

Revised 2/23/15
TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hicks Municipal Center
Council Chambers
Tolland, CT 06084

REGULAR MEETING

7:30 – 10:00 P.M.

AGENDA
February 25, 2015

VISION STATEMENT

To represent education at its best, preparing each student for an ever-changing society, and becoming a full community of learning where excellence is achieved through each individual's success.

A. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Regular Meeting – February 11, 2015

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2 minute limit)

The members of the Tolland Board of Education welcome members of the public to share their thoughts and ideas at this time. When appropriate to do so, members of the Board and the administration may respond to comments during "Points of Information". However, in consideration of those in attendance and in an effort to proceed in a timely manner, follow-up discussion may need to take place outside of the meeting setting.

D. POINTS OF INFORMATION

E. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT – Charles Perosino and Sarah Welch

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- F.1 Update on Security Grant (no enclosure)
- F.2 Tolland High School Evacuation – Friday, February 13, 2015 (no enclosure)
- F.3 Goals – Goal Setting (no enclosure)
- F.4 Recognition of Girls Indoor Track for Winning the State Open.

G. COMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

H. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

I. BOARD ACTION

J. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (2 minute limit)

Comments must be limited to items on this agenda.

K. POINTS OF INFORMATION

L. CORRESPONDENCE

- **Town Council Meeting – February 10, 2015**

M. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

N. ADJOURNMENT

MEETING MINUTES

TOLLAND TOWN COUNCIL HICKS MEMORIAL MUNICIPAL CENTER 6th FLOOR COUNCIL ROOM FEBRUARY 10, 2015 – 7:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jack Scavone, Chairman; George Baker, Vice-Chair; Richard Field; Jan Rubino and Ben Stanford

MEMBERS ABSENT: William Eccles and Paul Krasusky

OTHERS PRESENT: Steven Werbner, Town Manager; Clem Langlois, Public Works; Kathy Bach, President of the Tolland Historical Society; Celeste Senechal, Tolland 300th Anniversary Committee; Dorothy Mickiewicz, Chair of the Conservation Committee

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Jack Scavone called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Recited.
3. **MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Observed.
4. **PROCLAMATIONS:**
 - 4.1 Certificate of Recognition and Thanks Presented to Big Y Foods, Inc. presented by the 300th Anniversary Committee.

Kathy Bach and Celeste Senechal presented the following Certificate of Recognition to District Manager, Michael Beaudry and Store Director, Scott Gardiner:

***CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION AND THANKS
PRESENTED TO
BIG Y FOODS, INC.***

*On this 27th day of January, 2015
For their \$1,000 donation to the Tolland 300th Anniversary Celebration,
making them a Crandall-level sponsor*

- 4.2 Certificate of Recognition and Thanks Presented to Drew Crandall and Keep In Touch presented by the 300th Anniversary Committee.

Kathy Bach and Celeste Senechal presented the following Certificate of Recognition to Drew Crandall:

***CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION AND THANKS
PRESENTED TO
DREW CRANDALL AND
KEEP IN TOUCH***

*On this 27th day of January, 2015
For their \$1,000 donation to the Tolland 300th Anniversary Celebration,
making them a Crandall-level sponsor*

❖ *The Certificates were previously scheduled to be presented at the January 27, 2015 Town Council meeting, but due to inclement weather were presented tonight.*

5. **PUBLIC PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** (*on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council*) (2 minute limit): None.
6. **PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS:** None.
- 7a. **REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES RESPONSIBLE TO THE COUNCIL:** Karen Moran, BOE: She said they have been working very hard at the budget workshops, which have been well attended by the community. The budget that was put together is clear and very understandable. Information regarding the budget can be found on their website.
- 7b. **REPORTS OF TOWN COUNCIL LIAISONS:** Mr. Field, PCC: They settled on the parade route. They also discussed the cost for public safety, which will be \$8,000 +/- . The Committee has about \$2,000 to contribute. They will be coming to the Council to ask that the remainder be figured into the budget.
8. **NEW BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS):**

8.1 Approval of the Hovland Conservation Area Management Plan, Anderson Road.

Dorothy Mickiewicz, Chair of the Conservation Committee, said some of these properties have been sitting on the books. So, they wanted to get the Management Plans done. They have mapped it, identified in writing what there is on the land, what it is like and what they foresee its possibilities to be.

George Baker motioned to accept the following resolution:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Tolland Town Council approves the Hovland Conservation Area Management Plan adopted by the Conservation Commission on December 12, 2014.

Seconded by Rick Field. All in favor. None opposed.

8.2 Approval of the Baxter Street Conservation Area Management Plan, Baxter Street.

Dorothy Mickiewicz, Chair of the Conservation Committee, said this parcel was part of a larger parcel that what bought with both active and passive funds. It already has a well-traveled path. This is a piece of parcel where they will erect a sign so that people who pass by will realize that the town owns it and they can go on it. They want it to be identified, so that it can be utilized.

George Baker motioned to accept the following resolution:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Tolland Town Council approves the Baxter Street Conservation Area Management Plan adopted by the Conservation Commission on December 12, 2014.

Seconded by Jan Rubino. All in favor. None opposed.

8.3 Approval of the removal of graffiti and painting of a mural at Crystal Peat.

Pictures of the graffiti on the property were shown. Bob Rubino said the graffiti is not in keeping with the historic nature of the Crystal Peat property. It used to be a peat moss bog, where people would come in and cut up the peat moss. The Conservation Commission has struggled with how to stay on top of removing graffiti that pops up every year. He suggested that rather than striping off the art there and leaving a blank canvas for another person to paint graffiti, why not give our artists in our school district a blank canvas that

they could paint a Crystal Peat appropriate mural. He asked what we should do. Strip it off and keep our fingers crossed that the next artist will be more artful? Or do we let someone come along and make it more representative of the area. All the Council members thought it was a great idea. The next thing would be to speak with the BOE to gauge their interest. Mr. Rubino said he'd also like to get input from the Historic District as to what a historically correct mural would be. They would like to have this done by the end of the school year. It was decided that they will be back in about a month with some ideas.

All the members of the Council were in agreement. No vote was taken on the proposed resolution.

8.4 Consideration of a resolution to declare various equipment in disrepair or obsolete from the Board of Education.

Mr. Werbner reviewed the list of obsolete equipment as provided by Dr. Willett. The equipment will most likely be disposed of after attempts to sell it. The money would be returned to the BOE.

George Baker motioned to accept the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the following items are hereby declared obsolete and may be disposed of in accordance with Board of Education Policy 3040, Disposal of Obsolete or Surplus Equipment/Materials.

- Band Saw with Motor Break, Model #SS-2A-25, Serial #10802-0001
- Drill Press, Model #KTF-22, Serial #400009
- Drill Press, Model #1793, Serial #517123
- Table Saw, Model #62, Serial #162012
- Jointer, Model #50, Serial #450031
- Metal Lathe, Serial #21226 R
- RM 22, Metal Roller

Seconded by Rick Field. All in favor. None opposed.

8.5 Consideration of a resolution to declare various equipment as obsolete property within the Board of Education.

Mr. Werbner said this is the agenda item that has gone back and forth, and was tabled. The issue was where the proceeds were going to go. The request from the prior Superintendent had been that the money should go back to the cafeteria fund, and the Council was unsure as to whether the BOE actually wanted that. The new Superintendent clarified the issue and said the monies recovered will be returned to the BOE, and not to any specific fund.

George Baker motioned to accept the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the following items are hereby declared surplus and may be disposed of in accordance with Policy A176-4, Policy Concerning Disposal of Surplus Personal Public Property. Once equipment is approved for disposal, Food Service will sell it and have proceeds allocated to their budget.

- Stationery Kettle - Market Forge, F60-PE (2)
- Convection Steamer - Vulcan, C2EA10-DLX (1)
- Convection Oven - Vulcan, VC44-EC2 (1)
- Convection Oven - Vulcan, VC-4EC1 (2)
- Table Kettle - Groen, TDB 20 (1)

Seconded by Ben Stanford. All in favor. None opposed.

8.6 Appointment of Blum, Shapiro & Company, P.C. as the Town's independent auditor.

Mr. Werbner said the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S. 7-396 and 4-232) require that the Town Council file with the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) the name of the independent auditor designated to conduct the annual audit of its accounts. We recently went out for formal quotes from accounting firms, and Blum & Shapiro, which has been our auditor for the past several years, had the lowest cost over the five year period. They have served us extremely well. The proposal that we received includes the addition of the firm's managing partner, Joseph Kask to also oversee our audit along with the current partner, Vanessa Rossitto. The terms of the contract provide for a flat fee of \$50,500 for each of the five years and covers fiscal years: 2014-2015, 2015-2016, 2016-2017, 2017-2018 and 2018-2019. The Board of Education is responsible for 50% of the cost. He recommends Blum Shapiro be appointed for the five year term.

George Baker motioned to accept the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S. 7-396 and 4-232) require the appointing authority of any municipality or audited agency to file with the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) the name of the independent auditor designated to conduct the annual audit of its accounts; and

WHEREAS, the notification must be made at least thirty days prior to the end of the fiscal period for which the audit is required;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Tolland Town Council that it hereby approves the reappointment of Blum, Shapiro & Company, P.C. to conduct the annual audit of its accounts for fiscal years:

July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015

July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016

July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017

July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018

July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019

Seconded by Jan Rubino.

Mr. Baker asked if the town had the ability to get out of the contract should the need arise. Mr. Werbner said he would need to review the contract for the exact terms, but advised that there are provisions to get out.

All in favor. None opposed.

8.7 Appointments to vacancies on various municipal boards/commissions: None.

9. OLD BUSINESS (ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS): None.

10. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER (A WRITTEN REPORT SHALL BE PROVIDED THE 1ST MEETING OF THE MONTH ONLY): Mr. Werbner updated on the snow situation: Three weeks ago, they had a full shed of salt and surpluses in all the snow accounts. That has changed drastically in the last three weeks. They had originally budgeted \$231,850 for 3,000 tons of salt. That has been exhausted in total. They have swept all the Public Works accounts, and came up with \$76,000 to put towards salt. So, year to date, they will have spent about \$307,000 in salt. If it continues at this pace, he'll need to find another \$100,000 to add to that. In the most difficult of winters, they have been

averaging between \$350,000 – 500,000. The other concern is equipment. They have had a couple of breakdowns. The crews are shot, from working around the clock. He will report back to the Council in terms of where he will find additional monies. He is estimating that it will cost about \$200,000 more than originally thought. Ms. Rubino asked if the town would receive any FEMA money from the first storm. Mr. Werbner didn't believe our county would. They needed to spend over \$500,000 for that particular storm. We only spent about \$100,000, and the other towns are smaller than us. Mr. Field said he would rather not take any more money from Parks & Roads. He suggests going to Fund Balance. Mr. Werbner agreed, although he'll scour the other accounts before committing to that.

11. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 11.1 January 13, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes: George Baker moved to adopt the minutes; Seconded by Rick Field. All in favor. None opposed. Jack Scavone and Ben Stanford abstained.
- 11.2 January 29, 2015 Special Meeting Minutes: Jack Scavone moved to adopt the minutes; Seconded by Ben Stanford. All in favor. None opposed. George Baker abstained.

12. CORRESPONDENCE TO COUNCIL:

- 12.1 Letter from John Crickmore re: some issues on his property;
- 12.2 Caleb Pfohl re: Google fiber optics;
- 12.3 Letter from UConn re: legislative revised requirements of tree wardens and certification;
- 12.4 Letter from State of Connecticut re: Verizon Wireless; and
- 12.5 Letter from Scout Pack 15 re: invite to Blue & Gold banquet on February 28th.

13. COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILPERSONS: Mr. Field said he spoke with some BOE members about how the ESCO project was going. They have some questions/comments. He suggested having a joint meeting with the BOE, Honeywell and Celtic. Mr. Werbner said they have met with the Superintendent on several occasions regarding closing out the project and financing. Mr. Werbner said if there are issues that someone wants to have clarified, they certainly can be addressed. He asked that the BOE compile a list of questions, which then can be forwarded to Honeywell and Celtic in order for them to prepare for the meeting. Mr. Werbner will work with Dr. Willett to set a date.

14. PUBLIC LISTED PARTICIPATION *(on any subject within the jurisdiction of the Town Council)*
(3 minute limit): None.

15. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Rick Field motioned to go into Executive Session at 8:12 p.m., thus ending the Regular Meeting of the Town Council. Invited to the Executive Session were the Town Manager and Town Attorney. Seconded by George Baker. All in favor. None opposed.

- 15.1 Discuss Possible Sale of Town Property.

16. ADJOURNMENT: Rick Field moved to adjourn the meeting; Seconded by George Baker at 8:42 p.m. All were in favor.

Jack Scavone, Council Chair

Michelle A. Finnegan
Town Council Clerk

TOLLAND BOARD OF
EDUCATION Tolland High
School
Library
Tolland, CT 06084

REGULAR MEETING – February 11, 2015

Members Present: Mr. Sam Adlerstein, Chair; Mr. Patrick Doyle, Vice Chair; Ms. Kathy Gorsky, Secretary; Ms. Karen Moran, Ms. Colleen Yudichak, Mr. Bob Pagoni, and Mr. Joe Sce.

Administrators Present: Dr. Walter Willett, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Frank Connelly, Interim Business Manager; Mr. Jim Dineen, Principal, Tolland Intermediate School; Ms. Kathleen Raymond, Director, Pupil Services; Mr. Tom Swanson, Principal, Birch Grove; Ms. Dominique Fox, Principal, Tolland High School; Mr. Dan Uriano, Principal, Tolland Middle School; Ms. Margot Martello Assistant Principal, Tolland High School.

A. **CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The meeting was called to order at 7:38 P.M. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
Mr. Doyle reviewed the agenda.

Dr. Willett gave the following statement:

Welcome. This process really began a little over a year ago today - Concerned citizens expressed their consternation over the budget process, curriculum, and instruction in the Tolland Public Schools. Citizens mobilized, and in this venue, called for change.

At around the same time, maybe a little before it, administrators in Tolland in the Tolland Administrative Society wrote a letter to the district administration at the time... similar sentiments and concerns were expressed, over budget, curriculum, literacy and math preparation, the common core, and testing...

Administrators mobilized, and called for change

And yet another group has been pointing the way for years . . . they have been asking for help... they have lacked the professional development they needed, they have lacked the material and textbook support, they have lacked the program leadership, and this group more than any other has struggled with the new demands of effectively teaching to the Common Core in Literacy and Math instruction.

Teachers called for change.

And students have suffered through the lack of materials, supplies, and textbooks, through conflicting and confusing curriculum, and they have called for change with their frustration, lost opportunity, and sometimes their tears...

I, and the administrators that serve before you tonight, stand on the shoulders of those who spent countless hours at these meetings to make a difference in Tolland's Education System. We have been given the opportunity, and the responsibility to effect that change.

Through the budget meetings that were held in January 15th, January 20th, January 21st, January 28th, January 29th and February 4th, we worked together as a community. Big hits, bad habits, and the way forward were forged. We know we cannot continue the way things were, with shoot from the hip shotgun curriculum, spread wide and without focus, with inconsistent programs in math for all 3 schools, and despite the best efforts of Language Arts staff, a lack of support and consistency in literacy and writing.

The district leadership presented a laser focus on Literacy and Math, focusing our resources, energies and budget process as they have not been focused before, and formulating the genesis of a multiyear planning model. You gave us a mandate to change, and we have responded.

In the February 4th meeting when the attendees were asked to identify what they thought was positive in this budget, they said it was clearly communicated, invested in books, and professional development. That it heralded the end of bad budgeting practices, supported clear literacy and math instruction, set clear priorities, was realistic and transparent, showed thoughtful decision making, good communication, and made the hard choices.

And hard they were, what you have before you tonight is our good faith effort, it represents the decision making of educators, and administrators you have employed. We bring to bear decades of experience, and work in the Tolland Schools every day. We have made decisions, particularly those involving staff reductions, with great pain in our hearts. We have done so also with an eye toward the future – a future that fulfills the mandate that we have been given to CHANGE. This budget, without further staff reductions, that includes the SRO, and program support for a new behavioral health program in the Tolland Public Schools, is now at a 3.44% increase. It is responsible increase that fulfills the call for change. To provide anything less, or recklessly modify what your administrators have provided, puts that change in jeopardy.

I urge you to consider that tonight as we engage in this important meeting. Thank you.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Regular Meeting – January 28, 2015
- Special Meeting – January 29, 2015
- Special Meeting – February 4, 2015

Correction: January 28th, page 3, 3rd paragraph, 1st line should read, “The budget reflects a reduction of 15 FTEs (10 certified staff FTEs and 5 paraprofessional FTEs) in order to get to 4.74%.”

Ms. Gorsky motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Moran seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Bob Rubino, 296 Weigold Road, commented that the budget presented is perhaps the clearest and best prepared budget he has seen from the Board in a very long time. This is due to the hard work and leadership of this Board and Dr. Willett. He hopes it will get the support from the Town Council it deserves.

Mr. Rubino added that he needs the help of the Board and spoke as the Head Steward of the Tolland Conservation Corp and for the Conservation Commission. There are over 1,000 acres of open space in town and from time to time students in the district have supported conservation activities. Periodically, there have been problems with graffiti at open space parcels and students have assisted with its removal. Most recently, there has been a problem with graffiti at the Crystal Peat Conservation Area. Someone painted a large mural which is not in keeping with the Crystal Peat operations of the 1940s. In order to build community and add something unique, the Conservation Commission would like to solicit artwork from artistically inclined students. It would like to have a mural painted that is in keeping with the theme of the property. The Town Council would like to see some ideas of what could be put on this edifice/concrete wall in a month or so. The Conservation Commission would pay for the materials and the Conservation Corp will strip the old paint. The goal is to have something

which reflects the property's historical value in place by the end of the school year. The artists will be able to sign their work and include it in their portfolios. Mr. Rubino would like to see collaboration among the Board, the students, and the Town.

D. POINTS OF INFORMATION

Mr. Doyle noted that a discussion regarding the artwork at the Crystal Peat parcel took place at last night's Town Council meeting and that Ms. Moran will speak about this in her liaison report.

Ms. Gorsky reviewed the correspondence received since the January 28th meeting. There were a couple of letters in favor of shortening the school year by 3 days. She added that on the Tolland Friends and Neighbors Facebook page that this seems to be the general opinion as well but noted that some suggested that school be held on February 17th. Others suggested holding school during the Spring Break but district employees feel that students need the break in April. Lastly, Ms. Gorsky noted that the Board received 3 letters in favor of keeping the current music program at TMS.

E. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Ms. Welch noted that students are currently signing up for classes for next year. Additionally, a jean drive is taking place. Students may bring their old jeans in exchange for \$5. Mr. Perosino added that the High School Open House is coming up. Parents will be able to shadow their students' during the school day. He noted that students have expressed concerns regarding the budget cuts proposed for the music education program at TMS.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

F.1. 2015/2015 School Calendar – Adjustment Recommendation

Dr. Willett explained that the district has 183 days in its school year. In response to requests from the community and due to the snow days, he is requesting that the Board reduce the 2014/2015 school year from 183 days to 180 days of instruction. This would push the calendar back and provide more leeway and a financial benefit. Mr. Sce asked what the anticipated savings would be. Mr. Connelly explained that the savings is \$16,871 per day or approximately \$48K over the three days. The savings would come from items including bus transportation, paraprofessionals, and fuel costs.

A discussion of the 180 day school year took place. Mr. Pagoni suggested that perhaps, given the history of snow days etc., the district should return to 180 days. There would be a good deal of savings and is something that should be given some thought before the next round of negotiations. Mr. Sce commented that since the teachers are being paid, the students should receive 3 days of education. Mr. Doyle noted that this issue can be discussed in the future. It is something the Negotiation Committee can review. Ms. Moran confirmed that the 3 days will be used for professional development for teachers.

Ms. Gorsky motioned to move item F.1 to board action as item I.2. Ms. Moran seconded the motion. Mr. Adlerstein, Mr. Doyle, Ms. Gorsky, Ms. Moran, Ms. Yudichak, and Mr. Pagoni were in favor. Mr. Sce opposed. Motion carried.

F.2. Monthly Financial Report

Mr. Connelly reviewed the report dated January 31st. January is the 7th month of the fiscal year and the halfway point in the school year. The current deficit is \$718,752. This includes encumbrances and reserves. The deficit increase from the previous month \$331,930 is primarily due to the Special Education line. The state provides an excess cost reimbursement. This was anticipated to be at a rate of 77% (approximately \$1.2M) but it is now believed that the rate will be 84% (approximately \$1.4M). In turn, an additional \$112K will go back to the Board. The 1st payment, 75% of what is owed, will be received this month. The 2nd payment, the balance, will be received in May. In turn, the financial report ending February 2015 will no longer show the deficit and the Board's budget will return to the black.

Mr. Connelly explained that there are still many unknowns between now and June 30th. Last year, there was a 1.7% surplus. After reviewing the data, he does not anticipate that that Board will reach 1.7% again but that it will end in the black.

Mr. Sce inquired about the Pension/Severance line which shows a \$411K deficit. Mr. Connelly explained that the budget started at a negative \$192K. This is part of the pre-spending that was done last year that affects the operating budget this year. When there were actual expenditures, it added to the negative number pushing it to negative \$411K. While this practice reduced the bottom line of the budget, it created a hole in the following year's budget. The budget for 2015/2016 is not designed with negative operating expenditures. Everything in the 2015/2016 budget is fully funded. Mr. Adlerstein added that this number was a surprise to the Board and it did not come up until October.

Mr. Connelly added that early in the fiscal year, the Board prepaid \$1.6M to the Energy Fund so this is adding to the deficit. Mr. Doyle confirmed that the Board is not in danger of not being able to cut checks.

F.3. Adoption of the FY 2015 – 2016 Budget

Dr. Willett provided an updated "Proposed BOE FY 2015-16 Budget" document. The proposed budget is 3.44% and includes a social, emotional, and behavioral component. These funds will allow consultants to come to the district and provide a systemic approach with service for all of the schools. The budget includes the SRO position. Dr. Willett explained that the administrators worked very hard and with great due diligence to provide a program that focuses on literacy and math moving forward. There is no single school or program that took the brunt of the hits. Careful consideration by all administrators in all buildings was taken to ensure there was the least impact.

Mr. Adlerstein asked Dr. Willett what his greatest concern is in regard to the budget. Dr. Willett responded that he did not want to take the position of superintendent and have to recommend the reduction of educators. He understands the pain and feels it as deeply as anyone in the district. He was hired to provide change. The budget has elements of discomfort and no one feels it worse than him but it will provide the necessary change.

Ms. Gorsky expressed concern regarding the cuts to the music program at TMS. It has suffered over the years and often when something is cut, it is not put back. She

understands that a lot of thought and consideration went into the process but feels the changes that are going to be made to the music program at TMS are significant and will affect guitar, percussion, theater arts, and the esteem enrichment program. Dr. Willett responded that it is not accurate to say that the esteem program will be affected. The guitar and drum electives will be impacted but choral and band will not. Ms. Gorsky added that there are kids who do not find a voice through choral or band and that it is a lot for the remaining 2 teachers to do. She would like to support the budget as presented but it hurts her to see this happen. She inquired if there would be any way that something could be put back at some point during the process. This is what she would like to see put back.

Dr. Willett responded this is 1 of the 15 items. Music is not taking the biggest hit. The reason this item is listed is because the impact of taking the music position will not be as great as the impact of a failed budget at referendum or some of the other things the principals have identified as critical. To try to modify the budget will impact the change that the district has been asked to make. It comes down to impact. Mr. Adlerstein explained that the impacts are there so that there can be improvements where they are most needed. He added that there has been a lot of reaction not only to the music position but also to the social and emotional well-being of the students and asked Dr. Willett to address these items.

Dr. Willett explained that in order to make the social and emotional welfare of students a priority, there needs to be a systemic approach through all of the grades. This requires expertise, time, and material that cannot be provided by any one person. The \$20K will allow the district to achieve something in all of the schools. It will allow them to support students and respond to their needs. The funding for this is in the budget.

In regard to music, Dr. Willett noted that he cares deeply about the music program. He has been involved in every variety show, musical and has attended band and choral events. Personally, it is a great hardship but he knows that from meetings with the administration and the priorities the district has set for the first time in decades that this is what is necessary to move forward. In the process, the district is not losing critical pieces of the music program.

Mr. Sce commented that considering that neither the cost of real wages nor the inflation rate has really moved, the district has done a good job at holding the budget at 3.44%. He added that the budget has good priorities.

Mr. Perosino asked if the impact on the music program at TMS will affect students' willingness to explore programs at TIS. Dr. Willett responded that the teachers at TMS are hard-working and have a passion for choral and band. They strive to encourage this passion in students. If the budget fails to pass or if the core priorities cannot be executed, there will be a far greater cost and he does not want to be in that position.

Mr. Doyle added that music has tremendous power. He found his passion for percussion at the age of 5 and tells his son to love music. Seeing a music teacher go hurts but he has spoken to others in the district whose children go home crying that they do not understand math. As much as every cut hurts, part of what gives him hope

is that the teachers are getting more support. It is not easy leadership but it is leadership that he appreciates and supports. He is not happy but is excited about the possibility and ability to move forward.

Mr. Adlerstein opened the floor to the public and asked that comments be limited to the budget discussion.

Michele Harrold, 256 Mountain Spring Road commented that she would like clarification regarding the safety official. Two weeks ago, the position was not in the budget and she understood that the position was split with the Town. It is now in the budget at full cost.

Dr. Willett explained that the cost for the SRO is still split with the Town and the Board's portion is \$108K. The Board voted in August to support this. Ms. Harrold responded that she is still not happy about it. It was not in the budget that was proposed and now it is. Mr. Adlerstein noted that from a taxpayer's perspective, it is not an increase and that there is a plan to evaluate the position going forward. Mr. Doyle noted that it is in the budget document under the global program. Ms. Harrold commented that the budget was decreased by that amount; she knows it is just tax money but something was taken out to put it in. Dr. Willett noted that no additional positions were reduced and offered to review it with her at the Superintendent's breakfast. Mr. Doyle added that he has drafted some information that he would like to request regarding the SRO and is awaiting Mr. Clark's feedback before sending the request. Mr. Adlerstein commented that this will not affect this budget but the Board wants to know to prioritize in the future.

Kate Vallo, 72 Tolland Green thanked the Board for bringing up the social and emotional growth of students as part of the conversation. It is an important element which is foundational to future learning. She really appreciates not only the topics highlighted but also statements regarding the fact that even with the laser focus on literacy and math that these topics are going to be tended in this budget. She asked to clarify that it is not being tended by the SRO. Dr. Willett responded that this is correct. There is a completely separate allocation for behavioral, social, and emotional health.

Mr. Doyle motioned to move the Adoption of the FY 2015 – 2016 Budget to action item I.3. Ms. Gorsky seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

G. COMMITTEE AND LIAISON REPORTS

Finance and Facilities – Mr. Doyle drafted an e-mail requesting information regarding about SRO position and has sent it to Mr. Clark for review.

Communications – Ms. Moran noted that the next meeting will be held on March 4th at 6PM.

Website Task Force – Ms. Moran noted that they will meet again on February 23rd.

Town Council – Ms. Moran spoke in regard to Mr. Rubino's comment. She distributed information regarding the Crystal Peat property. Mr. Rubino proposed removing the graffiti and having students forward ideas for a proper mural. Additionally, Ms. Moran noted that the Town

Council addressed the equipment that the Board declared obsolete and will take care of the items.

Policy – none

Negotiation – The paraprofessional union will vote on February 24th on whether to accept the contract.

CABE – none

H. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT - none

I. BOARD ACTION

I.1 **District Technology Upgrades to Support Transition to the New Standards 2014-2015 Grant Application**

Dr. Willett explained that this is a request for the Board to endorse and allow him to follow through with the grant application on behalf of the district.

Mr. Pagoni motioned to authorize the Superintendent to pursue the District Technology Upgrades to Support Transition to the New Standards 2014-2015 Grant Application. Mr. Doyle seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

I.2 **2015/2015 School Calendar – Adjustment Recommendation**

Dr. Willett explained that would be used with discretion and would provide him with flexibility.

Ms. Gorsky motioned to authorize the Superintendent to shorten the current school calendar by up to 3 school days depending on additional school cancellations. Ms. Yudichak seconded the motion. Mr. Adlerstein, Mr. Doyle, Ms. Gorsky, Ms. Moran, Ms. Yudichak, and Mr. Pagoni were in favor. Mr. Sce opposed. Motion carried.

I.3 **Adoption of the FY 2015 – 2016 Budget**

Mr. Doyle motioned that the Tolland Board of Education adopts its FY 2015-16 budget in the amount of \$38,469,361 and recommends this budget to the Town Council and Town Manager. Ms. Gorsky seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

J. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Diane Clokey, 29 Tolland Farms Road commented in regard to the calendar. She clarified that the last day now falls on a Tuesday.

Paul Krasusky, 26 Susan Drive commended the Board for its efforts and actions for presenting a clear and articulate budget which presents a solid plan with a clear focus. This is something that has not been seen in quite a long time. As a parent of 3 kids in the system, it is almost too little too late but he is happy to see the changes and focus on the curriculum. The Board will have his support on the Town Council as it moves forward to a vote.

Jan Rubino, 296 Weigold Road echoed what Mr. Krasusky said. She commented that Dr. Willett's opening statement struck the heart of her. It is not easy and she wishes the whole community could understand the amount of volunteer effort that has gone into this decision making. It is hard work. The Board's leadership began the conversation about bringing the community in as soon as it was elected. The conversations started and the Board has done a phenomenal job. Ms. Rubino commended everyone who came out. It is heartwarming and makes all the volunteer hours she puts into it worthwhile. She commends the Board for its decision on excellence. The TMS project over the summer was supported by the community and is part of where we are today. There is an opportunity to bring this budget to the community in a way that the senior citizens and citizens in the community who do not have children can understand the importance of passing the budget. She hopes that they can figure out some new communication to blend the students with the community. As a councilperson, she will support the budget.

Deb Goetz, 176 Kate Lane commented that she wishes her kids were 1st graders again because Tolland will regain the excellence it was known for. She can see the future and it looks bright. She thanked the Board for all its hard work. In regard to music, every year when there are cuts, there is a lot of confusion regarding their impact. Parents need to know the impact and she has not seen this information. Dr. Willett responded that there was an impact statement presented and it is available online. It is also linked in the newsletter.

K. POINTS OF INFORMATION

Mr. Adlerstein commented that since has been following this, it is the first time the Board has presented a real plan. It has sacrifices in it to achieve what needs to be achieved and is 100% about improving the school system. He commended Dr. Willett and the administration for their hard work and what they have achieved. He thanked the administrators for attending the meetings and supporting the process.

Ms. Moran agreed with what Mr. Adlerstein stated. She thanked the administrators, Mr. Connelly, Mr. Lynch, Dr. Willett, the Board members, and the community for coming out to the workshops. It is hard to see cuts but she tried to focus on the investments being made in this budget.

Mr. Adlerstein noted that the Board needs to find a way to communicate the information to the public. The budget needs to support the Town of Tolland and the taxpayers.

L. CORRESPONDENCE

- Town Council Meeting – January 29, 2015


M. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Process for Expulsion Hearings
- Mechanism for the Cancellation of Board of Education Meetings

N. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pagoni motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:19PM. Mr. Doyle seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Pascuzzi
Clerk