

**TOWN OF EAST HAVEN
BOARD OF EDUCATION
35 WHEELBARROW LANE
EAST HAVEN, CONNECTICUT 06513**

**MINUTES
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
JANUARY 29, 2008
7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Mrs. Vitale, Mrs. Vineyard, Mrs. Padua, Mr. Inglese, Mr. Hammell,
Mrs. Geraci-Anastasio, Mr. Hennessey, Mr. Finkle

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Serio, Superintendent; Mr. Martorella, Assistant
Superintendent; Mr. Meoli, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent; Mrs.
Acquarulo, Director of Pupil Personnel; Mr. Travaglino, Director of Buildings and
Grounds; Mr. Rizza, Director of Finance; Mrs. Lewis, Finance Manager

ABSENT: Mr. DeNuzzo

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Vitale called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**2. Final Discussion and Approval of Proposed Operating Budget for Fiscal
Year 2008-2009**

Mr. Serio explained the revisions to the budget. Mrs. Vitale had requested that the previously submitted request which included a 7.7% budget increase be reduced. He informed the Board that by looking at individual line items, he was able to reduce the budget. He stated that he made \$517,000 in additional cuts, thereby bringing a requested increase of 6.49% over last year's budget which represented a dollar increase of \$2,748,943 for a total requested budget of \$45,101,545.00.

Mr. Serio explained that the proposal would be sent to the Town, once approved by the Board of Education, and they decide what increase percentage the Board's budget would receive. He advised that once the process was complete, the budget would most likely have to be cut again. He advised that he would have to hold fast with tuition accounts so that he would not have to make cuts from other areas once the budget is adopted.

Mr. Serio further explained that the Board has sustained a large maintenance budget for the past ten years for its 12 school buildings. He informed that this was a proactive approach which kept these older schools looking good despite their ages. He advised that regular maintenance was important to keep these facilities functioning and looking good.

Mrs. Vitale stated that the public wants to increase the efficiency of the school system, reduce the operating costs of the Board of Education, and provide a better education to their children. She added that a School Resource Officer is a goal in this budget for next year. She added that the Mayor has sent someone to look at the roofs on all of the schools and they were found to be in need of repair. Mrs. Vitale stated that priorities have to be set in this budget.

Mr. Serio explained how the budget process works between the Board and the Town. He informed that he is asking for basically the same dollar increase as he requested last year. He explained how sometimes, he has to “back into” a budget.

Mrs. Vineyard asked when teachers have to inform the Superintendent of their intention to retire. Mr. Serio responded that they can inform him at any time and sometimes, he is not informed until the summer months.

Mr. Hennessey stated that the Board has to start scrutinizing contracts with employees. He wants the Board to spend more time talking about them before they are settled. Mr. Inglese asked about the range of raises for principals, and Mr. Serio explained that there were increments involved.

Mrs. Vitale asked if it would help if Board members were part of negotiations, and Mr. Serio replied that would be satisfactory but that the teachers’ contract was just settled and it is a four-year contract.

Mr. Hammell asked when we negotiate raises and co-pays, do we do research and compare what other towns are giving. Mr. Serio answered in the affirmative.

A brief discussion of general contract settlements ensued, and Mr. Finkle talked about his experiences with mediators and what they are willing to give and not give.

A discussion of particular line items ensued and there were specific references to the \$10,000 reduction in the campus security line item and the \$100,000 reduction in the Data Warehouse account.

Mr. Hammell asked for a detailed explanation of the line items that were reduced and Mr. Rizza responded to each reduction.

Mrs. Padua asked if the Little Jacket Program paid for its own buses, and Mr. Serio replied that they were using all-day buses that were included in the price. Mrs. Padua suggested that the Little Jacket program paid something for bus use and Mr. Serio articulated that was a good idea.

Mr. Serio informed that the St. Vincent charge for buses in the past several years has not risen and asked Mr. Rizza to check to see if the Town was willing to raise their share.

Mr. Finkle made the motion to approve the Board of Education budget request for the fiscal year 2008-2009 in the amount of \$45,101,545 which represents a 6.49% percentage increase over the 2007-2008 budget. Mrs. Geraci-Anastasio seconded the motion.

There were no objections, abstentions or further discussion. Motion carries.

3. ADJOURNMENT OF SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

Mr. Finkle made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Padua seconded the motion. There were no objections, abstentions or further discussion. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 8:16. p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

**MARILYN VITALE, CHAIR
EAST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION**