

**PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING/SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE SOUTH BURLINGTON SCHOOL BOARD
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2017
6:00 P.M.
Chamberlin Elementary School Cafeteria
262 White Street
South Burlington, VT**

PRESENT

Elizabeth Fitzgerald, Martin LaLonde, Bridget Burkhardt, Steve Wisloski, Alex McHenry

ADMINISTRATION/STAFF

David Young, John Aubin, Stuart Weiss, Susie Merrick, Joanne Godek, Patrick Burke, Pat Phillips, Lissa McDonald, Karsten Schlenter, Mark Trifilio, Holly Rouelle, Cally Flickinger, Tina Brown

GUESTS

Approximately 50 guests.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

There were none.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING ON PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND BUDGET
ARTICLES TO BE VOTED ON BY AUSTRALIAN BALLOT**

Reading of the Warning Article

Ms. Fitzgerald read the Warning for the special meeting.

Presentation of Revised Proposed Budget for FY 2018

Mr. Young and Mr. Aubin presented the revised proposed budget for FY 2018.

Questions from the Public on the Revised Budget

- Board: What happens next if the budget is defeated? Answer: We're under a charter. The charter says we have to diligently work to get another budget before the community.
- Board: What is the potential of a level-funded budget? About how many FTEs would that constitute? Answer: The budget that's currently proposed does maintain the level of excellence in current programming. Our business is educating children with qualified staff. 24-28 staff (5% of staff overall) would be impacted if the budget is defeated. Right now the District employs about 450 total staff, 242 teachers serving 2500 students.
- Board (Bridget): What are the risks of not getting a budget approved? Answer: Stability in employment is important perhaps especially for newer staff. If you know there's a delay, you would look for other places of employment. Getting a contract to staff is important. It is also important for us to stay focused on other goals: PLPs, etc. Continued work on revised budgets stops up other significant work.
- Board (Alex): When the March 7 budget was rejected, you sent out RIFs. How many staff received those? Answer: RIFs were not sent out. We have collective

bargaining, and so the Union gave us additional time until we know the outcome of the budget.

- Public: Barry Young read a statement.
- Public: Percentage increase on the absentee ballot said increase was 3.48%. Why is there confusion? Answer: The ballot speaks to the cost per equalized pupil. The overall expenses budget is 5.92% on both the absentee ballot and the regular ballot.
- Public: 14.82% revenue increase. Will that number change do you think because of the turmoil in our community, causing less students from outside of South Burlington to choose this District for school choice? Answer: We're always grateful for good press; however, we are a District working through some changes right now, and we have been transparent about those changes. We hope and believe those making school choice will know that our programs and curriculum are still modeling excellence.
- Public: If the budget is voted down, would that change the negotiating position favorably? Answer: There's not a salary increase in the budget. No, it wouldn't change the negotiations. What has happened in the budget has not historically impacted the negotiations.
- Public: How do the changes impact safety? Answer: We've been doing good work. We have a strong stewardship plan. We have a lot of upgrades in the budget. There's no risk to students, staff, others using our buildings. If asbestos is not disturbed, it is not a hazard.
- Public: Two petitions have been submitted to the City (statement). Didn't the survey show that 92% of students were comfortable with the name? Answer: Students were given 30 minutes to fill out the survey and the narrative data revealed more about how students felt by qualifying their feelings.
- Public: What percentage of budget is wages and benefits? Answer: 80% of budget is wages and benefits.
- Public: Can Board members use e-mail to access voters? Answer: We will have a future discussion about School Board conduct on e-mails.
- Public: People have different opinions on how education should be supported. Answer: Education funding is complicated, and we didn't design it. We've gotten better at explaining it. You can't look at just the expenditure without the revenue. What affects us is the tax rate and other factors that make for a healthy community (i.e., value of homes).
- Public: Diane Bugbee made a statement.

ADJOURNMENT

The special meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Elizabeth Fitzgerald, Chair

Martin LaLonde, Clerk