

A **SPECIAL JOINT MEETING** of the Board of Finance and the Board of Education was held in the City Hall Auditorium on Wednesday, May 30, 2018.

Present were Mayor Elinor Carbone and Board of Finance Members Lance Boynton, Laurene Pesce, Mark Bushka, Jenna Reichen, Christopher Anderson and Joshua Ferreira.

Also present were Board of Education members Ellen Hoehne, Fiona Cappabianca, John Kissko, Peter Vergaro, Molly Spino, Armand Maniccia, and Joanne Brogis, as well as Assistant Superintendent of Schools Susan M. Lubomski and Board of Education Business Manager Rose Forzano.

Mayor Carbone called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. starting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

The Boards discussed Alliance District grant funding projections for FY 2018/2019. Ms. Cappabianca stated that several items in the general budget could be funded through the Alliance grant provided that Torrington Public Schools (TPS) receives the same level of funding as it is in the current fiscal year. Ms. Forzano stated that she received an email from the state indicating that estimated ECS and Alliance District grant revenues will be released by the end of June.

Mrs. Pesce questioned what changed when TPS received the Alliance District designation. Ms. Cappabianca stated that the designation resulted in more oversight and a reduction in ECS money.

Ms. Cappabianca discussed the implications of recent legislation in which the state voted not to allow municipalities to cap enrollment of students in vo-ag schools for the 2018-2019 academic year. She stated that more students attending vo-ag schools will cost the City greatly for additional transportation and tuition payments. Mayor Carbone expressed her disappointment in the legislation, stating that it eliminates any predictability.

Ms. Cappabianca discussed the difficulty in budgeting for revenue from Medicaid reimbursements, as the state disperses payments irregularly year-to-year. Mr. Ferreira asked how Medicaid revenue and expenses are budgeted and Mr. Maniccia clarified that revenue from Medicaid comes in the form of reimbursements. Mayor Carbone stated that there are some salaries that are charged to the Medicaid account and Ms. Forzano explained how those salaries are budgeted.

Mrs. Pesce and Mr. Bushka requested clarification regarding the funds originally budgeted for East School. Ms. Cappabianca stated that some of the staff at East School were going to be moved to the other buildings and that a portion would be allocated to the grant-funded pre-k program that has 1 year left on the grant.

Mayor Carbone discussed insurance projections and stated that there is projected to be a reduction of \$1,027,000 from the Board of Education benefits.

Mr. Anderson questioned the accuracy of Board of Education grant revenue projections for FY 2018/2019. Ms. Forzano stated that they may not be accurate because the Board has not yet received projections from the state for many of the grants.

Mr. Boynton asked if the Board of Education had a timeline for when they expect to receive estimated revenue projections for various grants. Asst. Supt. Lubomski stated that the Board may not be notified about some of the grants until after June.

Mr. Bushka and Mr. Boynton stated that they are uncomfortable voting on a FY 2018/2019 mill rate given the uncertainty regarding state funding.

DISCUSSION: BOE CAPITAL BUDGET

Mayor Carbone suggested for the Board of Finance to approve the Board of Education capital budget separate from the operating budget and stated that the City will need to consider bonding for critical capital improvement projects in FY2018/2019.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Diane Holland expressed her opposition to Torrington Public Schools being placed on the Alliance District of schools.

Christina Augliera criticized the Board of Education and Torrington Public Schools for constantly cutting resources and neglecting the special education student body.

Barbara Gall expressed her opposition to the proposed Board of Education budget due to its many uncertainties.

Adam Piechowski asked if the City has considered imposing an education tax, as opposed to raising the mill rate. Mayor Carbone stated that unless there is a change in state legislation, Torrington statutorily cannot impose an education tax.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Mr. Boynton, the meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jonathan R. Draper, Asst. Clerk

ATTEST: 
CAROL L. ANDERSON, MMC
CITY CLERK