

**Coventry Board of Education  
Coventry, CT  
Approved Minutes  
Fiscal Committee Meeting  
Thursday, June 10, 2010**

Members Present: Mary Kortmann, Fiscal Committee Chair  
Cheryl Trudon, Fiscal Committee Member (arrived at 5:09 p.m.)  
Mark Malcolm, Fiscal Committee Member

Also Present: Dr. Donna Bernard, Superintendent of Schools  
Katie Baumgartner, Payroll, Board of Education

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 pm by M. Kortmann.

**I. Budget Items**

**a. Projection Sheet**

K. Baumgartner handed out new projection sheets for May and June. She also handed out a copy of an e-mail from Sherry Holmes regarding Transportation revenue and a memo sent to Superintendents and School Business Managers from Karen Kowalski.

Dr. Bernard stated that her sub plan worked. She said beyond that the district was noticed on June 9 of a supplemental excess cost of \$42,000.00.” She stated that Sherry Holmes closed within a couple of thousand dollars for twelve years. Dr. Bernard also stated that she asked Ms. Holmes to come back in July to close out the books. Even if it is in consult with the new person. She stated the auditors were nervous about the transition and the auditors liked the way Ms. Holmes handled the books.

M. Kortmann asked M. Malcolm to review with her the utilities/electric line item on the projection sheet. She wanted to confirm that last month 30k was spent. M. Kortmann is concerned that the utilities are running at more per month than projected out. She asked when the bills come in. M. Kortmann also stated that every month the projection does not increase even though bills do. K. Baumgartner stated that she will speak with Sherry Holmes regarding the projections.

Dr. Bernard said she spoke to Ms. Holmes and made sure Ms. Holmes understood that all bills needs to be paid before any purchase orders are released. She asked K. Baumgartner to send an e-mail to Ms. Holmes asking when she can expect to close out the utility figures and to confirm she will hold off on purchase orders until all bills were paid. K. Baumgartner answered she would do so.

Dr. Bernard stated that 90k in funds available for re-distribution are sub funds.

C. Trudon asked to review the legal and audit line item on the projection sheet. She asked how this was figured. She has seen the Board attorney several times in the past couple of months and is concerned the money budgeted will not be enough.

M. Kortmann stated they saved 40K on arbitration. K. Baumgartner stated she heard the custodians accepted but hasn't seen anything official.

Dr. Bernard has recommended priorities on spending down the monies left in the budget.  
1) Oil tank top off. Dr. Bernard handed out an Oil Projection Update from 6/7/2010 prepared by Paul Noel. The tanks will be filled at the lower rate.

2) Deferred materials including the generator project, cameras for safety, and custodial supplies.

M. Malcolm asked what deferred materials and custodial supplies consisted of. Dr. Bernard answered it would be paper supplies and items that staff had requested throughout the year and been prevented from purchasing.

M. Kortmann asked where the compressor repair funds were. Dr. Bernard answered Mr. Noel repaired the compressor and took care of it. M. Malcolm stated he thought the compressor had been in repair. Dr. Bernard stated Beth Pratt is reviewing the items she needs and will get back to her if the compressor issues arise again.

M. Kortmann stated Beth Pratt would end the year positive. She stated Ms. Pratt should spend her money now on enhancing the culinary experience or fixing equipment. M. Kortmann also stated that since the food service is not a town fund, she does not have to spend all of her money by the end of this fiscal year. C. Trudon agreed that Ms. Pratt should be able to carry over any positive budget balance to the next year.

M. Malcolm stated a concern over spending money on paper supplies instead of textbooks. Dr. Bernard stated she is giving the principles \$8,000.00 each to buy books and curriculum supplies.

C. Trudon stated that principles are changing and wondered if this would affect the way the money is spent. She also stated that some students read their assignments on line.

Dr. Bernard stated she will add site based supplies to her spend down list.

M. Malcolm asked if Dr. Bernard agreed to spend the money on textbooks first instead of paper and custodial supplies. The committee discussed further and agreed that textbooks and curriculum supplies would be purchased before paper and janitorial supplies.

M. Kortmann asked if some of the deferred school requests should be slated for smart boards. Dr. Bernard answered they are already in the budget and includes projectors for the high school, smart boards for two schools, and universal screening and testing.

Dr. Bernard stated she will redo the list and e-mail it to the fiscal committee. She also stated that Mr. Petrone has purchase orders ready to go for new chairs if there is still money available after the priority items are purchased. C. Trudon asked if the new chairs were for Robertson or for his new school. Dr. Bernard answered for Robertson. C. Trudon stated she would rather have newer books than newer chairs. Both M. Malcolm and M. Kortmann agreed.

M. Kortmann asked Dr. Bernard to check on the compressor repair. Dr. Bernard stated she would. Dr. Bernard asked K. Baumgartner to obtain the cost of the compressor replacement from Beth Pratt. C. Trudon mentioned the freezer would run more efficiently and wondered if there a possibility of receiving a rebate.

M. Malcolm asked when they will know for sure if there really is excess money that can be used for these purchases. Dr. Bernard answered it could be the end of June. She stated that purchase orders sit in the system. If she cannot afford the items on the purchase orders, Ms. Holmes makes the staff resubmit the purchase orders after July 1<sup>st</sup>. K. Baumgartner stated the auditors want a report showing what was in the system as of June 30<sup>th</sup> including any purchase orders.

C. Trudon asked why we are giving back \$42,000.00. Dr. Bernard reviewed the memo from Sherry Holmes. The memo reviews the money given by the state as \$42,000.00. However, the state also shorted the town by monies equal to or greater than the amount of \$42,000.00. The town is now short in their transportation budget. The committee discussed what if any money they would be willing to give back. The committee agreed that the money be spent on essential supplies, repairs, and curriculum items before any further discussion with the town.

M. Kortmann asked if the committee should inform the Board of Education during the meeting scheduled for later this evening. The committee discussed and agreed to see what is really remaining and possibly give some money back to the town, but not the whole \$42,000.00. Dr. Bernard answered that the committee should not report on the excess numbers this evening, as it is not scheduled on the agenda for discussion. K. Baumgartner agreed and stated that fiscal reporting was not on the agenda.

The committee discussed further and resolved to put it on the agenda for the next Board of Education meeting scheduled for June 24<sup>th</sup>. Any questions that came up on the excess should be answered that the budgets were managed well and there was not really an excess as the money is slated for specific items.

M. Kortmann asked if there should be a fiscal committee vote to give Ms. Holmes the go ahead to spend down the budget for necessary curriculum items. Dr. Bernard answered that has not been past practice and she gave the principals permission to spend some of the money. She also stated we need to spend it on essentials first based on the list she will send out to the committee.

C. Trudon asked if switches, computer gear, and a back up system were accounted for. She also stated the back up of the town's e-mail system came out of the school budget.

That really helped the town. M. Kortmann answered the computer stuff and smart boards are in the capitol budget and not this budget.

M Malcolm stated it was too bad we didn't know about the excess in February when we could have had the roofs slated to be repaired. Dr. Bernard replied it did not look that way in February.

### **III. Approve Fiscal Minutes from May 13, 2010 Meeting**

The committee discussed some changes needed to the May 13, 2010 minutes. The following changes were noted.

On page 4 Encumbrance Reports for April 2010, M. Malcolm noted it does not reflect the conversation the committee had on specific concerns around the projection line items. The committee listed a handful of line items such as salaries, utilities, and legal that is inconsistent month to month. The amount of money spent in April was the amount of money projected to spend in May and June together.

Dr. Bernard asked for the following sentence to be added under bullet III. The committee expressed a concern in looking at month to month projection trends and what appeared to be inconsistencies.

On page 2, M. Kortmann asked that the 4 sentences starting with "C. Trudon commented" and until "P. Noel proposed charges" be placed in the same paragraph and not be separated.

C. Trudon asked for the following changes to be made to the same section as follows.

On page 2, eighth line from the bottom replace with:

C. Trudon commented that in cases such as our track and field programs, facilities that are shared with other school districts like Bolton, fee determination must be considered.

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Terri Lessard, Subcommittee Clerk

**Approved: July 8, 2010**