

New Milford Board of Education
Operations Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes
September 12, 2023
Sarah Noble Intermediate School Library Media Center

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
2023 SEP 14 P 3: 14
NEW MILFORD, CT

Present:	Mrs. Wendy Faulenbach, Chair Mr. Tom O'Brien Mr. Eric Hansell Mr. Pete Helmus
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Absent:	
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Also Present:	Dr. Janet Parlato, Superintendent of Schools Mr. Jeffrey Turner, Technology Director Mr. Matthew Cunningham, Director of Facilities Mrs. Laura Olson, Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services Mr. Anthony Giovannone, Director of Finance Mrs. Teresa Kavanagh, Director of Human Services Ms. Holly Hollander, Assistant Superintendent
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1.		Call to Order The New Milford Board of Education Operations Subcommittee was called to order at 7:30pm by Mrs. Faulenbach, Chairperson.	Call to Order
2.		Public Comment There was none.	Public Comment
3.	A.	Discussion and Possible Action Monthly Reports 1. Budget Position dated August 31, 2023 2. Purchase Resolution D-774 3. Request for Budget Transfers Mr. Giovannone noted with staff still working hard to cover the gap in the payroll department, there are no payroll encumbrances as of yet, explaining why there is a disparity from the previous year. On page 4/4, the area that outlines the turf field replacement account, the last deposit of \$12,960 was labeled incorrectly as a contribution from the town. It is not. The \$12,960 is a combination of team fees and banner sales across those two years. The chart has since been revised to the fiscal year in which they were posted.	Discussion and Possible Action A. Monthly Reports 1. Budget Position dated August 31, 2023 2. Purchase Resolution D-774 3. Request for Budget Transfers

	<p>On October 19th at 6:00pm there will be a Board of Education workshop focused on finance, explaining the financials to the full board. Mrs. Faulenbach added that she thought it was a good idea to have an workshop covering this topic.</p> <p>Mr. Helmus asked if the team fees included the brick project. Mr. Giovannone stated he thinks so, but there has not been activity on it. Dr. Parlato confirmed it is still ongoing but has not been advertised.</p> <p>Mr. Helmus asked if excess cost is a revenue stream based on resignation and how that is forecasted. Teachers leave but may have to be replaced at a higher cost, wiping out the revenue. Mr. O'Brien noted excess cost refers to special education outplacement. Dr. Parlato, responding to Mr. Helmus, clarified what the district budgets for teachers in the salary line. Mr. Giovannone stated those vacancies used to be budgeted at MA step 8 and are now budgeted as MA step 10. It is a placeholder to anticipate higher incoming salaries.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach noted that the workshop in October will help explain object codes and understand funds coming in and going out. Mr. Helmus asked if anyone from Town Council is invited to that workshop. Mrs. Faulenbach stated that can be done. Mrs. Faulenbach asked to clarify that the turf field contribution from the Board was \$100,000 for 2022-23. Dr. Parlato stated it was. Mrs. Faulenbach asked if the town matched it. Mr. Giovannone stated he would look into it.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach asked Mr. Giovannone about transportation because it is a large issue. Mr. Giovannone stated that line 55110 is not only athletic transportation, but includes regular transportation as well. Mrs. Faulenbach pointed out on the Purchase Resolution, looking at transportation services, 55110, it has athletic in that same line item. Mr. Giovannone stated there are 2 separate ones, one for key enterprises, 55110, and the other one is 55100. They are similar. Mrs. Faulenbach stated it has been reviewed in the past and wants to see where transportation is parceled</p>	
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	<p>out, especially for athletics, because it has gone over in the past.</p> <p><i>Mr. Helmus moved to approve the Operations Subcommittee monthly reports to the Board of Education, seconded by Mr. Hansell. The motion passed unanimously.</i></p> <p>B. Tuition Rates for 2023-2024</p> <p>Mr. Giovannone stated that this tuition memo is usually provided at this time of year. The cost for special education and services are not included, and billed for separately. This year there is an increase in tuition. The revenue from tuition from out of town students goes to the town, not the school district. Included in the memo is what the town expects each year from tuition and the actuals. Mrs. Faulenbach asked if the area where it says “received” is from the town budget. Mr. Giovannone stated yes and the funds go directly to the town. This does not include the Sherman tuition, but that goes to the town as well. The Sherman student population has been declining and that number has now dipped below \$1,000,000 per year that the town receives. Mrs. Faulenbach asked what the town budgeted Sherman for, Mr. Giovannone stated he could look up the exact number in MUNIS, but knows that it is declining. When New Milford develops their budget, it is based on what New Milford Public Schools has negotiated with Sherman. That negotiation takes into account what students are aging out and what the projection is.</p> <p>Mr. Helmus asked if Sherman was still thinking about disbanding. If so, those students would enter the New Milford school system and he wondered if the district could absorb those students. Dr. Parlato stated Sherman is figuring out how to renovate their school because the community still wants a school.</p> <p>Mr. Hansell, referring to the tuition amount, noted that it is not a lot of students. Mr. Giovannone stated the number applies to families from outside</p>	<p>Motion passed to approve the Operations Subcommittee monthly reports to the Board of Education Motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>B. Tuition Rates for 2023-2024</p>
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	<p>the district who pay for their children to attend New Milford Public Schools and includes any teachers who pay for their kids to attend. Teachers receive a 50% discount. Mr. Hansell stated it is only 2-3 students and asked if the district does an audit of residency. There could be students that should be charged, that are not. Ms. Hollander stated the district does check that regularly through a variety of means and investigates each one thoroughly. They have disenrolled students when it was found out the family lives in a different district. Sales of homes are looked into as well as verification. Dr. Parlato added that sometimes a student will mention something about where they actually live to an administrator or teacher, and the school investigates from that information.</p> <p><i>Mr. O'Brien moved to approve the Operations Subcommittee Tuition Rates for 2023-2024 to the Board of Education, seconded by Mr. Hansell. Motion passed unanimously.</i></p> <p>C. Bid Award - Custodial Supplies</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach asked where this was posted on the website. Mr. Giovannone stated it was under Fiscal Services. It is also run in the newspaper and on the CT source procurement site for vendors. Mrs. Faulenbach asked if the district has used this vendor before. Mr. Cunningham stated yes. Mr. O'Brien asked if the bid came in close to budget. Mr. Giovannone stated yes.</p> <p><i>Mr. O'Brien moved to approve the Operations Subcommittee Bid Award - Custodial Supplies to the Board of Education, seconded by Mr. Hansell. Motion passed unanimously.</i></p> <p>D. Roster Fees for Turf Field Use</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated a member of the public approached the board about the fees to use the turf</p>	<p>Motion passed to approve the Operations Subcommittee Tuition Rates for 2023-2024 to the Board of Education Motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>C. Bid Award - Custodial Supplies</p> <p>Motion passed to approve the Operations Subcommittee Bid Award - Custodial Supplies to the Board of Education Motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>D. Roster Fees for Turf Field Use</p>
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field. The roster fees that are collected for turf field use are put back into the turf field account. It has been said that teams that have large rosters were being charged more for field use than smaller teams because of the per player roster fee. Large rosters feel it is unfair because a team, large or small, spends the same amount of time on the field. The fee per player is \$15 dollars. Mr. Cunningham stated it is charged once a season and is used towards sustainability. New Fairfield charges \$40 per player. Other districts have a flat fee, or it falls under the Parks and Recreation department.

Mrs. Faulenbach stated roster fees or field use fees were never intended to be enough to replace the field. Mr. Helmus stated that is why the board reserves \$50,000 a year for turf field replacement, and asked how it compares to other sports. Mr. Cunningham stated the turf field rate is approximately \$50 per hour, but scaled based on day of the week and time. Mr. Helmus pointed out that those rates do not cover the cost of maintenance and every time someone uses the field the district is losing money. Mr. Cunningham confirmed yes, and stated that only occasionally there is a small profit.

Mr. Hansell asked if the district charges an in town fee and a different fee for out of town use. He felt this was another tax. *Mrs Faulenbach noted we have fees structured to in town versus out of town and profit vs non profit.* Mrs. Faulenbach noted, smaller groups pay less, which does not seem fair, but if the district changes the cost structure, it would mean a loss. Mr. Cunningham stated there are about ½ a dozen groups with over 25 kids on the roster. Mr. O'Brien confirmed that it is a seasonal fee. Mr. Cunningham stated yes and certain groups use it annually. Mr. Helmus asked how much it costs for Pop Warner to use the field. Mr. Cunningham stated it is \$1250 and a usage fee. Mrs. Faulenbach noted that there are two separate charges, per player fee and usage fee. Mr. Helmus stated that the use can be one or 30 uses per season. Mrs. Faulenbach stated that for larger groups, even a few extra dollars per player can be a hardship. Mr. Helmus pointed out that if the district charges a

	<p>flat fee then it makes it unfair to the smaller teams, and perhaps there should be a per team cap. Mrs. Faulenbach stated the board should address fees in general.</p> <p>Mr. Giovannone noted the flat fees that are in the regulation are a means to cover the expenses to offset the custodial and maintenance. It ultimately goes towards turf field replacement. Mrs. Faulenbach noted that it may not need to be voted on since it is part of regulation and the board should have a conversation regarding it. We will have to check as it does have budgetary impact if we modify it.</p> <p>4. <i>No Motion Needed.</i></p> <p>Items of Information</p> <p>A. Employment Report - August 2023 Mrs. Kavanaugh stated there are 8 new hires for certified staff and 10 for non-certified. Mr. Hansell asked if the new hires are coming in at a lower step than those retiring or resigning. Mrs. Kavanaugh stated some.</p> <p>B. Enrollment Report - August 1, 2023 Dr. Parlato stated the projected for this year is 3655, and actual is 3565. The numbers can still change. The snapshot on October 1st will be more definitive. Mr. Helmus clarified that a lower enrollment does not mean that staff should be cut. These numbers are dispersed over the whole school system. It is a known fact that the state had a low birth rate for '08, '09 and '10. Mr. Hansell noted that mathematically it works out to less than a student per class.</p> <p>C. Revised NMHS Fire Reimbursement Mr. Giovannone stated the \$10,000 in overtime and salaries has been notified in previous memos. On July 5th he received a statement of loss, which left a shortfall of \$165,000. Paperwork was resubmitted and after review, the shortfall shrank to \$63,000. As of September 12, the new revised statement of loss shortfall is now \$57,076.68. The reimbursement money can flow directly to the board since everything associated with this claim</p>	<p>No Motion was made.</p> <p>4. Items of Information</p> <p>A. Employment Report - August 2023</p> <p>B. Enrollment Report - August 1, 2023</p> <p>C. Revised NMHS Fire Reimbursement</p>
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	<p>came from the board side. The Board of Education paid the funds themselves and expensed the funds.</p> <p>Mrs. Faulenbach asked how it works with audit. Mr. Giovannone stated it will not affect the audit because it is in a separate account. Mrs. Faulenbach asked where the \$57,076.68 was going to come from. Mr. Giovannone stated that Capital Reserve is the only fund the district can tap. Mrs. Faulenbach noted that the board would have to weigh in on whether this comes from and if Capital we still have the request from last month that has not been brought forward.. Mr. Giovannone suggested adding it to the already existing request for a capital reserve withdrawal that is going before Town Council.</p> <p>Mr. Helmus reiterated that the gap was \$165,000 and is now \$57,000. Mr. Giovannone stated the \$57,000 gap will not get any smaller. Mr. Helmus pointed out that no matter what, the budget will be short \$57,000.</p> <p>Mr. Giovannone stated that whether it comes from fiscal end-of-year balance or Capital Reserve, it is essentially coming from the same place, but because it is coming from Capital Reserve it must go through a wider approval process. Mrs. Faulenbach made a note to state that the \$57,000 shortfall now in the budget is due to the fire, not due to spending. Mr. Helmus added the shortfall is due to the length of time it has taken to process this claim, which has been over a year. Mrs. Faulenbach agreed the length of time did not help, Mr. Giovannone and Dr. Parlato have been pushing to keep the process moving forward. Mr. Helmus stated that deadlines were given multiple times and missed, and that was a failure to meet the board's expectations for closeout. It should have been settled before the end of the fiscal year.</p> <p>Mr. O'Brien stated that the district already took a hit from the high school woodshop, and now another hit because of the fire. Dr. Parlato pointed out that the town, not the district, gets almost \$1,000,000 to educate Sherman students.</p>	
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	<p>Mrs. Faulenbach stated that they are now at the end of the claim. The district needs to capture these funds, and hopes this conversation will be put before the board. Mr. Giovannone noted there was never an expectation that 100% would be recovered, and has worked to close that gap. Mrs. Faulenbach noted the agenda item has been on every Operations Subcommittee meeting since April 2023.</p> <p>Mr. O'Brien asked when the board can expect the check. Mr. Giovannone stated he has asked and has not gotten a reply. Dr. Parlato added that they will ask again. Mrs. Faulenbach stated she hopes to have a vote at the full board meeting, if the board is going to reach out to the town and ask for help.</p> <p>D. Central Office Update Mrs. Faulenbach asked if the doors were going to be installed. Mr. Cunningham stated yes. Mrs. Faulenbach added that it was supposed to happen at the beginning of the school year and is a safety issue.</p> <p>E. NV5/ESG Update Dr. Parlato asked for confirmation that the SNIS panels have been turned on. Mr. Cunningham replied that they had not. Eversource has approved it but they are not turned on yet. Mrs. Faulenbach noted that savings cannot be captured until they are turned on and they are literally losing daylight. Mr. Helmus asked what is the financial impact to the board, if the savings are not properly illustrated. There is supposed to be a guaranteed benefit met or there should be no December payment. Mr. Giovannone stated there is a financial impact but there is not one the board has to make. Until he receives proper accounting, building by building, he would not bring a memo to the board to make a payment. Mr. Helmus stated that it may be under a town contract, but the board agreed to go along with it. Since then the board has had questions for NV5, but has not gotten any answers, including how they would document and account for the savings given the scope changes. For example, the Hill and Plain School solar panels were not originally planned. The roof needs to be replaced, so now there is the expense to remove the panels</p>	<p>D. Central Office Update</p> <p>E. NV5/ESG Update</p>
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		<p>and put them back on. There are a lot of open questions on how this is accounted for, and it needs to be made transparent to the public. There is no way to forecast what the energy cost for the budget will be next year.</p> <p>Mr. Giovannone stated there was a meeting on September 8th. He continues to press ESG to get NV5 to deliver the dashboard they were asking for, but does not have a time frame on it yet. Mrs. Faulenbach noted that the board is getting ready to enter budget and this is a big ticket item. Dr. Parlato suggested a presentation from NV5. Mrs. Faulenbach agreed and thought a refresher was a good idea. It is a town contract but the board did go into agreement with them. Having them come back and have a public conversation is the way to go. They can answer questions and provide the component that documents the budget mechanism. Dr. Parlato suggested giving them a list of questions ahead of time and communicate what they need answered as part of the discussion. Mr. Helmus also suggested they review the meeting minutes where the board asked NV5 questions that went unanswered. Mrs. Faulenbach added she has recently looked through the NV5 documents. She will go back, get the dates on the documents and let the board know so they may also refresh themselves. The biggest thing is to have the needed information before going into budget.</p>	
5.		<p>Public Comment There was none.</p>	<p>Public Comment</p>
6.		<p>Adjourn <i>Mr. O'Brien moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:45pm, seconded by Mr. Helmus and passed unanimously.</i></p>	<p>Adjourn <i>Motion made and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm.</i></p>

Respectfully submitted:



Wendy Faulenbach
 Chairman, Operations Subcommittee