR OVERNIGHT DELIVER THIS COMPLETED FORM TO:
The Office of School Construction Grants & Review
450 Columbus Blvd., Suite 1503
Hartford, CT 06103

SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

ITEM: First Reading of Policy 9060 Modifications

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

FOR BOE MEETING: February 12, 2020

ITEM SUMMARY:

Policy 9060 Bylaws was discussed in the January 22, 2020 meeting of the Policy Committee. The Policy Committee deliberated with respect to the current wording, and whether that wording was sufficient with respect to the difficulty in suspending BOE policies without prior public notification. A change was made to require a greater level (two thirds rather than majority vote) of support in order to suspend a Board policy or policies for a specified purpose and for a limited time. This change also makes the language consistent with the level of support needed to suspend By-Laws.

Policy 9060 is attached with the *addition in italics* and the current language to remove as ~~strike out~~.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

N/A

BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW:

N/A

BOE ACTION DESIRED:

First reading of the proposed change.

Eventual move to action when desired.

Motion to approve changes to Policy 9060 as presented in item H.3. Of the 2-12-2020 Board of Education meeting, and the related attachment.

Second. Discussion. Vote

SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:

Policy 9060 Bylaws (with suggested changes)

TOLLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Tolland, Connecticut

BOARD POLICY

REGARDING: Suspension of Policies, Bylaws or Administrative Regulations

Number: 9060
Bylaws

Approved: 2/28/01

Revised:

1. Policies and bylaws of the Board shall be subject to suspension for a specified purpose and limited time by:
 - A. A majority vote of all members of the Board in attendance at a meeting, and
 - B. Provided that prior notification of such a proposed suspension has been described in writing in the call of the meeting.
2. Policies of the Board of Education shall be subject to suspension for a specified purpose and limited time upon a ~~majority vote~~ **two-thirds vote** of all members of the Board when no such written notice has been given.
3. Bylaws of the Board of Education shall be subject to suspension for a specified purpose and limited time upon a two-thirds votes of all members of the Board when no such written notice has been given.
4. Administrative regulations of the Board may be suspended for a specified purpose and limited time:
 - A. By the Superintendent, who shall give notice to the Board of the reason for the suspension and the time period of the suspension.
 - B. The Board may direct the Superintendent to suspend administrative regulations for a specified purpose and limited time upon majority vote of all members in attendance at a meeting, provided that prior notification of such proposed suspension has been described in writing in the call of the meeting, or upon majority vote of all members of the Board when no such written notice has been given.

SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

ITEM: Second Reading of Policy 9190 Modifications

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

FOR BOE MEETING: February 12, 2020

ITEM SUMMARY:

The Policy committee reviewed Policy 9190 "Committees" during the meetings of December 5, 2019 and January 7, 2020. In the process of reviewing this item, draft changes were made to Policy 9190 that included an addition of E.5 as a standing "Curriculum" committee and language for the committee's charge under section 9. See ~~strikeouts~~ and *additions* in ~~strikeout~~ and *italics* fonts respectively in the attached draft document.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

N/A

BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW:

S&G policy templates reviewed.

BOE ACTION DESIRED:

Second reading of Policy 9190 revision.

Move to action

Motion: Motion to adopt changes to Policy 9190 as presented in the Board of Education meeting of January 22, 2020 adding a standing Curriculum committee with the charge as defined in section 9 of said policy.

Second. Discussion. Vote.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:

BOE Policy 9190 Committees Draft

TOLLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Tolland, Connecticut

BOARD POLICY

REGARDING: Committees

Number: 9190
Bylaws

Approved: ~~10/9/02~~
Revised: ~~11/14/12~~
Revised: ~~2/12/14~~

1. The Board shall act as a committee of the whole on all matters coming before it except that special committees for the consideration or investigation of certain problems may be created by vote of the Board.
 - A. Such special committees shall submit their reports at such regular meetings of the Board as may be determined, and when such reports have been submitted and accepted by the Board, shall be discharged.
 - B. All special committee reports affected Board policy shall be submitted in writing.
2. Meetings of committees shall be posted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. A record shall be maintained by the chairperson of each committee of each meeting, which shall include the names of committee members in attendance, listing of topics discussed and committee recommendations.
3. The Superintendent shall notify all Board members of committee meetings.
4. Standing Committees

As deemed necessary, the Board of Education may establish standing committees from among its membership to make recommendations for board action. The following rules will govern the appointment and function of such committees which shall:

- A. Be established through action of the Board of Education;
- B. have their members appointed by the Board Chairperson;

- C. be informed in writing at the time of committee formation of committee purpose, functions, and duties;
 - D. make recommendations for board action, but it may not act for the board except in those instances where authority to act has been specifically delegated to the committee by the board;
 - E. The standing committees of the Board of Education are:
 - 1. Contract Negotiations
 - 2. Policy
 - 3. Finance And Facilities
 - 4. Communications and outreach
 - 5. Curriculum
5. Contract Negotiations Committee - charged with contract negotiations with the various district bargaining units and recommending contractual amendments to the Board of Education.
- 1.0 Service on the negotiations committee
 - 1.1 Board members shall not serve on the negotiations committee if a member of their immediate family (spouse, parents, children) is a member of a Connecticut organization with whom the board negotiates or if there is an appearance of a conflict of interest.
 - 1.2 All negotiations committee members are required to disclose to the chair if their status changes in regards to section 1.1.
 - 2.0 Disclosure
 - 2.1 All board members shall disclose immediate (spouse, parents, children) family memberships in any organization with whom the board negotiates. These disclosures shall be recorded in the meeting minutes of the second meeting of the board and updated as necessary when the status changes. Board members are encouraged to withdraw themselves from contract ratification votes if a conflict of interest exists.
6. Policy Committee - charged with reviewing, developing and recommending amendments to existing policies and adopting new policies.
7. Finance and Facilities Committee - charged with reviewing fiscal, operational and facility related matters as may come to the committee from time to time.

The Board Chairperson and the Superintendent of Schools shall be ex-officio members of all standing committees.

8. Communications and outreach committee – charged with increasing opportunities for two-way communication between the board of education and other municipal boards, commissions, and committees as well as the general public at large.

9. *Curriculum committee – charged in cooperation with the Superintendent and/or her or his designee(s), with review, research, consideration, and endorsement of changes to the curriculum as well as to stay apprised of the effectiveness of current programs. Revisions made by the Board of Education standing committee would pertain to resource allocations and not the methods of planning, instruction, assessment and pedagogy. Curriculum is developed, modified, approved, and implemented by professional educational administrators and teachers employed under the direction of the Superintendent and through district/school curriculum committees and processes established by the Superintendent and his/her designees.*

Legal reference: Connecticut General Statutes
1-7 through 1-21k Freedom of Information Act.

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
FIRE TRAINING CENTER – 191 MERROW ROAD
JANUARY 18, 2020 – 9:00 A.M.

Council Members Present: Tammy Nuccio, Chair, Steven Jones, Vice-Chair, Lou Luba, Brenda Falusi, Kurt Schenher, John Reagan, Robert Abbate

Council Members Absent: None

Others Present: Michael Rosen, Town Manager, John Littell, Fire Chief, Carl Dojan, Deputy Fire Chief

- 1) **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 9:02 AM.
- 2) **New Business:** A site tour was taken of the Fire Training Facility, Station 140, Station 240, Station 340 and Station 440.
- 3) **Adjournment:** Lou Luba moved to adjourn the meeting; Seconded by Brenda Falusi at 11:30 AM. All were in favor.

Tammy Nuccio, Chair

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL
HICKS MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER
TOWN MANAGER'S OFFICE
JANUARY 28, 2020 – 6:30 PM

Council Members Present: Tammy Nuccio, Chair; Steven Jones, Vice Chair; Lou Luba, John Reagan, Kurt Schenher

Council Members Absent: Robert Abbate, Brenda Falusi

Others Present: Michael Rosen, Town Manager, Mike Wilkinson, Director of Administrative Services, Pat McHale, Town Labor Attorney

- 1) **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.
- 2) **New Business:**
 - a. S. Jones motioned, seconded by J. Reagan, to go into Executive Session to discuss Union Negotiations. The Executive Session concluded at 6:46 PM.
- 3) **Adjournment:** S. Jones motioned, seconded by L. Luba, to adjourn at 6:46 PM.

Tammy Nuccio, Chairman

**TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL
HICKS MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER
6th FLOOR COUNCIL ROOM
January 28, 2020 – 7:00 P.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tammy Nuccio, Chair; Steven Jones, Vice Chair; Brenda Falusi (arrived at 7:23 p.m.), Lou Luba, John Reagan, Kurt Schenher

MEMBERS ABSENT: Robert Abbate

OTHERS PRESENT: Michael Rosen, Town Manager; Bev Bellody, Director, Human Services; Lisa Hancock, Director, Finance & Records; Nancy Dunn, Assistant Director, Human Services; Michael Wilkinson, Director of Administrative Services

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Nuccio called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Recited
3. **MOMENT OF SILENCE:** A moment of silence was held.
4. **PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS:** none
5. **PUBLIC PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** *(on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council) (2 minute limit)* - none
Matt Sexton, 75 Woodfields Drive, posed questions in regard to agenda item 8.4. He inquired if the Wilbur Cross parcel has been appraised and commented that if it is to be used for economic development then it must have some value. Secondly, as he reads the Tolland Wetlands Conveyance 8-24, abutters and others have the rights to bid on the property. Is this correct? *Ms. Nuccio responded that this is correct but not with this piece of land because it has to be used for economic development per the contract that was signed with the State of Connecticut.* Mr. Sexton asked if then it should have gone out to bid to other developers. Further, he inquired if the sequence of steps outlined in the Town Charter and the Town Policies Document has been followed properly for this proposed sale? What is the purpose of the proposed sale and what is it going to be used for? Has the sale proposal been submitted to the Preliminary Commission? It appears to be required by the state statute. Has the conveyance been discussed with the Board of Finance and is it a budget line and if so, has the Town Council or the auditor signed off on it?
6. **PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS** - none
- 7a. **REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES RESPONSIBLE TO THE COUNCIL**
 - 7a.1 Overview of upcoming goals for the Economic Development Commission
Mr. Todd Longo, Chair of the Tolland Economic Development Commission, provided his background, that of the Commission, and noted the Commission's three main goals for 2020/2021:
 - Develop Tolland's brand and distribution channels
 - Work with the Town Council to arrive at a brand
 - Further engage and re-engage with existing businesses in Town
 - 7a.2 Update on Birch Grove Building Committee
Katie Murray, Chair of the Birch Grove Building Committee, updated the Council on the status of the Birch Grove Primary School Project.
Updates are available via the link on the Town's website.

7b. REPORTS OF TOWN COUNCIL LIAISONS

- Land Acquisition – did not meet
- Sustainable CT – will meet next month
- Complete Count Committee for the 2020 Census – a review of the January 28th meeting was provided by Ms. Falusi
- Blight Review Committee – a review of the meeting was provided by Ms. Falusi
- Tourism – a review of the meeting was provided by Ms. Falusi
- Planning and Zoning Commission – a review of the meeting was provided by Ms. Falusi
- Water Commission - a review of the January 22nd meeting was provided by Mr. Jones
- Conservation Commission – a review of the January 23rd meeting was provided by Mr. Jones
- Water Pollution Control Authority - a review of the January 21st meeting was provided by Mr. Reagan
- Birch Grove Building Committee – Mr. Luba referred to Ms. Murray's presentation
- Board of Education – a review of the January 22nd meeting was provided by Mr. Luba and Ms. Nuccio
- Board of Education – a review of the January 15th budget workshop was provided by Ms. Nuccio
- Eastern Highland Health District – a review of the January 16th meeting was provided by Ms. Nuccio

8. NEW BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS):

- 8.1 Presentation and discussion of 2018-2019 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report
Mr. Rosen introduced Ms. Vanessa Rossitto, Audit Partner, BlumShapiro.
Ms. Rossitto presented a summary of the Town of Tolland, June 30, 2019 Audit.
A brief question and answer period followed.
- 8.2 Consideration of a resolution to authorize the submission of an application for the Connecticut State Opioid Response Initiative (SOR) Mini Grant in the amount of \$5,000. Grant applications are due by January 31, 2020.
Ms. Dunn summarized the grant's purpose, how it is administered, and the required deliverables. She noted that the SOR funding is awarded on a competitive basis. A brief discussion followed.

Mr. Jones motioned to authorize the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Tolland Town Manager, and in his absence the Acting Town Manager, is hereby authorized to make, execute and approve on behalf of the Town of Tolland the FY2020 Connecticut State Opioid Response Initiative (SOR) Mini Grant application, offered by the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), for funding and for any subsequent amendments and modifications, between the Town of Tolland and DMHAS/SAMHSA or their administering organization, AMPLIFY, Inc..

Ms. Falusi seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

- 8.3 Discussion with Trooper Eklund on the responsibilities of the Resident Troopers to the Town.
Mr. Rosen introduced Administration Resident Trooper Kevin Eklund and Lieutenant Robert Palmer from Troop C.

Administration Resident Trooper Kevin Eklund introduced himself and Lieutenant Palmer. He thanked Mr. Rosen and the Town Council for inviting them.

Trooper Eklund reviewed a presentation that included the following topics:

- Community policing initiatives
- Community policing events
- Tolland Schools
- Omnipresence/Visibility
- Speed Enforcement Initiatives
- Statistics (Troop C)
- Criminal Trends
- Additional State Police Services
- Looking Forward

A brief question and answer session followed.

- 8.4 Consideration of a resolution to approve a Purchase and Sale Agreement between the Town of Tolland and Stephen D. Williams for the purchase of the parcel described as Wilbur Cross 22/k/020 (9.70 Acres, more or less) authorizing Michael Rosen, Town Manager to sign the Purchase and Sale Agreement and the setting of a Public Hearing thereon for February 11, 2020.

Mr. Rosen introduced this item. He explained that the Town owns the Wilbur Cross portion of the parcel and would like to enter into a Purchase and Sale Agreement with the owner of the TVA, Mr. Steve Williams. Mr. Rosen cited a portion of the Town Charter, Section C10-3. This evening's action for the Town Council is to read the resolution into the record and set the required public hearing for the next Town Council meeting on February 11th.

Mr. Jones motioned that the following resolution be introduced and set down for a Public Hearing on February 11, 2020 at 7:00 PM in Tolland Town Council Chambers.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby approves the Purchase and Sale Agreement between the Town of Tolland and Stephen D. Williams for the purchase of the Parcel identified as Wilbur Cross 22/K/020 (9.70 acres, more or less) authorizing Michael Rosen, Town Manager, to sign the Purchase and Sale Agreement.

Mr. Luba seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Rosen noted that he will invite Mr. Williams to attend the public hearing on February 11th so that he may answer direct questions from the public. Further, he will invite Ms. Samokar to attend as well.

- 8.5 Appointments to vacancies on various municipal boards/commissions

Mr. Jones motioned to approve the appointment of David Drost of 464 Merrow Road for a term of term 11/06/19 – 11/08/23 to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

Mr. Luba seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Jones made a point of order. A resignation letter was submitted by Kathie Amedy (Tolland Non-Profit Housing Corporation) and an opening now exists. Ms. Falusi added that there are eleven vacancies on other boards and commissions as well.

9. OLD BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS):

9.1 Discussion and possible action on the Regional Performance Incentive (RPI) Program and Grant application.

Mr. Rosen reviewed this item regarding if the Town wants to submit application for the following grants:

- CRCOG Region-wide Planimetric Data
- School-Municipal Back Office Consolidation Cost Benefit Analyses and Implementation Plans

Mr. Rosen noted that there is no match required for the Region-wide Planimetric Data portion of the grant. The School-Municipal Back Office Consolidation Cost Benefit Analyses and Implementation Plans will require a 20% match from the town. Both are competitive grants. If the Town is awarded the grant the Town Manager will be able to serve on the selection panel for the School-Municipal Back Office Consolidation Cost Benefit Analyses and Implementation Plan to select the proper vendor for Tolland.

Mr. Jones motioned to accept the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Section 4-124s provides statewide incentive grants to regional planning organizations for projects that involve shared services; and

WHEREAS, the Capitol Region Council of Governments is acting as a convener and facilitator of service sharing projects around the CRCOG region; and

WHEREAS, on December 18th, 2019 the Policy Board of CRCOG passed resolutions authorizing development and submittal of an application packages to the State Office of Policy and Management for funding under the Regional Performance Incentive Grant Program, on behalf of the Council's member municipalities, and municipalities of other regions, which are participating in Council initiatives; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Elected Officials and municipal staff of the Capitol Region have developed a list of service sharing project proposals that will be included in this application package, to the benefit of individual municipalities and the region as a whole; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Tolland has expressed an interest in taking part in the project proposals entitled:

1. *CRCOG Region-wide Planimetric Data*
2. *School-Municipal Back Office Consolidation Cost Benefit Analyses and Implementation Plans*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Tolland Town Council does hereby endorse the Regional Performance Incentive Program project proposals and authorizes the Town Manager to sign all necessary agreements and take all necessary actions to allow for the Town's participation in this program.

Ms. Falusi seconded the motion.

Discussion: Ms. Falusi inquired if, rather than spending the money given the match, there is any way they could have the in-house people discuss school-municipal back office consolidation since they know the Town best. Mr. Rosen responded that this is something that is discussed every five years or so and as previously discussed during the goal setting process they would like to see regional collaboratives and ideas. He has an opportunity to apply for the grant and is presenting it to the Council. Ms. Nuccio added that she likes the idea of having an independent consultant come in and do an unbiased review to learn if an opportunity exists. She would like to move forward with this grant and thanked everyone from the Town side for bringing this forward and their hard work. Ms. Nuccio added that the Board of Education has indicated its support for this item as well. Mr. Rosen noted that he met with the Superintendent in regard to this.

All were in favor. Motion carried.

9.2 Discussion on Town Council Goal – Explore the creation of a new Commission on Disabilities standing committee.

Mr. Rosen presented the Tolland Commission on Disabilities Draft Mission Statement (Version 1-22-2020) for discussion. This was compiled from information presented at a previous meeting as well as his discussion with Ms. Bellody. He incorporated information from other communities' commissions on disabilities as well to craft this for Tolland and it is open to revision.

A discussion took place. Ms. Falusi commented that she believed this item was still in the discussion period and not in the creation period. They have not yet identified if most of what is noted is already being done in other commissions/committees and/or by town/school staff. She expressed concern that all of this work was done without a direction from the Council. Based on her review of past meetings, it does not seem that it has been determined yet if this is needed. Ms. Nuccio responded that they discussed this in a meeting and got input from a number of people. The drafting of a mission was the next step in the process as explained by Mr. Rosen. It is still in the discussion phase. Ms. Nuccio clarified that it is up to the Council to create the mission statement. Mr. Rosen commented that at the December 10th meeting he noted that the Council would review the draft mission statement for the commission based on the area/surrounding towns at the January 14th or 28th meeting. Ms. Falusi commented that she understood this to mean that they would review the mission statements of those towns. She added that she does not believe that what is in the draft mission statement is not already being done by someone in the town. Mr. Luba commented that the draft mission statement when adopted will allow the Council to start going forward so that it may begin to look at options/opportunities so they can determine if there are other agencies that are already working and covering items and/or if the town can work with them to develop what is needed. Further, this will provide an opportunity to apply for grants and other funding. Ms. Nuccio clarified that the point of the commission is to educate, inform, and advocate for the disabilities community.

Ms. Bellody commented that she reviewed the draft mission statement and believes it is something that a commission could likely handle. Initially she was curious about the expectations and if the Council would be required to fund initiatives. She explained that the first step is to look at the missing links in the community and at the moment she is unsure as to who will staff it. Ms. Bellody does not have any suggested changes or edits at this time.

Mr. Jones commented in regard to commission goals and inquired if perhaps the primary goal would be exploring established town services and being apprised of new programs as they come before the town. Mr. Luba inquired if learning about services already in place could be done without forming a commission. Mr. Reagan responded that a commission, even if there are services available, would be a singular organization that would tie everything together, work to build synergy, and report back to

the Council. It would be a singular commission that would oversee, help direct, educate, and report back. Ms. Nuccio added that the commission would inform and educate. It is an opportunity for higher advocacy. Mr. Reagan explained that he needs to be more educated about this issue. Communication with people in the community as well as those providing services is important.

Ms. Falusi motioned to extend the meeting past 10:00 p.m.

Mr. Luba seconded the motion.

All were in favor. Motion carried.

The draft mission statement will be sent in an e-blast to the community with a request for public input not only on the statement but also in regard to the possible benefits of the commission.

10. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER (A WRITTEN REPORT SHALL BE PROVIDED THE 1ST MEETING OF THE MONTH ONLY)

- Census Complete Count Committee is up and running; next meeting is February 25th at 2 p.m.
- Mr. Rosen has been in budget meetings with each of the town's department heads discussing operating budgets.
- Representative Joe Courtney visited on January 21st. He and Mr. Rosen spoke about crumbling foundations among other items.
- Mr. Rosen attended the Tolland County Agriculture Breakfast on January 25th where he spoke with Representative Courtney again as well as Senator Dan Champagne and Representative Tim Ackert.
- Mr. Rosen is working on the Capital Budget Presentation which will be held on February 13th at 7p.m. in Council Chambers.
- Mr. Rosen and the Director of Recreation will attend a meeting in South Windsor tomorrow.
- Mr. Rosen will attend the Legislative Breakfast at THS on January 30th.
- Mr. Rosen will attend the monthly Senior Center Birthday Lunch on January 30th at noon.
- Mr. Rosen will attend the CIRMA Annual Meeting on January 31st in Hartford.
- Birch Grove Building Committee – next meeting is on February 11th
- Economic Development Commission – next meeting is on February 5th

11. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

11.1 January 11, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes

11.2 January 14, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes

11.3 January 14, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes

11.4 January 18, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes

Mr. Jones motioned to adopt the January 11th Special Meeting minutes, the January 14th Special Meeting minutes, the January 14th Regular Meeting minutes, and the January 18th Special Meeting minutes.

Mr. Schenher seconded the motion.

Mr. Jones rescinded the motion.

Amendment to the January 14th Regular Meeting Minutes (item 11.3): per the Planning and Zoning Commission, from Heidi Samokar, Director of Planning and Development: item 7A, 1st sentence: " a public hearing was held for a resubdivision to create one new building lot and it was approved with stipulations"; item 7A, last sentence should read, "updating some regulations. The Commission might use its second meeting of the month to focus on these updates."

Mr. Jones motioned to adopt the amended minutes in items 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, and 11.4.

Mr. Schenher seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

12. CORRESPONDENCE TO COUNCIL

- e-mail inquiring about the Tax Stabilization Fund Balance; *Mr. Rosen responded*
 - e-mail asking that they consider flying the Pride Flag during Pride Month in June
 - e-mail with data on educational numbers
 - e-mail regarding the budget and the reduction of staffing at Tolland schools and his concerns
 - e-mail regarding the town budget and the negative impacts it will have on the education system
 - e-mail regarding the USIF account
 - e-mail providing information about inclusion
 - e-mail regarding a zero-based budget and concern for what it would mean for residents
 - e-mail asking that they consider creating a ban on toll gantries in Tolland
 - e-mail (2) concerning East Conn and employment opportunities for residents with disabilities
 - e-mail requesting that the Pride Flag be displayed
 - e-mail regarding information on substance abuse and mental health services
- Only e-mails received up until 2:00 p.m. on January 28th were presented.*

13. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

- Chairperson's Hour, February 6th, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall, 6th floor
- Board of Education budget meeting, February 6th, 7:30 p.m.
- Ms. Nuccio thanked all those for volunteering for boards and commissions; a few more people are needed
- Ms. Nuccio read the following statement, "As you may be aware we are currently in the budget season here in Town. The departments are all building their budgets right now and they'll turn them into the Town Manager. He will do a combination and have a Town Manager Recommended Budget that will come to us to review ... then we will start our process of reviewing all of it and coming to a decision on what the budget will be for the Town that will be recommended at referendum. Ultimately it is the Tolland citizen who votes on the said budget. During this time there will be lots of rumors and false information and words taken out of context, select quotes thrown around and a whole lot of emotion. I encourage you all to reach out to your elected members on any board. Talk to them, ask them questions directly, [and] be open to conversation and debate. Every voice matters equally in this conversation and the person who yells the loudest is not always the most effective. This is a process where we can all learn from each other and try to find balance for all 15,000 residents. I encourage you to listen as much you talk, ask as many questions as you need to make sense of what is before us, and be respectful of someone's opinion even if it is not your own. Be open to someone else's point of view. One team, one vision, we are all one Tolland here."
- Ms. Nuccio asked the Council members to review the Capital Improvement Plan in advance of Mr. Rosen's presentation on February 13th.

14. COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILPERSONS

- Ms. Nuccio noted that she gathered the issues to date and is working with Mr. Rosen to get all of the requests on upcoming agendas. March will be fully loaded with the budget. The list of issues includes: commission on disability, commission on substance use disorder and mental health, brokerage firm update and discussion, cemetery policy review, review of a flag policy, and meeting with commission/board chairs or representatives to discuss goals and look for synergies.
- Ms. Falusi noted creating a group that looks at town-wide communications and Sustainable CT.
- Ms. Falusi would like to review the roles and responsibilities of liaisons and Town Council members

- Ms. Falusi added having a Town Council involved initiative to help encourage property owners to reuse their space or rehab their property.
- Mr. Jones noted that vacancies on boards and commissions still exist. He recommended attending a meeting before applying.

15. **PUBLIC LISTED PARTICIPATION** *(on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council)*
(3 minute limit)

George Ulrich, Fish and Game Road commented that he is concerned that they are not getting enough information out to people in regard to how bad the budget is going to be this year. He heard the e-mails that were read where people are concerned about cuts to the schools. He does not think people realize how bad "a shape" the town is in and they need to get the information out and cited the crumbling foundations, the loss in the reassessment, and the higher sewer. He assumes that they will be paying for two Birch Grove schools next year – he believes there are 5 years of payments remaining on the building that was demolished and added the payments for the new building. *Ms. Hancock noted that the original Birch Grove has been paid off including the addition.* Further, the Town is receiving less money from the State. People need to know so they don't panic on the day of the meeting that there are a lot of problems. Even with a zero budget increase they would need to raise taxes. When he attends Board of Education meetings he hears people concerned about cutting freshman sports (\$7,000) on a \$40M budget. They need to let people realize the problem with money. There is only so much money coming in and it is less than last year. In order to adjust there needs to be cuts everywhere. Everyone has to hurt a little. The schools are still asking for an increase. It is not a cut; it is a reduction in the increase.

Ms. Nuccio noted that all of the budget meetings will be advertised and everyone is welcome to attend.

Mike Byam, 70 Woodfields Drive, thanked the Council for scheduling the public hearing [item 8.4] and has a procedural question. He came upon a document from September that was a signed for a Bill of Sale and inquired if it is now null and void. *Mr. Rosen responded that according to the Town Attorney it is not 100% null and void. Mr. Williams still has access to the property and can walk the property. Mr. Williams cannot do development on the property until everything is rectified.* Mr. Byam commented that there is currently an application before the Wetlands Commission that has a grading plan that includes that parcel. Is that now invalid? *Mr. Rosen responded that the timeframe is now going to be after the February 11th meeting.* Mr. Byam expressed concern that if he looks at the process this is another situation where an application has gone in and there are issues in the application and now we are going back trying to fix regulations. The application has 50' buffers and the regulation is 100' and now there is an open hearing to change it. As a citizen watching this it seems there is a consistent series of steps that are trying to move this forward and there is not a concerted effort to talk to the neighborhood about the impact. He appreciates Mr. Rosen opening the public hearing but there is not enough open conversation regarding the impacts on the neighborhood. He is all about economic development but would like to know if there is a way it can be done in a more balanced manner so they have a chance to discuss it. *Ms. Nuccio explained that there are different sections of the government involved in this. For example, the Town Council cannot do anything about the wetlands piece. There was an issue with a piece the Town Council has control over and it is taking the steps to correct this. The discussion at the public hearing is limited to those areas in which the Town Council has control.* Mr. Byam commented that he would like to be part of the solution going forward. He supports economic development but wants to be sure they are doing things in the right manner. Clear cutting a lot of land does not seem like the best use of dollars if they could sell and find money for the budget. He thanked the Council. *Mr. Luba commented that in regard to the sale of the property, the Town does not receive any money. It goes back to the State.*

Chris Cook, 60 Woodfields Drive, commented that he too is a proponent of EDC. They need development in Town. He liked what was said about tourism being a key factor. He is hoping that there is a due diligence process by all of the respective committees. His fear is what was said, which may have been in jest, at the last PZC meeting. A member made a comment about the Electric Blue needing competition and that it would

be great to have it across the street. Mr. Cook expressed concern, even if it was said in jest, about such cavalier comments as there tends to be some truth behind them. He is assuming the community has spent tens of thousands of dollars on consultants who have done work for the town and presented proposals and is not aware of anyone on the PZC or Town Council who is a credentialed real estate developer. They need to listen and review what the experts recommended such as the minimum of 100' buffers in development areas. Mr. Cook is hoping they do not cavalierly take the information from experts and toss it aside. They need to go through a thoughtful process, make the right decisions, and revisit some of the proposals from the past. *Ms. Nuccio commented that legally they cannot all sit down (Town Council, PZC, Wetlands Commission) and have a conversation like this. They are different governmental entities that are driven differently. She encouraged people to attend the various entities' meetings to advocate their positions. The Town Council hearing will only be in regard to the purchase and sale agreement so that Mr. Williams can grade the Town's side of the property.*

Mike Byam, 70 Woodfields Drive, inquired if Mr. Williams has the commercial expertise for this type of job as a residential developer. In turn, in regard to the sale, has the Town Council done its due diligence and is this the appropriate sale for the appropriate individual for what needs to be done? Has this been vetted?

A discussion took place and it was noted that the property needs to be economically developed and what is the process. Was the opportunity to allow someone else to develop it made available?

Lisa Burns, 214 Slater Road, noted that Representative Joe Courtney has been doing a lot of webinars on the topic of crumbling foundations. The next one is on February 3rd when tax breaks and low interest loan funding will be discussed. Anyone who would like to join needs to contact his office and request an invite. The information may be helpful to citizens and the Town Council as part of its goals. *Mr. Rosen will add this to the Town website.*

16. **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Jones motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 p.m.

Ms. Falusi seconded the motion. All were in favor. None opposed.

Tammy Nuccio, Council Chair

Lisa A. Pascuzzi
Clerk