

**Somers Board of Education Meeting**  
Board of Education Meeting Room  
January 27, 2020  
7:00 PM

**Attendance Taken at 6:59 PM:**

Present Board Members: Krista Cherry, Sarah Bollinger, Marissa Marks, David Palmer, Bruce Devlin, Jan Martin, Jeremy Anderson, Kate McLellan, Anne Kirkpatrick

Others: Andrew Slater, Patrick Soucy, Erika Purdy

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Chairman Devlin at 7:00 p.m. in the Mabelle B. Avery Board of Education meeting room.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS**

The students were not present for the BOE meeting.

**3.1. Two Somers High School students will be recognized as winners of the 2020-21 Budget Book Graphics Project.**

**Rationale:** The Board will recognize Jillian Mailhot and Chloe Albano as winner of the 2020-21 Budget Book Graphic Project.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**4.1. Draft Minutes of the January 13, 2020 Board of Education Meeting**

**Rationale:** The Board will review and approve the January 13, 2020 Board of Education Meeting Minutes.

**Motion Passed:** Motion to approve the draft minutes from the January 13, 2020 BOE meeting passed with a motion by Kate McLellan and a second by Anne Kirkpatrick. **9 Yeas - 0 Nays.**

**5. AUDIENCE TO CITIZENS/STAFF/STUDENTS**

**6. OPPORTUNITY TO ADD/DELETE AGENDA ITEMS**

**7. CONSENT AGENDA**

**Motion Passed:** Motion to approve the Consent Agenda passed with a motion by David Palmer and a second by Jeremy Anderson. **9 Yeas - 0 Nays.**

### 7.1. Warrant of January 27, 2020

**Rationale:** The Board will review and consent to the January 27, 2020 warrant in the amount of \$184,435.27.

## 8. NEW BUSINESS

### 8.1. Somers High School SSS (Students Supporting Students) Retreat - Overnight Field Trip

**Rationale:** Somers High School's SSS will be taking their members to the annual overnight retreat at the Silver Lake Conference Center from March 6 through March 8, 2020.

**Discussion:** The focus of the retreat is on leadership development, social/emotional learning, and team building. Students attending this conference may utilize these skills to help other students better understand the different social/emotional issues within the school.

**Motion Passed:** Motion to approve the SHS Students Supporting Students overnight retreat to Silver Lake Conference Center passed with a motion by David Palmer and a second by Jan Martin. **9 Yeas - 0 Nays.**

### 8.2. 2020-2021 Superintendent's Proposed Budget for Somers Public Schools

**Rationale:** The Superintendent will present the proposed 2020-21 Budget for Somers Public Schools.

**Discussion:** Superintendent Czapla presented the proposed 2020-21 budget to the BOE. This is the first year that the Strategic Plan has been implemented to address the needs that have been identified including goals, student achievement, professional development, and accountability. He stated that SPS is off to a good start. Superintendent Czapla asked the administrators to develop their budget in relation to the strategic plan. Their budget requests had to be justified.

He reviewed student achievement in 2018 where he recognized students were underperforming compared to DRG-C but stated that last year the curriculum was being finalized with professional development. In 2019, there have been improvements in the lower levels which is encouraging, and he looks forward to next year's data. There has also been growing concern relating to mental health needs and student achievement. Mental health not only impacts the individual but may impact the entire class as well. SPS has been looking at adding more resources for mental health. The 2020-21 budget priorities include increasing student achievement and educational opportunities; providing students with mental health resources; and, continuing to update and maintain all facilities.

Superintendent Czapla proposed a budget of \$24,792,970 which is a \$908,833 or 3.81% increase from the current year's budget. The majority of expenses fall under nondiscretionary or contractual obligations (salaries, insurance and benefits, tuition, transportation, and utilities). Salaries and insurance and benefits make up 81% of the budget. Superintendent Czapla is proposing to add \$416,406 under contractual obligations in Salaries by adding a 0.4 SHS school counselor to help

address mental health issues; a 1.0 math interventionist at MBA; and, a 1.0 MBA school psychologist. MBA currently shares a school psychologist with SHS. This will provide more special education testing and clinical services needed to get in front of mental health issues. Insurance and benefits are increasing by \$311,700 due to higher premiums at 18%. There has been a slight reduction of Special Education services by \$20,100. Transportation is increasing by \$49,970. Utilities are increasing by \$6,300.

Other significant budget impacts include the discretionary categories including instructional resources (textbooks & programming and departmental supplies) at \$110,520 and equipment (5-year technology replacement plan and MBA Technology Education course transition to more relevant STEM experiences) at \$22,200.

There are a number of requests that are unable to be funded at this time; however, Superintendent Czapla will be closely monitoring Kindergarten enrollment which may increase the need for part-time Kindergarten Paraeducators.

Superintendent Czapla presented the PPE (Per Pupil Expenditure) to the BOE. This is the rate at which it costs a town to educate a student. In the State of CT, the average cost to educate a student is \$18,791. In DRG-C (communities in CT with the same socioeconomic status as Somers), the average cost to educate a student is \$19,431. In Somers, the average cost is \$16,718. Superintendent Czapla stated that although Somers is educating students at a more efficient cost than the average school district in CT and DRG-C, there is still a lot more work to be done which costs money.

After presenting the slideshow of the proposed 2020-21 budget, Superintendent Czapla went through the provided budget proposal book with the BOE members. Anne Kirkpatrick asked questions regarding staff, transportation, and curriculum. Jeremy Anderson positively commented on the MBA math interventionist and music replacement plan. Jan Martin commented on the increased transportation cost of athletic trips. Superintendent Czapla asked the BOE to email all questions in a single email so that he may address them and report back at the next BOE meeting on 2/10/20.

## 9. OLD BUSINESS

## 10. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

### 10.1. Superintendent's Update

**Rationale:** The Superintendent will update the Board on any issues or upcoming events.

**Discussion:** There was nothing further to report other than the budget.

