

MINUTES

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BOARD OF FINANCE

BOARD OF EDUCATION

SPECIAL MEETING

CITY HALL AUDITORIUM/ZOOM

MARCH 19, 2024

A **SPECIAL JOINT MEETING** of the Board of Finance and the Board of Education was held on Tuesday, March 19, 2024. Present at City Hall were Mayor Carbone, Torrington Public Schools (TPS) Superintendent Michael Wilson, Comptroller John Monks, Manager of Budgets and Planning Erika Johnson, Treasurer Dan Farley, Board of Finance Members James Wright, Laurene Pesce, Deborah Iannacito, and Board of Education members Ed Corey, Susan DePretis, John Kissko, Ellen Hoehne, Jeff Putnam, Patrick Cronin, Kristen Conway, Glenn Burger, Board of Education Director of Finance and Operations Scott Petruzzelli, Board of Education Director of Facilities Dean Pergola, and Board of Education Director of Technology Services Rachael Viens. Board of Finance Members Christopher Anderson, Wendy Traub, Chris Beyus, Deputy Fire Chief Dave Tripp, and Board of Education Building Committee Co-Chair Mario Longobucco joined via Zoom. Board of Education Members Gary Eucalitto and William Knight were absent.

Mayor Carbone called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m., beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

On a motion by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Anderson, the Board of Finance and the Board of Education voted unanimously to review the FY 24/25 Board of Education Capital Plan. Superintendent Michael Wilson said that Director of Facilities Dean Pergola and Director of Finance and Operations Scott Petruzzelli will be presenting the Board of Education Capital Plan for FY 24/25. Mr. Pergola said that last year TPS handled the high-priority items that were listed on the Facilities Study that was done on the Torrington Schools. He said that this list of items is what is prioritized in the study. They skipped Forbes School as they do not know the future of that School yet, once the new High School and Middle School are open. Mr. Pergola highlighted the high priority items that need to be done at each school. Mr. Beyus asked if the chiller that needed to be replaced at Tarringford was for air conditioning or a fridge for the cafeteria, Mr. Pergola told him that it was the HVAC. Mrs. Traub asked if the curb replacement at Tarringford would be concrete or granite, Mr. Pergola said there are no specifications yet for concrete or granite. Mrs. Traub asked if the contracted snow removal company is responsible for any damage in the winter, Mr. Pergola explained that they had a new snow contractor this year, and it is contracted for any damage to be repaired, however, he said it is hard to tell what new damage versus years is prior. Mr. Corey stated that the curb issue at Tarringford has been an issue for the faculty and staff for many years and that the curbs are in rough shape. Mr. Wright asked why there is a need for new snow removal equipment, Mr. Pergola said that the contractor isn't responsible for the sidewalks, that is the responsibility of the school custodians, and the equipment is old and in need of replacement. Mrs. Traub asked about the turf field replacement at the high school, if this was already there, and the history behind the turf field. Mayor Carbone explained that the BOE has been putting funds from their surplus into turf field improvements, and the funds have moved around a bit, but to put all the funds together to date she believes there is about \$600,000 for the turf field replacement. Mr. Petruzzelli said that the replacement cost of the turf field comes to around \$1,000,000, and currently, there is \$600,000 in the general fund for this project. Mrs. Pesce asked if the Building Committee was continuing to get a grant for the field, Mayor Carbone explained that this is a different field than the one for the grant opportunity. Ms. DePretis said that the turf field would need to be replaced every 10 years. Mrs. Traub asked when the turf field was put in place, and the BOE was told that it would need to be replaced every 10 years, what have they been putting away, Mr. Corey explained that by maintaining the field, there is some extra life. He explained that with careful long-term planning with the City, they won't be paying all \$1,000,000 at one time. Mrs. DePretis said the turf fields are designed to last 15 years. Mr. Beyus asked if 2025 was the 10-year mark for the replacement, Mrs. DePretis said that 10 years isn't 2025, they are currently seven years into budgeting for the replacement, and they have three more years to get the funds. Mr. Beyus asked that the Capital Plan for FY 24/25 be adjusted to reflect that the BOE isn't requesting the full \$1,000,000 for the turf field replacement. Mr. Beyus asked if they had the funds for the

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Middle school roof replacement, Mayor Carbone said that in 2018 \$700,000 was designated for the middle school roof and windows, and \$378,000 is currently in bonded projects for the middle school roof. She explained that the BOE had used COVID funds for the window work. There is currently \$1.1 million in the City fund. Mr. Beyus asked if the roof would require an additional \$500,000 in funds, Mr. Pergola said that they would need an additional \$500,000 in funding, however, 72% of that project is what can be reimbursed. Mr. Beyus asked if that would be the same for the Vogel roof, and Mr. Pergola said yes. Mr. Beyus said he would like an idea of the actual request for Capital for the BOE since they are not asking for \$1,000,000 for the turf field. Mr. Anderson stated that he would like to see the BOE five-year Capital Plan for Capital Projects. Mrs. Traub asked for the plan to be modified to reflect what would be reimbursed, Mr. Pergola said that \$3,156,940 worth of capital projects would be able to be reimbursed. Mrs. Iannacito asked why the total for Forbes wasn't included, Mr. Pergola explained that they are not sure what they are doing with the building yet. Mr. Petruzzelli clarified that the BOE is asking for \$1,552,960 in Capital funds. Mayor Carbone said that they can investigate other funding sources to reduce that expense. Mr. Petruzzelli presented the BOE Technology Capital Budget for FY 24/25. Mrs. Pesce asked if Chromebooks were still the way to go, Ms. Viens said that the schools work with Google Classroom, which is compatible with Chromebooks.

BUDGET PERFORMANCE REPORTS

On a motion by Mrs. Pesce, seconded by Mr. Anderson, the Board of Finance voted unanimously to accept the Board of Education Budget Performance Reports. Mrs. Traub asked if the encumbrances were all purchase order ready, and just had to input expense items, Mr. Petruzzelli said that she was correct. Mrs. Traub asked if the gas and electricity were based on prior years' use, and Mr. Petruzzelli told her they were.

FORBES SCHOOL ROOF REIMBURSEMENT

On a motion by Mr. Kissko, seconded by Mrs. Hoehne, the **Board of Education** voted unanimously to approve the deposit of \$30,840.00 received from the State of Connecticut for School Construction Grant reimbursement for Forbes School Roof Replacement that occurred in 2013. Mayor Carbone told the Boards that this was a reimbursement from 10 years ago, and that action is needed by both Boards to move the funds from the General Fund as miscellaneous revenue into the Capital Fund for future roof projects.

On a motion by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Mrs. Iannacito, the **Board of Finance** voted unanimously to approve the deposit of \$30,840 received from the State of Connecticut for a Construction Grant reimbursement of costs expended on the Forbes School roof in 2013. Funds should be transferred to the Board of Education Capital Reserve account for future roof projects. Mrs. Traub asked since the funds were over 10 years old how they can be considered revenue, and if these funds would be earmarked specifically for roof projects. Mayor Carbone said that the City reached out to the auditors for guidance before planning, and she said that once the funds are transferred, they would be for roof purposes only. She did say that the BOE could come back with a request to transfer funds for say IT purchases if the roof projects didn't use the full amount. She explained that there should be a paper trail for the auditors, and for the taxpayers to see where the funds are spent.

BOARD OF EDUCATION TRANSFER REQUESTS

On a motion by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mrs. Iannacito, the **Board of Finance** voted unanimously to transfer the \$52,422.72 surplus from the Board of Education's General Budget into their Capital Reserve Account for IT Projects to be determined. Mayor Carbone said that in June, Sue Lubomski had requested \$200,000 of the BOE surplus to be transferred into the turf field account, and this is the final amount of the surplus that needs to be transferred into the BOE Capital Fund. Mr. Beyus asked if the turf account had gone from \$400,000 to \$600,000 or

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\$600,000 to \$800,000 with that surplus transfer, Mayor Carbone told him that the balance in that account was \$600,000. Mr. Wright asked if the \$52,422.72 would be applied to the IT Capital Budget for FY 24/25, and Mrs. DePretis said that it would be. Mayor Carbone suggested a full review of what is in the BOE Capital Reserve Account. Mr. Corey said it would be helpful if the Boards looked at old records to see what funds are specifically earmarked for which projects. Mayor Carbone explained to the Boards why a paper trail is so important. Mrs. Traub asked if their surpluses have been in years past and if there is a way to restrict funds in line items, saying reserved for specific projects. Mr. Anderson said that you can label the line items as much as you want and that it could help to identify those projects. Mr. Anderson explained that it would be helpful to both Boards to have a yearly Capital Plan, plus a 5-year plan to see what would need to be done in the future. Mayor Carbone said that the original surplus in June was \$252,000, and they requested that \$200,000 of that be moved to the turf field line item in the Capital Reserve. The prior year there was a much larger surplus with no request to move funds, she said that the BOE should always ask for surpluses to be moved into the Capital Reserve. Mr. Corey added that the BOE has always been in a positive position with a surplus at the end of the year.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mr. Anderson, seconded by Mr. Corey, the Boards voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Heather Abraham, Asst. City Clerk

ATTEST:


CAROL L. ANDERSON, CITY CLERK