

**Barnet School Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 2, 2014
Barnet School**

Members in Attendance: Louis Bushey, Mary Skovsted, David Warden, Lori Werdenschlag Barbour (acting chair); Principal Shawn Gonyaw, Business Manager Janice Ouellette, Superintendent Martha Tucker

Members of the Public in Attendance: Mark Vaal, Kim Evans, Bobby Farlice, Susan Jensen, Meg Clayton, Stephanie Giese, Eric Bogie, Sue Person, Ed Ryan, Penny Stevenson, Rick Malon, Beth Malon, Cathy Brown, Dennis Kaputala, Becky Boardman, Heather Counter, Jen Hall, Tammy Davis, Jackie Gilmour, Melissa Bushey

The meeting was called to order at 6:18 p.m. by Acting Chair Lori Werdenschlag Barbour.

Financial Report

Superintendent Tucker explained version #2 of the budget that is being proposed by the school administrators. This budget does not have any additional cuts included. The budget amount recommended is \$4,956,431 which would result in a tax rate of \$1.6120. Superintendent Tucker then went through a revised budget proposal (version #3) that would level fund the educational spending to the FY14 level. The revised budget was prepared at the request of the Board to provide a list of potential cuts if we were to level fund the school district budget. The version #3 budget amount would be \$4,711,133 which would result in a tax rate of \$1.5170. Principal Gonyaw went through the list of potential budget cuts used to develop version #3 and discussion followed.

No action was taken by the Board. A budget vote will be scheduled for 1/14/14 at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Public Input

-Ed Ryan asked if cuts to the CCSU budget were considered during the development of the Barnet budget. Superintendent Tucker responded that the CCSU budget had been approved by the CCSU Board and was set for this budget cycle. Louis Bushey responded that each school in the SU has three representatives on the CCSU Board. Barnet's representatives are David Warden, Shellie Samuels, and Louis Bushey.

-Rick Malon asked about the large increase in professional development budget item. Superintendent Tucker explained the shift to the Common Core Standards and the need to provide training to make the transition smooth for teachers and students.

-Stephanie Giese asked what was driving the budget increase from the FY 2014 budget. Janice Ouellette explained that a big portion of the increase was the increase in high school tuition being paid. The 2013 graduating class was relatively small and the incoming freshman class is relatively large.

-Superintendent Tucker suggested going through Version #2 of the budget to attempt to answer questions instead of jumping around for specific questions. The Version #2 budget is the suggested budget that has been developed by the administration. Discussion occurred throughout.

-Rick Malon suggested that the Board have a clear explanation of the school population. Superintendent Tucker explained that the tax rate is calculated using equalized students instead of real students, so the numbers are not the same. It was agreed that the census information is needed for Town Meeting.

-Eric Bogie, a non- Barnet resident, was granted permission to speak. He asked about the number of students that pay tuition to the Barnet School (mainly Peacham 7th - 8th graders) and how the proposed cuts would influence the number of students paying tuition to Barnet.

-Stephanie Giese asked about the possibility of securing grants to cover the costs of some programs.

-Ed Ryan explained he wanted the Barnet School to be the best and to keep what we currently offer.

-Heather Counter asked if Barnet still had the “failing school” status. Principal Gonyaw explained that most schools are “failing.” No Child Left Behind is being replaced and the “failing school” status will go away as well.

-Meg Clayton stated that we needed to maintain the current levels of support for students during this time of transition to the Common Core Standards.

-Penny Stevenson commented that the foundation of our education system is set in the early years and that the proposed cuts in the primary grades would not provide the needed support for students.

-Beth Malon indicated that she was involved in the planning for the new school and that the classrooms were sized for 15 students. She also offered her support for the music program.

-Rick Malon asked how the state planned to use the extra \$.05 that is being added to the base tax rate.

Adjournment

A motion was made by David Warden and seconded by Mary Skovsted to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed with no further discussion and the meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Louis Bushey, Recorder