

**BOARD OF FINANCE  
TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR  
11 RYE STREET  
EAST WINDSOR, CONNECTICUT 06088**

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING**

**Wednesday, March 14, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.**

These minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting.

Members Present: Jason Bowsza, Joseph Pellegrini, Danelle E. Godeck, Jerilyn Corso, Marie DeSousa, and Kathleen Pippin  
Members Absent: None  
Alternates Present: Sharon Tripp  
Alternate Absent: Paulette Broder  
Others: Catherine Cabral, Denise Menard, Alan Baker, Dale Nelson, Richard Pippin, James Richards, Chris Mickey, Teresa Kane, Cathy Simonelli, William Schultz, William Raber, Nichole DeSousa, Kathy Bilodeau, Linda Guiliano, Ty Osborn, and many others  
Press: Cory Garfman (Journal Inquirer)

**I. Call to Order**

Chairman Jason Bowsza called the Special Meeting to Order at 7:06 p.m., in the East Windsor High School. He indicated the Meeting will stand in recess to comply with FOI due to the typographical error in the agenda. The meeting was recessed at 7:06 p.m.

Chairman Jason Bowsza reconvened the meeting at 7:30 p.m., in the East Windsor High School.

**II. Presentation of Proposed Budgets for Fiscal Year 2012-2013**

**a. Board of Education**

Dr. Teresa Kane, Superintendent of Schools and Chairman Chris Mickey addressed the Board. They began their presentation by using a Power Point Presentation, copies of which were supplied to all Board Members and members of the audience. Another document entitled "Budget Guidelines for FY 2013" dated March 14, 2012 was also given to the Board Members for their review along with audience members.

In the beginning of the presentation, Mr. Mickey and Dr. Kane explained that the East Windsor School System is responsible for 1,285 students and 247 employees. A breakdown of the students and teachers per school, Board of Education Offices, full time personnel and part-time tutors, paraprofessionals, substitutes and others. The Board was reminded that there has been a new leadership team since July, 2011 which includes administrators at the high school and elementary school.

Dr. Kane explained what the East Windsor Public Schools have been implementing in 2011-2012. Those initiatives are:

- Started full-day kindergarten
- Eliminated the pre-kindergarten waiting list
- Started a breakfast program at Broad Brook Elementary
- Creating a parent portal
- Implementing a Point-of-Sales system for breakfast and lunch programs
- Started “turnaround work” for district improvement
- Providing counseling for student at no cost to the district
- Providing social/emotional/behavioral supports to students and teachers
- Redesigning the website
- Upgrading the network
- Started Community Newsletters
- Will update the EWPS Strategic Plan
- Created a new teacher evaluation system
- Realign the business functions of the district to support Strategic Plan
- Reviewing and updating the district safety procedures
- Adopted an online employment process

Dr. Kane discussed the critical issues the district is presently facing. She indicated that the district is among the thirty lowest performing districts in Connecticut. The district did not make adequate yearly progress in literacy. The Broad Brook School and Middle School are in need of improvement. The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) placed the High School has on warning for community resources for learning, inadequate funding and facility. This could lead EWHS to not being accredited and possibly affecting our graduating class’s future higher education options. Progress is being made in that NEASC has removed the EWHS from warning in the area of curriculum. Overall, the district’s performance is improving. Dr. Kane explained a graph showing test scores from 2006 through 2011 in reading and math for grades 3 through 8. The figures were percentages of students at or above proficient levels.

A brief discussion was held.

Dr. Kane continued to discuss the steps the school district is taking to improve student’s performance. Those steps are as follows:

- The instructional focus for students at Broad Brook School is: “At Broad Brook School – We read, we think, we share our thinking, we succeed!”
- The instructional focus for students at East Windsor Middle School is: “For all students to make gains in reading comprehension in all subject areas over time. These gains will be measured by teacher-created tests, benchmarks, CMT, and Star assessments.”
- The instructional focus for students at East Windsor High School is: “A coordinated school-wide effort to provide opportunities for all students to demonstrate growth of problem-solving skills in all disciplines as measured by the State and district assessments.”
- The practices for teachers at Broad Brook Elementary are think, pair, share, questioning, modeling, visual clues, and differentiated Instruction.
- The practices for teachers at the East Windsor Middle School are questioning, making connections and vocabulary.
- The practices for teachers at the East Windsor High School are modeling, higher order questioning, active reading and learning objectives.
- The administration will realign resources (people, time, talent, energy, and money) to support the instructional focus for all students.

Chairman Chris Mickey began explaining the budget parameters from the Town. The Town has requested that the budget presented is a level service budget and the budget being presented reflects the needs and priorities of the district’s children. Mr. Mickey showed the next slide which was entitled “Budget Guidelines 2012-13 (FY 13), Town Parameters: Level Service, The Breakdown”. This slide showed the current budget breakdown, including utilities, personnel, and expenses which total \$21,059,617. The breakdown of the increases which total \$1,129,802 or 5.4% increase, level service parameters which total \$22,189,419.00, and town fund request which totaled \$20,777,951. The Town funded 2011-2012 was in the amount of \$19,512,262, the Town fund request for 2012-2013 is in the amount of \$20,777,951 which is an increase of \$1,265,689 or 6.5%.

Mr. Mickey discussed the next slide discussed the increases in personnel costs, which includes salaries and benefits figures. He indicated certified, classified, and administrator contracts have been settled at a 1% increase plus steps. In FY 12, all employees received a 0% increase and no steps. He noted that East Windsor Public Schools estimates \$641,993 of salaries and benefits will be funded through grants in the FY 13 and the schools will absorb the loss of Education Jobs Fund as stipulated in the grant in the amount of \$160,211.

A brief discussion was held regarding the Education Jobs Fund Grant.

The other increase discussed was the category other expenses. This is considered health, technology, building based budgets (textbooks, pencils, paper and so forth), special education tuitions and out-of-district tuitions for vocational schools and magnet schools. A brief discussion regarding transportation for regular

transportation of children to and from school and special education transportation and the costs associated with same.

Dr. Kane began explaining the revenues portion of the Board of Education budget. She indicated the district has not yet received information regarding the funding levels for the Federal Grants for FY 13. However, Federal Grants which have been received by the district are as follows:

- Special Education Grant (94-142)
- Title I
- Title IIA Teacher Quality
- Title III
- Perkins

The total amount of Federal Grants received in FY 12 by the East Windsor Public Schools is in the amount of \$489,956.

A brief discussion was held.

Dr. Kane also mentioned the revenues from the State of Connecticut. She indicated the district has not yet received information regarding the funding for the FY13 State Education Grants. However, the East Windsor Public School has received State Grants for FY 12, the Sheff Grant and Adult Education Grant. The total received in FY 12 from the State is in the amount of \$168,603.

The discussion continued regarding the Excess Cost Revenues. It is anticipated that \$306,976 will be the Excess Cost Grant for FY 12. These funds are designed to reimburse school districts for a percentage of the costs associated with high costs special education students. School Choice Revenues were also discussed. Currently the district has 43 Choice students enrolled. Because that number represents over 3% of the district's enrollment, the district is reimbursed \$6,000 per student for a total of \$286,170 in FY 12. The district will also receive additional fund for Kindergarten Choice Students. In FY 12, the district received \$22,500 in CREC Early Childhood revenue. The district declared Choice seats before March 1, 2012, to qualify for additional dollars. The district declared 54 seats. If filled, the increased revenue will be used to support behavioral program needs.

A brief discussion was held.

Other revenues discussed were:

- Fees for student activities and athletics
- School lunch which operates independently and is self-sufficient
- Early childhood tuition for pre-k students
- Special education tuition revenue

A lengthy discussion was held.

Dr. Kane gave details on what the district and each individual school plans to do in 2012-2013. She began discussing the district's goals which were:

- Continue District Improvement Initiatives
- Provide support for integrating technology in classroom instruction
- Pilot the Common Core Curriculum Pre-K to 12 in Language Arts and Math
- Implement new Strategic Plan
- Implement new teacher evaluation system
- Create an internal accountability system
- Engage families and the community in supporting the instructional focus

She touched briefly on the goals of Broad Brook Elementary, East Windsor Middle School and East Windsor High School.

A brief discussion was held.

Dr. Kane mentioned she was very proud of her administrative team with all of their hard work in preparing the budget as proposed this evening. She indicated the budget the Board of Education is seeking is an overall 6.5% increase over last year's budget. She indicated the increase is due to the increases in contractual obligations for salaries, transportation and tuition reimbursement.

Mr. Mickey indicated the Capital Improvement Projects which the Board of Education requested are as follows:

- Security systems for all three schools
- Removal and replacement of underground oil tanks at the high school
- Removal and replacement of oil tank/conversion of boiler to gas at BBES
- Removal of sinks and countertops/installation of 15 classrooms at BBES
- Refurbish boys and girls upper level bathrooms at BBES
- Removal and replacement of carpeting at high school and middle school
- Sand and finish gym and stage floor at BBES and high school
- Removal and installation of exterior doors at BBES and middle school

A brief discussion was held.

Mr. Bowsza thanked Dr. Kane and Mr. Mickey for their presentation.

#### **b. Board of Selectmen**

Ms. Denise Menard, First Selectwoman, addressed the Board. She had copies of the Power Point presentation she would be referring to during her discussion of the proposed budget along with copies of a document entitled "CIP 2012-2013 Projects Ranking Sheet".

She commented that it has been a challenging year for the Town of East Windsor with all of the weather related emergencies. She is also representing to the Board a level service budget for fiscal year 2012-2013.

The first slide she discussed was entitled “Fiscal Year 2012-2013 Proposed Town Budget, Summary of Expenditures”. She gave a brief description of each category and indicating the percentages of increase or decrease, which were as follows:

- Town Government -1.38%
- Public Safety 0.94%
- Public Works 4.78%
- Sanitation & Waste Removal 2.38%
- Conservation of Health -9.06%
- Recreation 0.10%
- Insurance & Benefits 42.52%
- Miscellaneous 30.05%
- Capital Improvement Plan 4.08%
- Debt Service 4.08%

The summary of the proposed budget is a grand total of \$14,204,274 or an increase of \$469,059 or 3.42%. Ms. Menard mentioned the mill increase required to support the proposed town budget would be 0.43. One mill is equal to \$1,091,915.

She began discussion the request of the CIP Committee for the budget, which is \$20,000 less than originally submitted. The CIP is requesting funding for projects totaling \$631,620. A brief discussion was held regarding the current projects, ongoing projects and requests. The last category discussed was the debt service 2012-2014. The total debt service is \$1,851,472.

A brief discussion was held.

Ms. Menard referred to a slide entitled “Fiscal Year 2012-2013 Proposed Town Budget Including the Board of Education” when she discussed the grand total of the proposed 2012-2013 budget. She indicated when adding the Town budget and Board of Education budget, the grand total is \$34,982,225 or an increase of \$1,840,559 or 5.55% increase.

Mr. Bowsza questioned which baseline would be used in determining the Board of Education budget. He was concerned about the added appropriation given to the Board of Education due the MBR issue which occurred previously in this fiscal year.

A lengthy discussion was held regarding which baseline should be used for the Board of Education. It was mentioned that auditors have indicated the original approved budget number should be used prior to the MBR appropriation. However, Mr. Bowsza indicated he would like some sort of confirmation with the

State Department of Education in regards to this issue so the Board of Finance and the Town of East Windsor will be in complete compliance with MBR requirements.

Ms. Menard discussed the projected revenue for fiscal year 2012-2013. She indicated it is projected the Town will receive revenue from the state and local in the amount of \$6,736,835, and the amount which will be needed to be raised in taxes is \$28,245,390 which is an increase of \$1,863,512. Therefore, the proposed mill rate to support the proposed budgets would be 25.87 or an increase of 1.49.

A lengthy discussion was held.

### **III. Adjournment**

It was **MOVED** (Godeck) and **SECONDED** (Pippin) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Finance adjourns the March 14, 2012 Special Meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Denise M. Piotrowicz  
Recording Secretary