

Tentative minutes of the **Bethel Board of Education Regular Meeting** held on **February 19, 2009**, in Board of Education Conference Room E.

Attendance: Jen Larsen, Linda Anderson

Administrative Attendance: G. Chesley, J. Jordan, T. Yonsky, D. DeBlois, P. Cosentino, K. Brooks, B. Kirmil, L. Pica, K. Smith, B. Germinaro, K. Gombos

B. Kingston, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

1. **Call to Order**

A. ***Roll Call for Quorum***

Board Members Present: W. Kingston, S. Carlsen, L. Craybas, J. DeRosa, M. Duff, M. Knickerbocker (arrived 7:40 p.m.), R. Renner

Board Members Absent: B. Foulk, K. Harrison

B. ***Pledge Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America***

2. **Approval of Minutes**

A. ***February 5, 2009***

**Motion by R. Renner: Move to approve the minutes of February 5, 2009.  
Seconded by J. DeRosa  
Motion Carried Unanimously**

**Motion by M. Knickerbocker: Move to add Agenda Item 2 B. Approval of Minutes for February 11, 2009 Special Meeting.  
Seconded by R. Renner  
Motion Carried Unanimously**

**Motion by L. Craybas: Move to approve the minutes of February 11, 2009, Special Meeting as corrected.  
Seconded by J. DeRosa  
Motion Carried Unanimously**

3. **Administrative/Board Member Update**

Dr. Chesley stated the State has canceled the Security Grant. He will be sending a letter to our legislators.

Mrs. Yonsky, Director of Fiscal Services, said the security grant project at the high school and middle school was to install full card access and full security. The middle school was to get more walkie-talkies. This project is now on hold.

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**TOWN OF BETHEL  
TOWN CLERK**

Dr. Cosentino showed the Board the video the high school produced that will be shown to the NEASC visiting committee. The video highlighted the many opportunities available to the students at Bethel High School. Dr. Cosentino also plans to show the video to real estate agents and run the video on Channel 26.

Robin Renner, Board Member, described the day she spent shadowing Mr. Muharem, Assistant Principal, at the middle school. She said he is constantly in classrooms, meeting with staff and students. She said she did not observe any disrespect from students to teachers and other students and staff. She feels this is a direct result of the work and dedication of the administration.

Larry Craybas, Board Member, described the day he spent shadowing the Assistant Principals at the high school to understand what they do. He said he has not seen work loads like this ever in his career. They spend an extraordinary amount of time working to make sure that a quality education is being provided. There are a number of interruptions or emergencies. Their work loads cover so many different things like work on annual plans, curriculum and scheduling, meetings that occur on a weekly basis, and involvement with ROTC and business education, student safety, parking, and discipline. This is a work load that doesn't end at 3 PM; they work hours in the afternoon and evenings, and attend students' sport events, plays, and proms. Most important is the work they were doing with teachers, professional development with the new teachers and tenured teachers to be sure they are growing professionally and effectively, and teacher observations and evaluations.

Bill Kingston, Chairman, said he had the opportunity to bring eight high school students along with two science teachers to King Industries. They went through the labs and plant and saw production equipment and did some calculations on setting up an experiment. He had a civil engineer talk to them about his projects. Mr. Kingston stated he would like to make this an annual trip if possible.

#### **4. Correspondence**

- Letter from Bob Dolan, BHS All Sports Booster Club President, regarding the Board's discussion of possible elimination of middle school and freshman interscholastic sports.
- Letter from Michael Powers, BHS Assistant Football Coach, regarding the Board's discussion of possible elimination of freshman sports.
- Email from Todd Piatnik regarding the Board's discussion of possible elimination of middle school and freshman interscholastic sports.
- Email from Laurel & Timothy Draper regarding the Board's discussion of possible elimination of freshman sports.
- Email from Arthur Horan regarding the Board's discussion of possible elimination of freshman sports.
- Letter from Ron Lienhardt regarding the Board's discussion of possible elimination of freshman sports.

## **5. Audience Participation**

Dan Gaita, Dodgingtown Road, apologized to the Board for not fully understanding what legally can and can't be done with the unions when he suggested the Board make a 5% salary cut per person across the board. He said he spoke with Senator Boucher today and she informed him there is new legislation to re-open contracts for specific items. She is willing to meet with the Board to go over the new legislation.

Bob Crnic, Old Hawleyville Rd, referred to past minutes of the Board of Education and said that no one in the community is going after teacher cuts and would like the Board to come in at a sub-zero or close to it as possible. He said there are other ways to creatively lower the Board's budget and he is advocating that the Board lower its costs.

Jim Roden, 53 Juniper Rd, said he was told he was singled out, as a member of the Board of Finance, by an administrator at a meeting as someone with an agenda.

Jen Larsen, 128 Grassy Plain, said she has attended many Board of Education meetings and thinks the Board is working very hard on the budget and working along with the Town with the same goal in mind.

## **6. 2009-2010 Education Budget Workshop**

Mr. Craybas said he, along with other Board members and administrators, attended a legislative workshop session. Legislators were also invited and only one out of five attended. Senator Boucher did not show. We need their help in fighting in Hartford. He would like Representative Jason Bartlett to get involved.

Dr. Chesley said he has cut more than \$1.5 million from the budget so far and the bus company has helped with their contract. He has had three meetings with each of the bargaining units and has requested help of some kind. Some did not accept a freeze but said they would look at other ideas. As of today they have declined to meet with him.

Dr. Chesley said the administrators and non-union central office staff will furlough five (5) days. He is working daily with the offices of two senators on what the federal supplementary funding is, where it is, and who will control it. As of now he does not know. He does not have the answer on Educational Cost Sharing (ECS) funding or other rescinds from the State. He also does not have the numbers on excess costs for next year, and has gone out to bid on insurance because insurance came in at 12% and we budgeted for 10%. There is also a separation agreement out to teachers and the deadline to take advantage of the agreement has not happened and he is unsure how many will take advantage of it. The budget is now currently at 1.68% increase which is only for the insurance. All other items are at 0% or below.

**Motion by M. Knickerbocker: Move to approve the Board of Education budget for the 2009-2010 school year in the amount of \$37,181,750.**

**Seconded by J. DeRosa**

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

Mr. Craybas stated that the mandates that go unfunded is where we need the legislators help to dissolve them.

Mrs. Yonsky, Director of Fiscal Services, said the 1.68% increase solely reflects the benefit line for insurance.

She reviewed the proposed new additional changes to the budget for payroll and non-payroll.

<u>Proposed additional changes to the Budget- Payroll</u>	
Elementary Tech Education from 1.0 to .6	\$23,290
Secretary – TBD retire incentive (1 FTE +12 to 10 months)	\$54,963
Non-Union Staff Give-Back	\$11,188
TBD – Estimated for separation incentive	\$142,830

<u>Proposed additional changes to the Budget – Non-Payroll</u>	
Excess Cost based on Governor's flat-funding	\$65,000

### BOE BUDGET CHANGES FROM 2008-09 TO 2009-10

	FTE Headcount	Amount in \$ Dollars	Percentage Change
2008-09 Approved Budget	403.01	36,567,417	
2009-10 Proposed Budget	392.95	37,181,750	
<b>Increase in Budget 2008-09 to 2009-10</b>	<b>(10.06)</b>	<b>614,333</b>	<b>1.68%</b>
<b>Cost to Carry Forward 08-09 Budget into 09-10</b>		<b>1,515,724</b>	<b>4.14%</b>
<b>Proposed Changes to Budget - Payroll</b>		<b>-688,951</b>	<b>-1.88%</b>
<b>Proposed Changes to Budget - Non-Payroll</b>		<b>-212,440</b>	<b>-0.58%</b>
<b>Total Budget Increase 2008-09 to 2009-10</b>		<b>614,333</b>	<b>1.68%</b>
<b>Proposed Changes to Budget - Payroll</b>			
HS Certified Teacher - Regular Education	(1.00)	-72,513	
HS Certified Teacher - Special Education	(1.00)	-72,513	
HS Paraprofessionals	(2.00)	-36,416	
HS Reduction in Number of Class Sections	(0.21)	-10,622	
MS Certified Teacher - Regular Education	(1.00)	-64,516	
MS Certified Teacher - Reading Specialist 1.0 to .6	(0.40)	-24,840	

MS Paraprofessionals	(2.00)	-36,416	
<i>Elementary Tech Educator from 1.0 to .6</i>	<i>(0.40)</i>	<i>-23,290</i>	
SW Physical Therapist	(0.50)	-33,207	
SW Administrator - Supr. Reading & L.A.	(0.55)	-67,037	
<i>Sec'y-TBD retire incentive (1 FTE + 12 to 10mos)</i>	<i>(1.00)</i>	<i>-54,963</i>	
<i>Non-Union Staff Give-Back</i>	-	<i>-11,188</i>	
Administrator Union Give-Back Furlough Days	-	-27,000	
Administrator Non-Union Give-Back	-	-11,600	
<i>TBD - Estimated for separation incentive</i>	-	<i>-142,830</i>	
	(10.06)	-688,951	-1.88%

**Proposed Changes to Budget - Non-Payroll**

SW Health Benefits Related to Staff Reductions	-68,808	
SW Bus Contract with First Student Renegotiated	-62,157	
<i>Excess Cost based on Governor's flat-funding</i>	<i>-65,000</i>	
Reduction of Instructional Materials/Supplies	-16,475	
	-212,440	-0.58%

**Motion by L. Craybas: Move to suspend for the 2009-2010 school year interscholastic sports at the middle school and freshman sports at the high school and that savings to be applied to the budget.**

**Seconded by S. Carlsen**

**AYE: L. Craybas**

**NAY: S. Carlsen, J. DeRosa, M. Duff, B. Kingston, M. Knickerbocker, R. Renner**

**Motion Failed**

**7. Adjourn**

**Motion by M. Knickerbocker: Move to adjourn at 9:10 p.m.**

**Seconded by J. DeRosa**

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Paré  
Board Recorder