



**Town of North Stonington  
Tri-board Meeting: BOS,BOF,BOE  
North Stonington Education Center  
January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
6:00 PM**

## Agenda

Meeting Chair: Stephanie Mastroianni, BOE

In attendance: Stephanie Mastroianni, Judy Main, Chet Stefanowicz, Christine Wagner, Gary Annino, Carl Johnston, Dan Smith, Winona Berdine, Jamie Towle-Weicksel, Lisa Mazzella, Bob Carlson, Nicole Porter, Brett Mastroianni, Troy Hopkins (by Phone), Sarah Nelson, Mike Anderson, Alex Karpinski, Louis Gingerella

Call to order: 6:00PM

1. Call to order/Intro of New BOE , BOF Members/A & FO
2. Public Comments- none
3. BOE Update
  - a. T.Hopkins provided an update on the state of the school district. Highlights include
    - i. District Accreditation (first in the state)
    - ii. Year going well; few weather calls
4. Building Project Audit
  - a. \$2 Million reimbursement for the building project
  - b. Three construction projects being audited including the Ed Center roof, Elementary and MS/HS building
  - c. January 22<sup>nd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> will be an on-campus audit. In hopes that the town will get the money back sooner. B.Carlson reached out to Heather Sommers and Greg Howard and they bumped us to the top of the list

5. Eversource Issue- Eversource realized they were undercharging us for 4 years. Rate will be at the start of the 2023 school year. We did not budget the correct amount based on previous bills. We may have been overcharged for gas. Raises the issues of charging on municipal buildings. Looking into an energy audit. Should the audit include all the town buildings?
  - a. Discussion ensued
  - b. Questions
    - i. Do we need an appropriation? No, we can use negotiations line item
    - ii. Does solar play a roll? Yes, we are charged less because of the panels.
    - iii. Is it a supply or distribution charge? It is both, but more details on Wednesday
6. School Lights on Route 2- Signs that have lights flashing and school zone
  - a. Haven't worked for quite awhile
  - b. Spoke with multiple people regarding fixing them
  - c. Units were installed in 1989 and discontinued about 15 years ago
  - d. Provided estimates for cost to replace-state will not replace sign
  - e. Options for signs
    - i. Get rid of signs
    - ii. Replace signs to flash only during school time
    - iii. State will provide sign with 'recommended speed of 25mph'
    - iv. There is a grant in Feb for safer roads
  - f. Discussion ensued- overall agreed that we needed flashing sign
  - g. Questions

- i. How would it be financed- BOE non-lapsing
  - ii. Could we get replacement parts (lights, etc) to save money- yes, especially if you don't change base
  - iii. Main issue was who was responsible- BOS has to vote if change the sign
  - iv. BOS and BOE will follow up
- 7. Non-Lapsing Account- continue to talk about this account
  - a. \$3500 for lighting for elementary school stage
  - b. \$2800 for 12 keyboards for music programs for HS
  - c. Did the BOF get the non-lapsing report? W. Berdine commented last report received from C. Wagner on 11/2 with September/November 2023
  - d. BOE will make sure monthly financials will be given to the BOF
- 8. BOE/BOS Capitol Plans
  - a. M.Anderson provided update: Capitol is often the first cut. After last budget season, in collaboration with BOS, come up with a more comprehensive plan (starting this Fall)
    - i. BOS presented a preliminary 5 year plan last Weds
    - ii. BOF would like to see a more leveled out Capitol plan
    - iii. January 17<sup>th</sup> is the next meeting to discuss Capitol
    - iv. Revenues from Grands List at the January 17<sup>th</sup> meeting
  - b. Discussion ensued
  - c. Discussion about funding school building maintenance followed
    - i. Board Chairs to come together to work out a solution
      - 1. Assess historical Maintenance
      - 2. Draft a maintenance plan
    - ii. Goal for this budget season
- 9. Budget Calendar- handout
- 10. Budget Process / Best Practices-

- a. W. Berdine requested to please send presentation/materials **in advance** in electronic form prior to meeting.
- b. Discussion followed
  - i. Be prepared to be challenged
  - ii. Downward pressure on the budget; Uptick in capitol to take out of general budget
  - iii. Material should be sent to M. Anderson to distribute to board
  - iv. Present “best cut” of budget. L. Mazzella suggested that we also present impact
  - v. March 13<sup>th</sup> is presentation of Budget
  - vi. T. Hopkins will present January 24<sup>th</sup>. Want to know priority.
- 11. Wheeler Library Funds Request
  - a. \$2 Million request to be presented at the meeting 1/9 BOS and then on to BOF to town meeting and referendum (with budget)
  - b. Discussion ensued
- 12. Approval of Tri-board Meeting Dates 2024
  - a. January 8 (BOE)
  - b. June 10 (BOF)
  - c. September 9 (BOS)
  - d. December 9 (BOE)
- 13. Next Meeting – June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024
- 14. Reposting Director of Administration & Finance
- 15. Introduction of Susan Collin- Town Planner
- 16. Adjournment Time 7:43pm

Respectfully submitted by Jamie Towle-Weicksel, BOE Secretary