

**NEW HOPE-SOLEBURY SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Board Minutes**  
**May 9, 2016**

**I. Call to Order**

A special meeting of the New Hope-Solebury School District Board of Directors was held in the District Office Conference Room on Monday, May 9, 2016. Mr. Cowell, Board President, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Cowell led members and guests in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. Roll Call**

The Secretary called roll:

Members present: Mr. Cowell, Mrs. Deussing, Mr. Dougherty, Mrs. Gormley, Mr. McDonough, Mrs. Povacz, Mrs. Weisbrot

Members absent: Mrs. Keyes, Mr. Capriotti

Administrators present: Dr. Yanni, Dr. Cortellessa, Mr. Hansel, Mr. Malone, Dr. McKenna, Mr. Lechman, Mr. Radaszkiewicz, Mr. Rivera, Mr. Seier, Mr. Silver

**IV. Additions, Deletions, and/or Modifications to the Agenda**

NONE

**Mrs. Keyes arrived at 6:35 p.m.**

**V. Old Business**

A. Presentation and/or Discussion Items

- 2016-2017 Proposed Final Budget Discussion – Dr. Yanni, Mr. Lechman
  - Dr. Yanni stated the purpose of the meeting is to review the contents of the Proposed Final Budget and discuss the changes from the Preliminary Budget presented in December. Dr. Yanni stated at that time we were looking at a shortfall of about \$4.175 million and at the end of this presentation the budget gap is about \$1.5 million.
  - Dr. Yanni stated we are trying to balance the educational and service needs of our students and honor them, as well as honor our community by balancing the wants, the needs, and the educational and service needs with fiscal responsibility.

- Dr. Yanni reviewed the budget process starting in September, utilizing a “needs-based” budget from zero up. In January, the Board allowed the district to seek exceptions to raise taxes above the Act 1 Index of 2.4%. Exceptions were granted in February of another 2.4%. Since that time, there has been continual review of the budget on a daily basis.
- Mr. Lechman reviewed the history of the budget process beginning with the Preliminary Budget. It was determined to build a 3-year planning model and how decisions made now impact beyond the 2016-2017 school year; the deficit continued to grow which left the district a cumulative deficit in 2019-2020 of about \$10.5 million. These were the numbers we were facing when we started building the budget.
- Mr. Lechman reviewed the changes from the Preliminary Budget to the Proposed Final Budget. Proposed Final Budget is about \$38.7 million, \$100,000 less. We saw an increase of \$100,000, a large portion from state subsidy. The big reduction was \$200,000 for retirement and social security subsidy. We had a significant reduction in salary expenses.
- On the expense side, we are at \$40.2 million, reduced by \$1.5 million. The salary reduction is primarily from the retirement incentive, which reduced our salary expenditures by \$800,000; medical benefits/payroll taxes as a result was a reduction of \$430,000; a change in our medical benefits consortium to Aetna reduced the expected increase of 10% to 2.3%; PSERS had a reduction of \$330,000 driven by salaries; all others we had an increase of about \$60,000.
- Mr. Lechman then reviewed the changes in more detail.
- Dr. Yanni reviewed programs and staffing changes and discussed “right sizing” the district. Discussed recommendation of curtailment of Teacher Leader program, Elementary Foreign Language program, reevaluation of Family/Consumer Sciences program for one year, Elementary Health integrated with PE and reevaluate at the end of the year, combined Dean of Students and Athletic Director into one full-time position of Assistant Principal/Athletic Director for the Middle and High Schools.
- Mr. Lechman reviewed revenues in detail, including the tax increase, which are up approximately \$1.5 million.
- Mr. Lechman reviewed expenditures in detail; stated expenditures are outpacing revenues going into the future.

## B. Board Discussion

- Mr. Cowell asked about teacher furloughs, guidelines on class size, student withdrawals, savings by freezing budget and overall savings.
- Mrs. Gormley asked about medical access process.
- Mr. Dougherty asked if with senior teachers retiring it has moved us off the higher end of the quadrant; asked if we anticipate having another group of teachers superannuated for retirement.
- Mrs. Keyes thanked Dr. Yanni and Mr. Lechman for a very detailed presentation.
- Mrs. Deussing asked about the Assistant Principal/AD position and Dean of Students.
- Mrs. Deussing asked about the final threshold for students going from 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

- Mr. Cowell asked about the movement of teachers from higher to lower grades.
- Mr. Cowell asked about enough staff for offerings of more art, music, etc. with the elimination of the Elementary Spanish Program.
- Mrs. Gormley asked about the population of LES students needing support going down.
- Mr. Cowell asked if the special education population is continuing to increase.
- Mrs. Gormley asked if working with early intervention programs helps decrease our numbers.
- Mr. Dougherty asked about EDRs which is a large expenditure.
- Mr. Cowell asked about some of the budget gap closure ideas.
- Mr. Dougherty asked about the Act 1 Index for next year.
- Mr. Cowell commented that the administration did a good job.

C. Public Comment

- Mr. Coskun commented on the curtailment of the Elementary Spanish Program.
- Mr. Band commented on the curtailment of the Elementary Spanish Program and suggested Spanish Club as an EDR; commented on the maximum number of students in a class and the average class size in the district; commented that the experience of teachers who took the retirement incentive is a loss; commented about PSERS; commented about Dean of Students and Teacher Coaches; commented about \$600,000 spent on computers; commented about the Campus Revitalization Plan and the difference between a “need” and a “want.”

**Mr. Capriotti arrived at 7:45 p.m.**

- Mrs. Martino thanked the administration for their work on the budget; commented on the Spanish Program; questioned if parents can opt out of bussing to save money; commented on the impact on 6<sup>th</sup> grade team and enrollment driven staff reduction; asked what will replace Consumer/Family Sciences.
- Mrs. Cosner thanked administration for a very detailed budget presentation; expressed concern with the curtailment of the Teacher Leader positions.
- Mrs. Stiefel thanked the administration for excellent presentation; commented that she supports reviewing EDRs for efficiency in spending; commented that co-curricular expenditures are increasing; commented on program changes in elementary health program.
- Dr. Yanni and board members addressed the questions raised by the public.

**VI. Adjournment**

Upon a motion made by Mr. Cowell, which was unanimously approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

The next Board of School Directors Meeting will be held on Monday, May 16, 2016 at 6:30 PM in the District Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,

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Andrew Lechman  
Board Secretary

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Date