



TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hicks Municipal Center
Council Chambers
Tolland, CT 06084

Meeting is In-Person for those who wish to attend and will also be offered through Zoom for those who wish to attend remotely

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.

BOE GOALS

- Ensure the completion and implementation of the Portrait of a Graduate Report.
- Foster a culture and climate that supports high levels of learning and engagement, promotes mental and physical wellbeing, and leads to individual student success.
- Assess our district needs and advocate for resources to meet them, while pursuing non-traditional sources of revenue, ensuring a quality education for all students.
- Nurture and support an inclusive community where every person, regardless of their identity, is acknowledged and respected. This will ensure that Tolland students have the necessary resources to thrive at school, in the community, and in our diverse world.

REGULAR MEETING

7:00 PM

AGENDA
October 27, 2021

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86358441213?pwd=dUJPbnVDV3BoZW1MT1ZlZ1F1K21XZz09>

Meeting ID: 863 5844 1213

Passcode: 5FgfFH

Dial by your location
+1 929 436 2866 US (New York)
Meeting ID: 863 5844 1213

Passcode: 582724

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86358441213?pwd=dUJPbnVDV3BoZW1MT1ZlZ1F1K21XZz09>

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- October 13, 2021
- October 20, 2021 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

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- H.1 Obsolete and Surplus Equipment
- H.2 Possible Cancellation of the December 22 BOE Meeting
- H.3 Recognition of BOE Members (no enclosure)

I. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

J. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

K. BOARD ACTION

- K.1 Policy 3010 - Board Budget Procedures and Line-Item Transfers

L. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2-minute limit)

Comments must be limited to items on this agenda.

M. POINTS OF INFORMATION

- October 12, 2021 – Special Meeting
- October 12, 2021 – Regular Meeting

N. FUTURE

O. NEW BUSINESS

P. ADJOURNMENT

TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

Zoom or In-Person Meeting

REGULAR MEETING – October 13, 2021

Members Present: Christina Plourd, Vice Chair; Tony Holt, Secretary; Renie Besaw, Christine Griffin, Jacob Marie, Dana Philbin (Zoom), Madhu Renduchintala

Members Absent: Ashley Lundgren, Chair; Sofia Shaikh

Administrators Present: Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent of Schools

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Lundgren called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA - none

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- September 22, 2021
- October 6, 2021 – Special Meeting

Minutes approved as written.

D. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Patricia Phillips, 202 Anthony Road, commented that her daughter is a student at TMS and it has come to Ms. Phillips' attention that her daughter, and some of her friends at TMS, have been experiencing bullying and sexual harassment. She talked to them and asked if they had gone to any teachers or guidance counselors. They verbalized that they had not because they feel that the teachers and staff hear what is going on and are ignoring the behavior of their peers who are doing the bullying and harassing. She explained that there have also been racial slurs and negative references to LGBTQ. Ms. Phillips explained that it is her understanding that in 2012 TPS started positive behavioral interventional support with SOAR core values and what she has heard does not reflect the expected behaviors of Safety, Ownership, Active learning, and Respect. She asked how someone can have a safe place to learn when these fundamentals are not enforced. While not physical abuse, it is emotional abuse. Ms. Phillips added that her daughter has expressed anxiety and friends of hers have not felt comfortable approaching teachers or counselors. Ms. Phillips explained that she is concerned because her daughter still has a few years to go and added that the school and community are disappointing. She knows that teachers cannot babysit students and a lot of this starts at home but in today's age with media and social media, they need to look at what is going on in the school system. E-mails are sent about disciplinary actions for students who partake in TikTok challenges and students are punished for talking when they should not but there are real issues going on at TMS and Ms. Phillips would like them addressed. She asked if the Title IX coordinator is not actively working if anyone else can cover for them.

Liz Costa, 54 Josiah Lane, commented that she is a proponent for keeping masking in the schools. There have been over 100 cases of students being quarantined over the last 10-12 days and she is sure this is keeping Dr. Willett, the nurses, and administration busy but most importantly students are not having equal chances for Mastery Based Learning if they are at

home with only an opportunity to view the classroom one way. Ms. Costa explained that she knows masking is not up to the Board but to the DPH.

Shay Belair, 185 Kozley Road, noted that she is a parent of a middle school student and a high school student in town and is a teacher at TMS. She is addressing the Board and Dr. Willett this evening as a parent of an 8th grade student regarding the D.C. trip. Ms. Belair commented that she has read and heard Mr. Spangle speak to the fact that students who are not vaccinated are not eligible to go on the trip and she disagrees with the decision. She explained that excluding a population of students for a medical decision is wrong and every effort should be made to provide equitable access to all educational experiences. Anything short of that is unacceptable. Extra staff could chaperone the trip if students are not allowed entry to a venue due to their vaccination status. Whether vaccinated or not, someone could get sick on the trip. Ms. Belair explained that as they navigate another school year impacted by COVID, all educational decisions should include the entire population with equitable access and by excluding a population they are not providing equitable access to all educational experiences. She noted that a lot of thought went into the decision but when making the decision they cannot exclude a population of students based on their vaccination status for a vaccine that is not fully FDA approved for those under the age of 15.

E. CORRESPONDENCE

- Letter asking for water companies to stop fluoridating water
- Letter discussing the strategy for learning for students being quarantined; the technology to do better exists within the schools
- Letter concerned with the adult themes being taught in the 7th grade language arts class
- Letter sharing a parent's perspective on the inadequacy of the current learning process for quarantined students
- Letter asking if CRT is/will be taught at TPS
- Letter advocating against the current directive that D.C. trip participants must be vaccinated
- Letter asking the Board not to make a vaccine mandate
- Letter stating that teachers are advocating for the vaccine in classes
- Letter asking if the schools will host vaccine clinics or provide guidance once a vaccine is available for younger students
- Letter asking for teachers of quarantined students to turn on their cameras to support the educational needs of those students
- Letter discussing the learning challenges of 2 students that were quarantined
- Letter concerned that quarantined students are not being supported educationally
- Letter expressing disappointment that the D.C. trip will exclude unvaccinated students
- Letter expressing frustration about COVID restrictions and testing for upcoming events such as the D.C. trip and homecoming dance
- Letter expressing frustration and disappointment at the decision to exclude non-vaccinated students from the D.C. trip

F. POINTS OF INFORMATION

- Ms. Griffin thanked Ms. Phillips for speaking and noted that she saw Dr. Willett speak to her. Ms. Griffin appreciates that it was brought to their attention. She commented that she heard Ms. Belair and agrees with her. The trip will be discussed under H.4.

- Mr. Renduchintala apologized to Ms. Phillips that the situation happened and thanked for her advocating. Regarding the D.C. trip, it will be discussed. He does not like seeing students excluded but understands the reasons why.
- Ms. Plourd thanked Ms. Phillips and noted that if there are any policy changes regarding this, they will go to the Policy Committee.
- Ms. Besaw thanked Ms. Phillips for speaking and while it is not easy to talk about, she appreciates that it was brought forward. The Board needs to know these things and they need to be addressed. She has confidence Dr. Willett will do what needs to be done. Sometimes one does not know what they do not know.
- Mr. Holt commented that has 3 daughters in TPS and none are the extroverted kind who would step up and say something. They need to advocate for those who are not necessarily comfortable speaking up. He thanked Ms. Phillips for bringing this to the Board where they can be certain Dr. Willett and the staff will address it.
- Ms. Philbin thanked everyone for their participation and commented that she appreciates that Ms. Phillips spoke on behalf of her daughter and her peers. It is a difficult topic, but she has confidence in Dr. Willett and the staff. She added that Dr. Willett is open to scheduling time with people and it is disheartening to hear the story. She is sure staff will do its due diligence to ensure it does not happen again and will get involved.
- Dr. Willett noted that bullying and sexual harassment are never ok. He noted that they have a Title IX person and someone who comes in when that person is not available. The D.C. trip will be addressed as an agenda item.

G. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' REPORT – Nathalie Mitchell and Emily Pereira - none

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

H.1 Monthly Financial Report

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment H.1.

The September 2021 financial report shows an available balance of \$1,618,530 or 3.97% of the BOE's current budget. They are still in the process of filling positions and not all items have been encumbered.

Mr. Holt asked if the FFC has reviewed the numbers. Ms. Griffin responded that the September 30th numbers will be reviewed in greater detail at the Committee's next meeting. The Committee confirmed that that salary line is currently over because reimbursements via grants have not yet been received.

Mr. Marie asked about the Tuition Education Agency and Transportation line items. Dr. Willett explained that these are due to encumbrances and noted that funds will come in to balance it.

Ms. Besaw asked if given the issues with the buses, and that fewer are being used, if the district is charged less. Dr. Willett responded that when there is reduced bus utilization, they speak with First Student about adjusting charges. He noted that given that the situation was a 3-day anomaly and that routes were completed, any adjustment will be small.

H.2 EOY (June) 2021 Financial Report

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment H.2.

He explained that this is a review of what generated the end of year balance and how it was expended.

Dr. Willett reviewed both the Sample of Under Budget Items (\$1,886,000) and the Sample of Over Budget Items (\$1,104,000) which have a difference of \$782,000 which accounts for about 98% of the end of year remaining funds.

Ms. Besaw commented that while it is helpful to have a narrative, it would also be helpful to have a few line items that come close to the number. She asked that it be more granular when reviewed by the FFC.

H.3 Quarantine Support (no attachment)

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment H.4 which was presented at the meeting.

Dr. Willett noted that resources include the following:

Students in a quarantine status will have class content available each day through one or more of the following:

- One-directional live audio stream from the classroom (Google Meets).
- Live video & audio stream from the classroom of content; e.g. the board, a presentation shared to the screen, but not the students in the class
- A pre-recorded video of either a class with relevant content or video for the class content such as a pre-recorded lesson from a previous class or an online video relevant to what the class is doing/watching

Associate Educators (AEs) work in conjunction with teachers and families to ensure there is a connection and if there are questions, they circle back to address them.

Dr. Willett reviewed the supplemental staff support which includes the contact information for the AEs as well as counseling support.

This information is sent to all families and students in quarantine status.

Dr. Willett explained that the delta variant is much more contagious, and they are receiving information from the health district about organizations that are experiencing COVID positives affecting students. These organizations include athletics, scouting, and dance programs. Dr. Willett asked the community for continued vigilance and reminded people about the requirements of quarantine. He expects they will be in a better place as they approach the December school holiday after vaccinations have opened to a larger population (age 5-11).

Mr. Renduchintala asked if infections are coming from within the schools or externally. Dr. Willett responded that he would refer the question to the EHHD but believes in school transmission is extremely low. Mr. Renduchintala asked if there is data regarding how many students are quarantined and then test positive. Dr. Willett responded that the health district would have that information.

Ms. Besaw thanked Dr. Willett for stepping up the game to support students in quarantine. A number of people expressed frustration and concern and she is pleased they are moving forward and supporting students at a higher level.

Mr. Holt commented that his thrilled the district is addressing this and utilizing its resources. He asked what the feedback loop is to ensure what is in place is working and to learn what can be done better. Dr. Willett responded that he regularly receives feedback from teachers, parents/guardians, and the AEs and asks what can be done to improve. He tries to incorporate the feedback and balance the perspectives. He reviewed some of the supports that have been added including additional contact information for the AEs and after school support.

Ms. Griffin asked about the one-directional audio stream and video and why they are not doing only video. Dr. Willett explained that the teachers, as educational professionals, have the discretion to decide what will be best for the classroom at any given time. Video can have privacy issues regarding students so flexibility is necessary so they can be considerate of all students' needs from class to class.

Ms. Philbin commented that she has heard great feedback about the AEs and thanked them for doing a phenomenal job in a difficult situation. She appreciates the plan that was presented and wants to do the best for all students. In regard to the passive cameras, teachers know students are behind and in front of the cameras and educators do not want to leave any student behind. Ms. Philbin appreciates that there is flexibility and that staff are adapting. Things will evolve as they continue to grow and navigate the pandemic. Ms. Philbin commented that some students have been struggling with the curriculum while in quarantine and asked Dr. Willett for his thoughts on this and about tapping the COVID Relief Fund to hire more AEs and people to teach the curriculum as well as having a more synchronous program. Dr. Willett responded that it would be useful to have available funds - the more AEs the better. When there are many quarantined students in a short timeframe it can be difficult for the AEs, so it makes sense to use some of the dollars in this manner but finding individuals who can perform in the position is challenging. Ms. Philbin commented that it is important to know the situation is fluid and evolving. She appreciates Dr. Willett's candor and the staff's flexibility.

Mr. Marie commented that he is pleased with what was presented and believes it will address concerns that have been raised. He would like this to be viewed as a starting point and to see the feedback loop utilized to learn what can be improved. Ultimately, it is a difficult situation that is not the fault of the staff. There are state requirements that are out of the district's control.

Mr. Renduchintala thanked Dr. Willett for his efforts in making a bad situation better. It will help many students not only from an education standpoint but also from an isolation standpoint.

Ms. Plourd noted that she is glad they are doing more for students in quarantine. She would like the quarantines to go away and data on how many students test positive after close contact in school would be pertinent to the argument of if quarantines are necessary. She would like the plan to include advocacy at the state level for the Test and Stay protocol being used by other states.

Dr. Willett reviewed attachment H.4 which was presented at the meeting. He explained that in regard to field trips, in a broad sense, they have had to decide what path to take and there are regulations that need to be followed. He has to decide what can be logistically, operationally, and safely executed. It is an obligation under 5150 and a difficult situation. He has spoken with many stakeholders regarding anything related to the pandemic including field trips. Items that need to be considered in regard to the D.C. trip include the following: vaccines; testing requirements of venues; length of time testing results are considered viable for access to venues; and consultation with the health district, tour company, school administration, legal representation, and trip advisors. Given the length of the trip, testing would not be sufficient to provide the 72-hour exemption required by some venues which allow a testing option. Further, often venues require digital or paper proof. Students would be staying 4 to a room unmasked so the potential is high for an undesirable outcome if there is a covid positive or symptomatic student. Additionally, students, mentors, and guides share common coach buses for more than 6 hours. If a student has what looks like COVID-19 symptoms, the child is often considered symptomatic of COVID and would likely need to be quarantined along with any close contacts. Some students may not feel well after a long bus ride and this could be seen as symptomatic of COVID and become an issue for others on the trip, particularly those who are not vaccinated as vaccinated students in close contact do not have to quarantine if they do not feel symptoms, but unvaccinated students do. Covid related isolations dividing the group diminishes the value of the trip for all students. The logistics of splitting the group also have safety and management implications including requiring separate transportation options, rooms, and supervision. When considering field trips during the pandemic, they need to take into account what they feel they can reasonably execute with the recommendations and rules related to the pandemic. For trips beyond the scope of the 72-hour PCR test it would not be responsible for him to suggest that a trip of this kind be done without requiring vaccinations at this time. Dr. Willett noted that while he wishes this was not the case, he must consider the things under the current guidance.

Mr. Renduchintala asked if they could have families sign a hold harmless agreement relieving the district of liability. Dr. Willett responded that the issue is when they arrive in D.C. The venues do not care about the agreement and may not provide access without a vaccination card. Further, this is about the safety and logistics of when a group of students needs to be separated. The issue is not a mistrust of families, but if the district can logistically manage this in a safe way. He does not believe it would be a safe trip without vaccination. There could be many issues including loss of value for families and a miserable experience for students. Mr. Renduchintala asked if the trip could be opened to freshmen who were unable to go last year due to the pandemic. Dr. Willett responded that if there were students willing to participate, they would explore a sophomore trip next year when hopefully they are not bound by the current issues. Mr. Renduchintala asked about Homecoming and why only unvaccinated students have to test prior to attending and vaccinated students do not since those who are vaccinated can still pass the virus. Dr. Willett responded that it is a probability consideration. While a vaccinated person can be infected and pass it on, it is significantly less likely, and department of health guidance drives decision making during the pandemic.

Ms. Besaw noted that she appreciates that Dr. Willett is looking at all of the risk factors to protect the students and school. She noted that the trip is in May and the COVID situation is always changing. She wondered if they are not jumping the gun a bit and perhaps could have waited to make the decision. Have they considered other options such as having a shorter trip, less than 72 hours, or other possibilities? Dr. Willett responded that they are trying to be sensitive to timelines and deposits. He cited the delta variant and noted that policies and requirements may not change much between now and May, so he has to make the best decision possible with the current information. If there are students who miss out on the trip, they can look at running another trip at the high school level next year. Ms. Besaw commented that looking back to last year's graduation, after a couple of months things eased up and they were able to hold a program. Dr. Willett explained that the tour company needs time to plan the trip given the number of students, and he is working off of information available to him at this time.

Ms. Griffin commented that this is a done decision and not a Board decision. She is disappointed with the decision and believes it will cause a lot of heartache and division. She is disappointed that they are not focusing on perhaps a secondary itinerary or a way to make it work. As of now, only the Kennedy Center is requiring vaccinations. In terms of insurance and the risk to parents, if they want to risk their deposit etc., they should have the choice. Lastly, no trip will be perfect and there is always a risk. She cited the 2013 trip when the government was shut down and many students contracted food poisoning. She is disappointed they are not trying to find a way to make this happen when the trip is 6 months away. It seems premature to make this decision and brush aside unvaccinated students. Ms. Griffin feels it is unfair. Dr. Willett responded that food poisoning is not a virus, and things are different during this pandemic. During this pandemic if a student had symptoms that food poisoning can produce on the trip they could be considered symptomatic for COVID with everyone around them within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes needing to be quarantined. It is not a normal year unfortunately, and would make that a different situation with significantly higher potential to negatively affect all those who are participating. He is looking at the logistical considerations under the current guidance. He noted that some places have cancelled all trips, but he is trying to find a way to make it happen. Ms. Griffin noted that this is the first time she is hearing about an alternative trip and asked if this has been presented. Dr. Willett responded that he does not see a reason why another HS trip cannot be offered in the future but the focus at the moment has been on this trip.

Mr. Holt expressed concern about the policy shift and that this is not a Board decision. They are not discussing only a single trip but field trips in general. Policy 5150 revised in 2007 did not address a situation like this. He explained that if Dr. Willett came before the Board and said field trips could not take place, they would have understood but it seems that they are redefining the vaccinated vs. unvaccinated. He asked if a paradigm shift on this level is a policy change which would normally have multiple reviews, discussions, and a vote by the Board. Dr. Willett responded that vaccinations are covered in 5150. The policy puts the responsibility and burden on the superintendent and the regulation has language regarding vaccinations. During the pandemic superintendents have been expected in many cases to make decisions on many matters including field trips. He does not want to put anything in place that hurts students or

families. He is compelled to look at the recommendations and requirements and how they will impact operations. Mr. Holt noted that he does see this in the policy but he believes the decision about what one group can do and another cannot becomes a Board decision. Dr. Willett explained that 5150 has language regarding vaccinations. In addition, other conditions have been dictated by the state government via executive orders etc. Mr. Holt explained that last year, due to the necessity of speed, certain items were the responsibility of the superintendent. On the operational level this still applies but on the additional level such as items like this, he believes they become a Board discussion. Dr. Willett responded that he believed this was operational as has been the case for other trips. He expects and welcomes people to weigh in on all matters, and one will find that on many situations, particularly during the ongoing pandemic, the chief executive officer is the one expected to make decisions based on requirements and recommendations of state agencies and related legal considerations. An example would be the weekly testing requirement and required review of weekly test results. Policies are written for operation and functionality. He is in the position of parsing the information and keeping the best interests of the district, the Board, the students, and the staff in mind. Mr. Holt commented that believes this level of decision should have been brought to the Board and Dr. Willett's recommendation as the CEO and expert would have been taken into account. While operating in unique times, the Board has responsibilities and needs to keep an eye on the direction. It would be remiss if it only listened and was not an active part. Dr. Willett noted that he operated within the scope 5150, and more generally during this pandemic, the state put superintendents in the position of having to make many decisions.

Mr. Marie asked that this not be the last time this topic is discussed particularly if there is the possibility for a trip to make it up to students a couple years down the road. He agreed that this should have been brought before the Board. It is not that he does not have confidence in Dr. Willett but given the sensitivity of the issue it is worth discussing with the Board.

Ms. Philbin commented that it is tough situation for everyone. She believes the conversation needs to continue given the potential for the class to do the trip at a future time. She expressed concern with the number of hours Dr. Willett and his team spend contact tracing in Tolland and CT. Further there are items that are not under the district's purview but fall under the EHHD and CDC as well as the rules of the venues that students will visit on the trip. They need to ensure they take care of this class now and going forward. It is a huge opportunity and her heart breaks for the students and families. Everything is evolving and the conversation may look different in a couple of months, and she would like to continue the discussion.

Mr. Renduchintala commented that the solution with the least harm appears to be looking at an alternate trip particularly since last year's 8th grade class completely missed out and he would like to explore this. He asked if an unvaccinated students wanted to go on the trip and the parent were to go with them, stay with them at the hotel, and be responsible for having the student tested, if this would be a viable solution. Dr. Willett responded that while well-meaning, there would be costs, and it is not something that is traditionally done as sometimes students do not appreciate this

and may feel awkward. Planning a trip in the future for students who missed out can be explored.

Ms. Besaw commented that perhaps Dr. Willett could have waited to make the decision and they could have offered a softer landing with offering an alternative trip as the pandemic goes away. She understands that he is in a difficult spot and does not envy him but appreciates he is willing to discuss this for the former class and perhaps this one. Dr. Willett explained that the timeline of deposits was determined by the tour company, and he did not want people to lose money or end up with an experience not worth the money.

Ms. Plourd commented that with all due respect, she is disappointed that they are discriminating in regard to vaccinated vs. unvaccinated students. She realizes the logistical nightmare given the testing requirements and thought perhaps shortening the trip to 3 days would allow students to test and still go on the trip but there are other issues. Ms. Plourd explained that the actions do not show that they are ever going to exit the pandemic. They are waiting for various milestones and there will always be a variant. They cannot divide people into 2 classes – they need to find a way forward. She believed this item was on the agenda for feedback from the Board before the decision was made. Ms. Plourd asked that if any changes could be made to be more inclusive, she would support this; otherwise, the conversation continues.

Ms. Philbin commented that during a typical year, activities are planned for students who do not go on the trip. She asked if they could build on this and create multi-day opportunities for students and do something more grandiose and creative. Dr. Willett responded that they could put together a local trip for those who are unable to attend and he would be happy to help plan it if desired. He worked with staff to do things like this in the past.

H.5 Flexibilities Evaluation (no attachment)

Dr. Willett explained that the state put forward a flexibilities document and he feels in the future the state will move all of the plans toward holistic evaluation. The State Department of Education convened the Educator Evaluation and Support Council (EES), known in the CT General Statutes as the Performance Evaluation Advisory Committee (PEAC). It was tasked with reimagining the CT evaluation system for 2021/22. The local Professional Development Evaluation Committees (PDEC) are statutorily required in every district and deal with evaluation. In Tolland, Dr. Willett is the Chair and members include teachers and administrators. They have reviewed the flexibilities document which is being presented to the Board. The rationale behind the state flexibilities plan is that the pandemic has impacted school districts and the evaluation process should have foci including social/emotional learning, equitable and culturally responsive learning opportunities, academic achievement, and engagement with families. Dr. Willett reviewed the TeVal Teacher Guide 21-22 Flexibility Guidelines.

Ms. Plourd asked when Board approval is needed. Dr. Willett responded that he recommended adopting it as soon as they are able, and if possible this evening so they can move forward with the evaluation process, but it can be presented for a second reading. It has been recommended by all entities noted.

Mr. Marie commented that would like the Curriculum Committee to look at this more in depth. He asked if the Board has a choice in doing this. Dr. Willett responded that if the district does not follow this plan, the default is the 2019 plan which does not include a social/emotional element, the family focus, or the holistic approach. If the Board is not opposed to the concepts it is espousing, going forward will allow the district to move along in the process. If at the next meeting it is not approved, they will need to retool and follow the 2019 program. Mr. Marie commented that he does not believe the concepts are unimportant elements. He asked how this is weighted against academic performance in the classroom. Dr. Willett explained it is still part of flexibilities, and that 10 years ago the focus was on academics without the holistic concept. It makes sense, given that the state is moving in direction, for the district to start working in this realm.

Mr. Holt commented that recently a number of items have been presented to the Board that need immediate approval. He recognizes that this was put together via conversations with experts before being presented but approval is what the Board needs to do and is noted in Policy 9010. The Board needs to take the time, perhaps at a special meeting, to ask questions, understand it, and do their due diligence before voting. Dr. Willett explained that he will set up special sessions if desired. He noted that it is the way the state would like the districts to go, and they have some authority in this area. Given that it is coming from the state, it is up to the Board to decide if it is worth their time in this case to have another session, but sessions can be scheduled for next week. Mr. Holt noted that Policy 9010 sets the evaluations as one of the core responsibilities of the Board. Dr. Willett noted that this is not a typical evaluation process cycle, and this is a flexibilities adjustment for the pandemic done by the state for 2020-2021. It is a 1-year item. Mr. Holt commented that the pandemic does not lessen the Board's responsibilities. If anything, it increases them. Given that the Board needs to vote and approve this shows that the Board still has responsibilities. Dr. Willett noted extra sessions can be scheduled if desired.

Ms. Besaw asked if this will revert after the pandemic. Dr. Willett responded that it will either revert back to the 2019 document that was approved by the Board or, he believes the state will provide new standards that will need to be followed. Ms. Besaw commented that she does not see this item as specific for the Curriculum Committee since it is teacher evaluation. She believes the entire Board should understand how teachers are being evaluated. She asked when teachers are submitted holistic items, who evaluates the information. Dr. Willett responded that he agreed, that is was an area with a lot of content to cover, and felt the Curriculum Committee would be most applicable because for example 4 domains deal with competencies with respect to educational implementation of teachers and administration through curriculum, instruction, and the student experience. He explained that the administrators are trained in doing the evaluations locally and by the state. Calibrations are done to foster consistent evaluations, and staff are evaluated in a similar way.

Ms. Griffin commented that she does not feel she knows enough about this yet and the measurement component. Dr. Willett responded that there will be numeric indicators of student success as well as a narrative and qualitative process including artifact evidence. There is also an observation component, process, and rating. The

social/emotional and family outreach components can have a more qualitative approach with objectives. Dr. Willett noted that these will need to be mutually agreed upon with the administrator. Ms. Griffin noted that she would like this to be discussed further at another meeting.

Ms. Plourd noted that the consensus is to not move this to action this evening. She asked how the teachers feel about the flexibilities document. Dr. Willett responded that this has been approved by PDEC. Mr. Holt confirmed that this would be tabled pending the scheduling of a special session.

I. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

- Curriculum – will meet on October 28th
- Policy – Policy 3010
- Communications – Ms. Plourd provided an update
- FFC – will meet next week
- Tolland Mental Health and Substance Use Advisory Task Force – Mr. Marie provided an update
- Birch Grove Building Committee – Ms. Philbin provided an update. Will meet next on October 19th.

J. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT - none

K. BOARD ACTION

- K.1 Policy 3010
Presented for a first read.

Mr. Renduchintala cited “periodic review” on page 2 and asked for further definition. Dr. Willett responded that it traditionally aligns with the review in FFC meetings; board and subcommittee meetings would fulfill “periodic”. Mr. Holt added that it was included so the FFC could focus as needed.

Ms. Griffin commented that they should add June under the period covered and recommended that the submitted date be September or October. Dr. Willett recommended stating September.

Mr. Marie asked Ms. Griffin if she felt comfortable with how transfers are addressed in the policy. Ms. Griffin responded that she does and believes it is now more transparent. Mr. Holt was in agreement.

L. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - none

M. POINTS OF INFORMATION

- September 28, 2021

N. FUTURE - none

O. NEW BUSINESS – none

P. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Griffin motioned to adjourn at 9:51 PM.

Ms. Besaw seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

All were in favor. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Pascuzzi

Clerk

TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

Zoom or In-Person Meeting

SPECIAL MEETING – October 20, 2021

Members Present: Ashley Lundgren, Chair; Christina Plourd, Vice Chair (Zoom); Tony Holt, Secretary; Christine Griffin, Dana Philbin (Zoom), Madhu Renduchintala (Zoom)
 Members Absent: Renie Besaw, Jacob Marie, Sophia Shaikh
 Administrators Present: Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent of Schools

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Lundgren called the meeting to order at 4:36 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. State of Connecticut Flexibilities for adoption

Dr. Willett provided an overview.

Dr. Willett reviewed the Introduction to the CT Common Core of Teaching 2017 Rubric (CCT) currently in force. This is the tool used by administrators to evaluate teachers (40%). In a typical year, a teacher's evaluation has 4 components. One of these components is a teaching performance rating (40%) evaluated via formal and informal visits. Domains are utilized and a tagging of proficiencies is done in the True North Logic (TNS) system. At the end of the year, this is translated into a rating and becomes 40% of a teacher's evaluation. Another component (45%) is data related. Specifically, a teacher selects a goal with respect to their targets and activities and is evaluated on if data points are hit.

Dr. Willett reviewed the 4 domains used in the CCT and noted that the state provides documents for implementation.

He reviewed the criteria for the 4 domains.

- Domain 1: Classroom Environment, Student Engagement and Commitment to Learning as well as the rating levels and characteristics.
- Domain 2: Planning & Active Learning
- Domain 3: Instruction for Active Learning
- Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities & Teacher Leadership

Dr. Willett reviewed the TPS Teacher Professional Learning & Evaluation Plan currently in place and noted that the district became a model at one time due to its creation of Category 3, Option 2: Student Outcomes and Achievement. Historically, while a teacher may have had growth in the classroom, the results may not have hit the target leading teachers to choose safer goals in the future to avoid a lower rating. Option 2 allowed a teacher to select an aggressive goal by dividing the indicators of success. Under this option, the Student Learning Outcome (SLO) was assigned .25 and Progress Monitoring was assigned .75. In turn, teachers could show evidence that what they did made a difference even if students did not hit the aggressive target. This model is quasi-holistic, was approved by the Board, and has been successfully used.

Dr. Willett reviewed the CT Flexibilities 2021-2022.

When the pandemic hit, as part of the 2020/21 flexibilities, the Governor issued an executive order which exempted the summatives for the year. During this time, the state started moving toward flexibilities/holistic goals. PDECs were encouraged to meet to evaluate flexibilities and

determine how they could be incorporated into 2021/22. Further, the state indicated that flexibilities would continue to be incorporated in the CCT going forward. This direction toward holistic ratings is similar to the TPS Option 2 with qualitative and quantitative evidence. It allows the professional expertise of administration and others performing evaluations to bear on the rankings. Dr. Willett noted that the executive order on summatives has expired.

Dr. Willett reviewed the priorities of the flexibilities.

- Social and emotional learning (SEL) and overall well-being of students, staff, and educators
- Equitable and culturally responsive learning opportunities and teaching practices
- Academic achievement
- Engagement with families

Dr. Willett reviewed the TeVal Teacher Guide 21-22 Flexibility Guidelines.

A quantitative goal is used for academic growth and development/measurement while the SEL/family engagement measure of accomplishment goal may be quantitative or qualitative in deference to flexibilities. These 2 items comprise 50% of the evaluation with the focus of the other 50% being observation related in classrooms and using the CCT rubric. Combined they culminate in the final rating.

Dr. Willett noted that PDEC is a statutorily established committee with administrators and teacher representatives chaired by the Superintendent. The Committee makes decisions about plans, votes, and the plans go to the Superintendent for approval or denial before being presented to the Board. Flexibilities came from the state, were incorporated by PDEC, a plan was created, and is now being presented to the Board.

Mr. Holt asked if the evaluators would need any additional training considering flexibilities. Dr. Willett responded that the administration is well-versed in this, presentations and calibrations are planned. Further, teachers involved with PDEC participated in the creation of the plan and will be able to assist others.

Ms. Griffin asked about SEL goals and if teachers have them with each of their students. Dr. Willett explained that teachers select the populations for the goals. For example, a subset of students may be selected for a target rather than all students. The teacher needs to explain why a population is selected and the plan. Ms. Griffin asked if with the holistic approach if the evaluator will meet with teachers more often to discuss progress and/or if adjustment is needed. Dr. Willett responded that they interact along the way. There are many opportunities including when formal observation debriefings are performed as well as other conversations.

Mr. Holt motioned to adopt the Flexibilities Educator Evaluation Plan for 2021-2022.

Mr. Renduchintala seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

C. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Holt motioned to adjourn at 5:26 PM.

Mr. Renduchintala seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Pascuzzi
Clerk

Agenda Item #H.1

SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

ITEM: Obsolete and Surplus Equipment

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

FOR BOE MEETING: October 27, 2021

ITEM SUMMARY:

The Administration requests that the Board of Education declare the below items as obsolete and turn the items over to the Town Council in accordance with Board of Education Policy 3040, Disposal of Obsolete, or Surplus Equipment/Materials.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW: N/A

BOE ACTION DESIRED:

- 1) Proposed Motion: *Motion to declare the below items as obsolete and turn the items over to the Town in accordance with the Board of Education Policy 3040*

SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

Tolland High School

Item 1:
DPX Genesis plate maker. Model number: 45210547.
Location; room 63 left front corner of room

Item 2:
DPX Genesis film machine. Model number 45210547.
Location; room 63 left front corner of room

Tolland Middle School

Drill Press
WT 12 Speed Drill Press
Model #1793
Serial #517123

The Drill Press is used by the students to drill holes into our projects using different styles of drill bits. We already have 2 other drill presses available and do not need this one.

Table Saw
Model #62
Serial #162012

The Table Saw is used by the teacher in order to cut boards to proper sizes for student projects. This one is a duplicate brought from the old Middle School and is not necessary.

Jointer
Model #50
Serial #450031

The Jointer is used by the teacher to clean up rougher boards to make them easier to use for student projects. This one is a duplicate brought from the old Middle School and is not necessary.

Metal Lathe
South Bend Model CL 187ZB
Serial #21226 R

The Metal Lathe was used by the students to shape metal by spinning it on the lathe. This tool is not part of the curriculum for the Middle School.

Sears 12" Band Saw
No Model #

The Band Saw is used by the teacher to cut thicker boards for student use. This one is a duplicate brought from the old Middle School and is not necessary.

10" Slide Compound Miter Saw
Hitachi Model #C10FSH

The Compound Miter Saw is used by the teacher to cut pieces at precise angles for student projects. This one is a duplicate brought from the old Middle School and is not necessary.

Sitter LT3 Kiln
240 VAC 50 Amps

The Kiln is used by the teacher solidify clay projects in Art classes. This was brought from the old Middle School in case it was needed but is not necessary to have in the Woodshop.

Stanley Ball Bearing Grinder
#697A

The Grinder is used to sharpen metal tools for the Wood Lathes in the Woodshop. This one is a duplicate brought from the old Middle School and is not necessary.

Wilton Orbital Sander
Burge Crane 3501

The Orbital Sander is used by students to sand curves in their projects. This one is a duplicate brought from the old Middle School and is not necessary.

Various Vices
No Number

Vices are used to grip and clamp projects to the tables they are attached to. These vices are either duplicates or are no longer attached to a table.

Scroll Saws
Various Models and Numbers

The students use Scroll Saws to cut their projects throughout their semester in Woodshop. These saws are either not in working order or have been used for spare parts to fix other models.

Mini Belt Sanders

Various Models and Numbers

The students use Sanders to sand their projects throughout their semester in Woodshop. These sanders are either not in working order or have been used for spare parts to fix other models.

Mini Router Tables

Various Models and Numbers

The students use Mini Router Tables to route the edges of their projects throughout their semester in Woodshop. These Router Tables are either not in working order or have been used for spare parts to fix other models.

TMS equipment was left when new high school was built

Agenda Item #H.2

SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

ITEM: Possible Cancellation of the December 22 BOE Meeting

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

FOR BOE MEETING: December 22, 2021

ITEM SUMMARY:

Discussion on cancelling the Board of Education meeting scheduled for December 22, 2021.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

N/A

BOARD ATTORNEY REVIEW:

N/A

BOE ACTION DESIRED:

*Proposed motion: Motion to cancel the December 22, 2021 meeting of the Board of Education.
Second/Discussion/Vote.*

SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:

SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA ITEM BACKGROUND

ITEM: Policy 3010-Board Budget Procedures and Line-Item Transfers

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

FOR BOE MEETING: October 27, 2021

ITEM SUMMARY:

Second read of Policy 3010 Board Budget Procedures and Line-Item Transfers updates.
Revision from 10-13 made and re-presented (adding June period reported in September).

FINANCIAL SUMMARY: [N/A or put in a summary]

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

Updated per S&G model policies and district protocols and practices

BOE ACTION DESIRED:

Proposed Motion: Motion to approve the updates to Policy 3010 – Board Budget Procedures and Line Item Transfers as documented in the Superintendent's Agenda Item K.1 for the October 27, 2021 Board of Education meeting.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS ATTACHED:

Policy 3010-Board Budget Procedures and Line-Item Transfers Draft

TOLLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Tolland, Connecticut

BOARD POLICY

REGARDING: Board Budget Procedures
and Line Item Transfers

Number: 3010
Business

Approved: 2/28/01

Revised: 1/26/05

Revised: 12/11/13

Revised: 10/13/21

In accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-222, the Board of Education shall prepare an itemized estimate of its budget each year for submission to the fiscal authority for review and appropriation. *For the purposes of this policy, an itemized estimate means an estimate in which the following broad categories listed below are divided into one or more budgetary category line items.*

- Salaries
- Employee Benefits
- Purchased Services
- Tuition, Public In-State
- Tuition, All Other
- Supplies
- Utilities
- Grounds maintenance
- Property
- Other

The itemized estimate provided to the Fiscal Authority is referred to herein as the "Itemized Estimate."

The board of education shall review the recommendations and suggestions made by the, town council as to how it may consolidate noneducational services and realize financial efficiencies. If the board rejects such suggestions and recommendations, it shall provide the town council a written explanation of the reason for the rejection.

Following the annual appropriation, the Board of Education shall meet and revise such itemized estimate, if necessary, and adopt a final appropriated budget for the year. Line items in the budget may be allocated more specifically by the Superintendent or his/her designee in the development, administration and monitoring of the budget. *The Superintendent or his designee shall notify the Board of Education through the appropriate subcommittee of changes to the line items following this final adoption.*

The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall be responsible for administering and monitoring the budget through the course of the year. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall maintain a system of appropriate expenditures and encumbrance accounting that is organized to conform with the requirements for State and Federal Accounting Reports. A budget report shall be prepared in *an agreed upon format* showing for each line item the appropriated budget amount, expenditure to date (to include encumbered and expended amounts), projected expenditures, difference between the projected expenditures and the appropriation, and general comments indicating the reasons for the difference.

Such budget report shall be presented to the Board of Education at *the first* regularly scheduled meeting in the month following the period for which such report is prepared, in accordance with the following schedule:

<u>Period Covered</u>	<u>Submitted</u>
<i>June</i>	<i>September</i>
<i>July & August, September</i>	<i>October</i>
<i>October, November, December</i>	<i>January</i>
<i>January, February</i>	<i>March</i>
<i>March, April</i>	<i>May</i>

Based on expenditures and budget projections, with such budget reports, the Superintendent shall recommend to the Board of Education transfers from one line item (as set forth above) to another as needed. *Line item overages are identified for the Finance and Facilities committee, and to the extent that negative line item balances occur, these line items will be periodically reviewed.*

Budgetary transfer of funds from any program code which exceeds \$30,000 must be approved by the Board of Education. In the event an emergency precludes waiting for the next regular Board meeting for approval of transfers over \$30,000, the Superintendent will inform the Chairperson of the Board of the circumstances. The Chairperson shall be authorized to act on behalf of the Board in such cases and shall report any such acts to the Board of Education for ratification at the next Board meeting. A written explanation of such transfer shall be provided to the town council.

The Board of Education shall not expend more than the amount of the appropriation and the amount of money received from other sources for school purposes. If any occasion arises whereby additional funds are needed by Board of Education, the Chairperson of the Board shall notify the Town Council and submit a request for such necessary additional funds. No additional funds shall be expended until such supplemental appropriation is granted and no supplemental expenditures shall be made in excess of those so authorized.

Legal references:

Connecticut general statute §10-221

Connecticut general statute §10-222

Public act 13-60, an act concerning consolidation of noneducational services

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL

ZOOM MEETING

October 12, 2021 – 6:00 PM

Council Members Present: Tammy Nuccio, Steven Jones, Kurt Schenher, William Bode, Brenda Falusi (attended virtually), Lou Luba, John Reagan

Council Members Absent:

- 1) **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Tammy Nuccio.
- 2) **Executive Session:** At 6:00 PM, Steven Jones motioned, seconded by Lou Luba to go into Executive Session to discuss Town Manager Search and invited Doug Thomas and Mike Wilkinson with a unanimous vote of 7-0-0 to discuss a subject. The Executive Session concluded at 6:59 PM.
- 3) **Adjournment:** Steven Jones motioned, seconded by Brenda Falusi, to adjourn at 6:59 PM with a unanimous vote of 7-0-0.

Tammy Nuccio, Chair

MINUTES

**TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID MEETING
October 12, 2021 – 7:00 P.M.**

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
TOLLAND, CT

2021 OCT 13 PM 12:54

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tammy Nuccio, Chair; Steve Jones, Vice Chair; Bill Bode, Brenda Falusi (Zoom), John Reagan, Kurt Schenher

MEMBERS ABSENT: none

OTHERS PRESENT: Lisa Hancock, Interim Town Manager; Barbara Pettijohn, Director, Library Services; Jason Lawrence, Assessor; Todd Penney; Mike Wilkinson, Director of Administrative Services

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Nuccio called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Recited

3. **MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Observed

4. **PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS:**

4.1 Citation Recognizing E. Steve Clark

Ms. Nuccio read the citation recognizing E. Steve Clark's 30 years of outstanding service to the Town of Tolland.

Ms. Nuccio presented a plaque to Mr. Clark and thanked him for all he has done for the Town of Tolland.

Mr. Clark thanked Ms. Nuccio for the citation and added that it does not seem like it has been 30 years.

5. **PUBLIC PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** (*on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council*) (2-minute limit) - none

6. **PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS:** none

7a. **REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES RESPONSIBLE TO THE COUNCIL**

Tourism – Ms. Falusi noted that the meeting was cancelled.

Sustainable CT – Ms. Falusi noted that they have not met.

7b. **REPORTS OF TOWN COUNCIL LIAISONS**

- Blight Committee – no meeting
- Historic District Commission- no meeting
- Planning & Zoning Commission – Ms. Falusi provided an update.
- Agricultural Commission – meeting cancelled.
- Economic Development Commission – Mr. Schenher provided an update.
- Parks & Recreation Advisory Board – Mr. Schenher provided an update.
- Birch Grove Building Committee – Mr. Luba provided an update.
- WPCA – no meeting.
- Eastern Highlands Health District – no meeting.
- Conservation Commission – Mr. Jones noted the next meeting is October 14th.
- Permanent Celebration Committee – Mr. Bode provided an update of the September 30th meeting.

8. **NEW BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS):**

8.1 The "Tolland tax relief program", AKA "Ordinance 60" is required to be reviewed every 5 years or in the year following the revaluation. The council needs to review the ordinance.

Mr. Lawrence provided an overview of the Tolland Tax Relief Program including its history, how it works, and its flaws. In terms of the latter, one issue is that the point is for one's taxes not to increase but land in excess of 2

acres is taxed at the current mill rate adding an extra layer of processing for the Assessor's Office. He provided an example of other ways the system is difficult to manage, a review of the programs of some towns, and possible alternative scenarios for Tolland's program. He believes a program to provide relief should run smoothly and that there are easier ways to manage it. He added that those with more acreage should not be penalized. The current freeze benefit is \$160,509 (.28% of the budget) and the average benefit is \$949. Mr. Lawrence addressed column L in the spreadsheet which presents a scenario of offering everyone in the program \$1,000 and grandfathering everyone over \$1,000. The cost to the town would be \$214K annually, .37% of the budget. Other scenarios presented were based on longevity in town.

Ms. Nuccio commented that she would not want to hurt anyone currently in the program. She asked if they could hold the freeze of anyone in the program, so they are not negatively impacting those over \$2,000. Mr. Lawrence responded that because this is a local option, anything can be done but making it work in the software is the issue. Ms. Nuccio noted that she would like to see a hybrid row indicating up to \$2K in the spreadsheet and how it would impact the numbers.

Mr. Luba noted that he would like to see what would provide the greatest benefit to the residents without creating a substantial issue administratively.

Mr. Jones asked if any of the options offer an opportunity for the program to be expanded so it can help as many seniors as possible. Mr. Lawrence responded that they use the household income level set by the state - \$62,800. The asset test is ten times the income and is done every other year. Traditionally, people file every other year but due to COVID, everyone in the program passed the test last year without submitting documentation. He explained that difficulty arises due to the time needed to do the calculations given timing of when the mill rate is passed and getting the bills out. Ms. Nuccio confirmed that it would be easier if it was a credit. She would like to see scenarios of \$1,500 and \$2,000 for column L. Ms. Nuccio asked about why an applicant may be denied. Mr. Lawrence responded that it would be due to the applicant being over the income limit. Ms. Nuccio noted that she has been considering having the limit be a percentage of income rather than a straight income limit to help those who fall just over the current limit.

Mr. Jones asked if Mr. Rubino, who was involved in originally drafting the program, has offered any input. Mr. Lawrence responded that he provided a spreadsheet revision to address a current issue and offered his time to assist with scenarios, but they have not yet sat down together. Mr. Jones commented that column L appears to have benefits but noted that they need to give Mr. Lawrence more time to address this given the staffing issue. He would like to have some citizen engagement as well. Mr. Lawrence noted that they ran this by the Town Attorney's office to learn what would need to be done to amend the program and learned that it was set up so the Council may decide on revisions.

Ms. Nuccio clarified that if they went to a credit system, outside credits could be applied as well which would simplify the process. Currently, those credits are not reflected in the spreadsheet.

Mr. Jones asked about implementation of changes. Mr. Lawrence responded that adopted changes would be applied to the upcoming tax year.

- 8.2 Annual meeting of the Tolland Public Library Foundation Inc. to discuss Foundation Directors, 2020/2021 accomplishments, 2021/2022 goals and 2021/2022 approved budget as well as an overview of the Foundation activities over the past year.

Linda Byam, President of the Tolland Public Library Foundation, was in attendance. In accordance with the bylaws of the Tolland Public Library, the annual meeting of the membership, which is the Council, is held on the first Tuesday of October.

Ms. Byam reviewed her letter to the Council and highlights included the following items:

- Foundation Directors Alison Haigis, Cliff Vachon, and Linda Byam have terms that end October 2021 and have requested to be reappointed to 2 year terms
- 2020-2021 Accomplishments
 - Funding provided for a wall-mounted media display for the Children's Program Room

- Campaign was hosted to recognize and thank Library staff
- Funding provided for Hoopla, Brain HQ, 2 mobile hotspots, databases and online subscriptions, two naturalist programs, two virtual cooking classes,
- Renewal of premium Zoom license
- Eleventh season of the Eaton-Dimock-King Author Series
- Increased awareness of the Foundation and availability to be a recipient of third-party donors
- Worked with investment manager for the two endowment funds
- As of August 31, 2021, the year-to-date grant distribution from the Foundation's endowments and operating funds is \$17,261.08

Ms. Byam reviewed the goals for the upcoming year which include the following:

- Implementation of the *Tolland Oral History Project*
- Provide focused grants to the library based on endowment income and donations

Ms. Byam reviewed the 2021-2022 budget.

Ms. Nuccio asked about the demand for the hotspots. Ms. Byam responded that she will request and provide the usage information to the Chair.

Mr. Jones asked what Ms. Byam believes will be the greatest challenges going into the next year. Ms. Byam responded that in terms of the Foundation, they have had success with the endowment due to the market and need to ensure it is in place for perpetuity.

Ms. Nuccio thanked the Foundation for all it does. The endowment needs to be guarded but what they choose to do for the community make a difference. She thanked them for their hard work and maintaining a balance to ensure funds are available in the future.

Ms. Falusi thanked Ms. Byam for all they do for the community. Libraries are vibrant centers of communities, boost the experiences of people, and help preserve history and the truth. They are helping connect people in the community.

8.3 Appointments to vacancies on various municipal boards/commissions.

- 8.3a. Reappointments to the Tolland Public Library Foundation
- 8.3b. Reappointments to the Permanent Celebration Committee
- 8.3c. Reappointments to the Veterans Recognition Committee

Mr. Jones motioned to approve the reappointments to the Tolland Library Foundation – Linda Byam, Alison Haigis, Cliff Vachon for a term of 10/31/21 – 10/31/23; the Permanent Celebration Committee – Celeste Senechal, Mary-Pat Soucy for a term of 11/03/21 – 11/02/24; the Veterans Recognition Commission – Carl Davis, Perne Maynard for a term of 10/31/21 – 10/31/24.

Ms. Falusi seconded the motion.

Discussion: Ms. Nuccio thanked everyone. She noted that many of those reappointed are long-term volunteers and she appreciates all they are doing for the town.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

8.4 Discussion of a future resolution to amend the Code of the Town of Tolland, Chapter 112, Parks and Recreation Areas (§ 112-5 – Park regulations).

Ms. Hancock provided background information on this item and reviewed draft updates to the ordinance. These updates were reviewed by the Town Attorney. Ms. Hancock explained that in terms of the moratorium, it falls under the purview of the PZC.

Draft updates were reviewed and included the following:

- §112-2 Definitions – marijuana, cannabis, tobacco products
- §112-5 Park Regulations – addition of item R, usage in recreation areas

- §112-9 Posting of Signs – section added
- §112-10 Designation of smoking and tobacco use areas for certain events

Ms. Hancock noted that she would like the Council to discuss the drafted language this evening and she will present it again at the next meeting to set a date for a public hearing regarding making changes to the ordinance.

Ms. Nuccio asked why cannabis and marijuana are looked at differently in the legislation. Also, she did not see anything regarding vaping. Ms. Hancock noted that vaping was included but will review the draft. She will ask the Town Attorney about why he recommended breaking out cannabis and marijuana.

Ms. Falusi recommended not including the verbiage regarding signage. She envisions that people will say they did not see the sign and use it as an excuse. She also noted that signs may be stolen, not replaced in time, and people will feel they can participate in the activities addressed in the ordinance. Ms. Falusi noted that they should have signage but does not know that it needs to be expressed in the ordinance that it needs to be displayed. Additionally, she understands cannabis is used for products which are legal in the marketplace while if marijuana refers to items that are not legal, then she believes the definition does not need to be included. She requested a better legal definition.

Mr. Luba spoke regarding the signage and commented that in order for an ordinance to be effective, notice needs to be provided. People could claim that they were not aware of the restriction, so signage needs to be in place as an additional step for notification. He recommended signage be placed at the entrances and that notifications be sent out via e-blasts so that the town does its due diligence in making people aware of the ordinance. In terms of the difference between cannabis and marijuana, cannabis is more of the offshoot of THC byproducts while marijuana is plant-based. Thus, both need to be included and what is in the draft falls in line with the federal definition. Mr. Luba addressed the vaping aspect and noted that it has been enumerated well and is sufficient, but they should address oils as well. Overall, in terms of prohibitions and restrictions, this falls in line with the provisions of Responsible and Equitable Regulation of Adult-Use Cannabis (RERACA). Ms. Hancock noted that oils are addressed in the definition in §112-2. Mr. Luba explained that he was referring to the vaping aspect and would like to see it included in §112-2 under Smoking.

Mr. Jones recommended providing the draft language to the Recreation Advisory Board for their input. He asked if the Conservation Commission would need to adapt its policies as well given the definition of “park” under §112-2 so it is in alignment. Ms. Hancock will ask the Town Attorney for his opinion on this.

Ms. Nuccio asked about §112-10. Ms. Hancock explained that there are some areas, such as the Lodge, where people can smoke away from the venue during an event. She clarified that this is not to say that every park would have a designated smoking area.

Ms. Falusi noted that the Lodge is surrounded by a park, so they need to be careful with the wording if there is a designated smoking area. Further, she recommended asking Public Safety if they want to allow such an area given the trees and foliage. Ms. Falusi suggested looking at what the state allows, and disallows, in parks since state forests are in town and she assumes there are rules or ordinances in place.

9. OLD BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS):

9.1 Discussion on the engineering study and Miracle Field location and an update from the Miracle League Field Committee.

Ms. Hancock noted that Mr. and Mrs. Leibowitz are in attendance and met with the Council in May. They requested that once Birch Grove was essentially complete that this be added as an agenda item for further discussion. She added that they are looking at having all those with interest such as the Council, the Board of Education, and some of the sporting groups together for a special meeting.

Mr. Leibowitz provided background information and noted that one of the Council’s recommendations was to start fundraising and they have done so. They have commitments and an ongoing raffle totaling almost \$120K. He noted that they have not yet approached any major donors because they do not yet have a location. Mrs. Leibowitz noted that the grant writer cannot go after many grants without a location. Mr. Leibowitz reviewed

the financial commitments, fundraisers, and meetings that have taken place. Awareness of the project is being built and there are over 50 committee members.

Mr. Leibowitz explained that they feel this project would be seen as a field of dreams for special needs athletes and put Tolland on the map. They would like to move forward on the project. Mrs. Leibowitz added that while this is for special needs athletes, it is also to pull the community together to bridge gaps and have spectators cheer on the players. An integral part would be getting youth involved to help others. It is an all-inclusive field for everyone in the community. Mr. Leibowitz noted that they were asked for suggestions for alternate locations. He noted that they, along with their consulting engineer, researched locations in town and the Birch Grove site was selected based on the infrastructure and cost savings. He added that if this site is not selected, they would not be doing their due diligence if they did not open this to other towns/communities. CARES Act funds are available and other communities are looking to invest in projects such as this one. Mr. Leibowitz commented that they understand the fiscal tightness in Tolland but want it to be at the Birch Grove site. He added that Mr. Sztaba recommended the site for the field if it is going to be in Tolland. Mr. Leibowitz added that at the last meeting they agreed to do an engineering study as recommended by the former Town Manager but do not want to commit the funds without a commitment that if the study comes back with a thumbs up that this is where the field would be located.

Ms. Nuccio commented that she is committed to find a way to make this work in Tolland. They need to hold a joint meeting with the Board of Education, the Council, the Recreation Department, and sports organizations in town because there are obstacles that need to be acknowledged and addressed. The field would change the makeup of the current Birch Grove field and the teams impacted need to have a home as well. Further, ongoing maintenance needs to be addressed. Currently, Tolland is looking at a tax impact of \$100K/year to address its turf field. Mrs. Leibowitz noted that the project's turf field is very different, and more information can be provided. Mr. Leibowitz noted that a trust can be set up to address maintenance costs. Mrs. Leibowitz added that people are vested in helping and highlighted other ways that the field could be used.

It was noted that the next step is to hold a special meeting as discussed and Ms. Nuccio added that they will also need to look at setting up a trust for ongoing maintenance.

Ms. Falusi commented that the number of residents who have stepped forward to show that this is important is impressive. She thanked Mr. and Mrs. Leibowitz for their dedication to this program and all they are doing. She explained that the town needs to move forward as quickly as it can to ensure that the community can grow and be resilient. The field offers opportunities for the town's neighbors to be involved and she is sure that with the town's open space they can have enough fields for everyone but currently there is not a field that fills this need or one that makes everyone feel they are valued and important members of the community. She is thrilled there is an opportunity to bring this to Tolland and it should be a top priority.

Mr. Jones commented that he would like this to move forward as well and recommended setting a special meeting date prior to December given that the project would be considered infrastructure and the schedule of when the capital improvement plan is presented to the Council.

Mr. Luba noted that the Birch Grove Building Committee discussed this with Mr. and Mrs. Leibowitz and it was not an easy decision but there were too many unknown variables. He appreciates the hard work they are doing. This is a worthwhile project and it is overwhelming how the community has supported the project. The town is open, welcoming, and supportive. The project has value, and he would like to see it examined further. They need to ensure all of the interested parties are involved and that there is full buy-in. He added that regarding the trust, it would need to be set up and would fall under 501 (c)(3) with oversight. Mr. Leibowitz noted that this would not be a Tolland field. It would be a special needs field for all of northern CT.

Mr. Reagan commented that he too would like to find a way to make it happen. Mr. and Mrs. Leibowitz have passion for this and have done awesome work.

Ms. Hancock requested that all questions about the project be shared with her. A discussion took place about touring the field in Lyme. Mr. and Mrs. Leibowitz will provide a date for the tour that Ms. Hancock will share with the Council. October 30th was discussed as a potential tour date.

- 9.2 Tabled agenda item from September 28, 2021. Consideration of a resolution to postpone the consideration of approval to allow the Town Manager to authorize applying for a S.A.F.E.R. Grant Page 1 of 73 (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) through FEMA's Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, until the November 23, 2021 meeting.

Ms. Hancock noted that this is a procedural item.

Mr. Jones motioned to approve the following:

WHEREAS, The Town Council has already approved the motion to table the resolution to a future date;

WHEREAS, The Town Council must take action on an item that was tabled at their next meeting and is formally desiring to postpone the item until November 23, 2021; and

WHEREAS, The Town Manager and staff recommend postponing the resolution to November 23, 2021 in order to prepare additional analytical information;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Tolland Town Council approves the postponement of the resolution to November 23, 2021.

Mr. Luba seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

10. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER

- Operating results from the first quarter are included in the report
- Revenue may be received from state grants
- Class action suit regarding opioids and a potential settlement

Ms. Falusi asked if pending litigation will be an executive session discussion. Ms. Hancock responded that in regard to the details it would.

Mr. Jones gave kudos to Public Safety and Emergency Management regarding Hurricane Ida.

11. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 11.1 September 28, 2021 Remote Special Meeting Minutes
- 11.2 September 28, 2021 Hybrid Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Jones motioned to approve the minutes as laid out in item 11.1 and 11.2.

Mr. Schenher seconded the motion.

Discussion: none

A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed. Abstentions: Luba, Reagan

12. CORRESPONDENCE TO COUNCIL

- E-mail regarding glyphosates

13. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

- Electronic recycling – October 23, 2021, starts at 8:00 AM
- Harvest Event – Saturday, October 16, 2021

14. COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILPERSONS

- Ms. Nuccio asked Ms. Hancock for an update on hiring for the position of Assistant Director of Human Services and information on when the process for a Project Manager will begin. Ms. Hancock responded that regarding the latter, they will start moving forward with completing the job description and expect to advertise in

November or December. Regarding the Assistant Director of Human Services position, Mr. Wilkinson noted that they are in the process of hiring someone. Ms. Nuccio asked if the town's blight regulations include commercial businesses. Ms. Falusi responded that they do not. Ms. Nuccio explained that there are locations in town which are not rented and asked if there is anything that can be done from a blight perspective, and in the blight ordinance to encourage having them rented or not looking like vacant spaces. Ms. Hancock responded that she will research this. She added that she has been working with the EDC to compile an inventory of the empty spaces, including vacant spaces, as well as areas that could be developed for commercial businesses or other types of use. Her goal is to work with the Commission to bring potential tenants, developers, and real estate professionals to town, take them on a tour of the spaces, and provide them with regulations and ideas for use. She noted that while commercial development will help the grand list, it will not solve the issue of the tax burden on the residential base given that there are so few areas in town that can be developed.

- Mr. Jones noted that in regard to item 9.1, the Wanat Phase I Grand Opening is slated for October 30th. A brief discussion regarding item 9.1 took place regarding a date for the joint meeting. They are looking at a date in early November.
- Ms. Falusi commented that yesterday was Indigenous Peoples' Day. The President signed a proclamation to this effect, and she took the day to do what he suggested and looked at how indigenous people have impacted society throughout the centuries. She explained that they have been honored to serve in the military and uplifted and invested in communities. They have impacted scholarship, art, and science and are an integral part of history. Ms. Falusi noted that she would like to see Indigenous People's Day added to the town's calendar. She explained that it has been asked before and the reply was that it was not an official federal holiday, so she is asking that it now be added to the calendar since it has been officially recognized.
- Mr. Jones commented that someone asked him how many people are using the absentee ballots for this election since it was extended due to COVID. Ms. Hancock responded that as of last week there were 55 applicants and she expects there to be more.

15. **PUBLIC LISTED PARTICIPATION** *(on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council)*
(3 minute limit) - none.

16. **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Jones motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:22 PM

Mr. Schenher seconded the motion.

Discussion: none.

A roll call vote was taken. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,



Lisa Pascuzzi
Town Council Clerk

Town Council Chair