

Proposed Minutes  
Meeting of the RTM-Finance and Budget Committee  
Wednesday, February 22, 2017

**PLACE:**

Town Hall Room 119  
Meeting Starts: 7:30pm

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Jack Davis, Lisa Yarnell, Bert Von Stuelpnagel, Martha Banks, David Martin, Stacy Tie, James Howe, Matt Raben, Taylor Carter, Rob Cardone, Deb Ritchie, Bill Smith, Brad Pattelli

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Charles Boulier, Steve Anderson

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

BOE Chair Michael Harman, BOE VC Betsy Haggerty-Ross, BOE members Katie Stein, David Dineen, Jill McCammon, Tara Ochman, Darien Superintendent Dr. Dan Brenner, BOE Director of Finance and Operations Mike Feeny, BOE Director of Human Resources Marjorie Cion, Selectman Mark Thorne, members of RTM Education committee (see their minutes) and several CDSP parents.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Jack Davis called the meeting to order at 7:30pm. He asked if there was a quorum. It was agreed there was and the meeting began. This was a joint meeting with the RTM Education Committee which also had a quorum. Discussions on the Resolutions at hand began.

**Discussion on Resolution 17-1- A Resolution Approving the Contract between the Darien Education Association and the Darien Board of Education**

Jack began the discussion by stating that consistent with any union contract, the RTM was not voting to approve the contract, the RTM was voting not to reject the contract which takes effect July 1, 2017 and runs for four years through June 20, 2012. He stated that if the RTM voted in the negative the following would occur:

- The contract would be sent immediately to arbitration.
- In some cases the arbitrator will approve the contract as negotiated by the Town and the union. However, the arbitrator does not do a King Solomon-therefore there is no splitting the difference between the two parties. It is either the union's proposal or the Town's proposal.
- In addition, he went on, with the exception of healthcare, the financial strength of the community is reviewed and historically, town's such as Darien do not do well in arbitration.

The contract provided for a +3.4% total salary increases for certified staff including teachers, guidance counselors, school psychologists, etc. This is comprised of two steps, a GWI (General Wage Increase) and a step increase for each year taught, between 2.6% and 2.8% for each year taught. The union gave some important concessions were given so that:

- The number of classes taught would increase from 4-4.5 at MMS.
- Also the healthcare paid by the certified staff moved from 20% to 21%.
- Additionally, a \$20,000 budgeted item for sabbatical was eliminated
- Minor adjustments were made to number of credits reimbursed with an increase in the per credit amount paid from \$150 to \$300 with a greater fund created to cover such expenses.

A motion was made by Stacy Tie and seconded by Lisa Yarnell to take a vote. **The RTM F&B committee voted not to reject the contract 12 in favor, none opposed and one abstention.** The one abstention was motivated by the current uncertainties regarding the true or long term cost of the teachers (certified staff) contract.

**Discussion on Resolution 17-2- A Resolution Approving the Contract between the Darien Education Association and the Darien Board of Education**

Jack began the discussion by stating that consistent with any union contract, the RTM was not voting to approve the contract, the RTM was voting not to reject the contract which takes effect July 1, 2017 and runs for four years through June 20, 2012. He stated that if the RTM voted in the negative the following

would occur:

- The contract would be sent immediately to arbitration.
- In some cases the arbitrator will approve the contract as negotiated by the Town and the union. However, the arbitrator does not do a King Solomon-therefore there is no splitting the difference between the two parties. It is either the union's proposal or the Town's proposal.
- In addition, he went on, with the exception of healthcare, the financial strength of the community is reviewed and historically, town's such as Darien do not do well in arbitration.

Jack also noted that it was under this premise and understanding that the RTM F&B committee reviewed this school Administrators' contract. It was also discussed that this contract was for a four year period of time versus the prior resolutions contract that ran for three years as the last one was reduced to two years to allow the town to address any "Cadillac plan" effect under Obamacare. This puts the town back on track for the teacher's contract and administrators' contract not being negotiated during the same year.

This contract provides for a total salary increase of 2.25% for the first three years and 2.5% in the last year. The concessions received were noted as:

- Elementary assistant principals work year increased from 190 to 197 days or a +3.67% increase.
- Reduction in vacation carryover from 15 to 10 days
- Increase in sick days from 15 to 18
- A revision to add Reduction in Force provisions within four groups.

A motion was made by Lisa Yarnell and seconded by Rob Cordone to take a RTM F&B vote and **the vote passed NOT to reject the contract, 12 in favor, none opposed and one abstention** who wanted to know more about the long term costs of the teachers including the pension situation.

Several of the BOE members left the meeting after the votes were taken on the Administrators and Teachers contracts. Several CDSP Parents remained along with Jill McCammon, BOE member and Selectman Mark Thorne.

**Discussion on Resolution 17-4/17-5 -The first is a Resolution to take action on the Appropriation funds of (\$6,250,000) and the second one was about the Bonding (\$90,000) for a total cost of \$6,340,000 for the 16.296 acres located at 512 Middlesex Road from the Ox Ridge Hunt Club**

- This resolution had been previously approved by the BOS and BOF. After review of the contract, PZ&H has made several modifications including:
  - The elimination of the perpetuity of the agreement
  - A requirement to execute a Facilities Agreement with the Darien Parks and Rec for each use by the ORHC
  - The use of the bathrooms which do currently not exist was removed as plans for their construction could not be determined in the proposed 2017/2018 budget
  - Additionally, although potential revenue opportunities to offset the ongoing maintenance cost were discussed, no revenue was actually attributed to the new property in the current proposed budget.

Additionally, there will be an operating expense of \$17,200 for the maintenance of the property in the budget and a BOS capital expense of \$11,000 for aerator, seed and maintenance.

A motion was made by Stacy Tie and seconded by Rob Cordone and the RTM F&B committee passed the vote to recommend this resolution of 17-4 to the full RTM for the Purchase Appropriation. A second motion was made by James Howe and seconded by Deb Ritchie and the vote was taken to approve the Resolution 17-5 for Bonding. Both motions passed at 13 in favor, none opposed and none abstained.

**Discussion on Resolution 17-6 authorizing the issue of \$470,000 bonds, notes or other obligations to pay for the design and construction of a sanitary sewer on Clocks Lane and Settlers Trail with the possibility of two future sewer extensions**

It is worth noting that:

- Homeowner assessments of approximately \$36,000 per property will pay back the Town estimated cost plus interest over a 20 year period.
- As this amount is relatively small, the Town (F&B) has the right to add this sum to any Town bonding project.

A motion was made and a vote was taken with 12 in favor, none opposed and one abstention to approve this resolution. The one abstention to approve this resolution was from an F&B member who lives on one of the roads for which the sewer is being constructed.

**Discussion on Resolution 17-7 authorizing an amendment to the Ordinance Change for Park & Recreation-**

A discussion ensued about this and a vote confirmed all unanimously agreed 13-0 to approve this ordinance and recommend same to the RTM.

**APPROVAL OF REVISED MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 13<sup>TH</sup>**

There was a revision to the minutes of February 13 as it was needed to change the vote count to 8-0 as 5 of the members came in late for the first amendment. It was so motioned by David and confirmed by Stacy. The vote to approved the prior weeks minutes was 9 in favor and 4 abstained (who were not present)

**ADJOURNMENT**

Rob Cardone moved to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Deb Ritchie. Meeting adjourned 10:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa F. Yarnell, Clerk