

Thomaston Board of Education
Special Meeting
Wednesday, February 18, 2009
Thomaston Town Hall
Meeting Room One, Level Four
6:30 p.m.



Board Members Present:

Laurie Barrett, Deborah April, Beth Yaffe, Lucy Santopietro, Laura Rieley, Holly Herbert, Cheryl Roberts

Board Members Absent:

Steve Catania, Joanne Gilland

Also Present:

Superintendent, Lynda Mitchell; Business Manager, Susan Laone; Board Clerk, Patricia George; High School Vice Principal, John Perrucci

I. Call to Order:

Board Chair, Laurie Barrett, called to order the Special Meeting of the Board of Education at 6:39 p.m.

II. Approval of Agenda:

On a motion made by Lucy Santopietro and seconded by Deborah April to approve/accept the agenda as presented. No further discussion; motion carried unanimously.

III. Public Participation:

Salvatore Santa Maria
115 Carter Road
Thomaston, CT 06787

Mr. Santa Maria asked if he could obtain copies of the letters submitted by the unions. He also asked the Board to clarify whether the deferrals were really concessions. Additionally, he had several questions regarding salary breakdowns.

Anthony Durso
1301 Old Northfield Road
Thomaston, CT 06787

Mr. Durso asked the Board where the proposed budget percentage is currently. He was confused with the information that he obtained from a recent newspaper article.

IV. 2009/2010 Budget Reductions:

The Board began their budget discussions by reviewing class lists which noted the number of students per class per teacher excluding homerooms and study halls. Superintendent Mitchell noted the Special Education team taught classes were not able to be provided.

Board Member, Deborah April, felt it was not the Board's decision where teachers should be cut, but rather the decision of the building administrators.

Vice Principal, John Perrucci, spoke to the Board regarding state requirements relating to Inclusion and having to implement the initiative without funding.

The Board started with a 3.79% budget proposal (with \$294,000 cuts already done to date) and would need to reduce the budget further to get to the 1.25% proposed budget as agreed upon during a prior meeting. This computed to \$349,000 additional dollars.

Business Manager, Sue Laone, took the average salary of the non-tenured teachers or \$44,800. When divided, it equated to 8 teaching positions that would need to be eliminated if there were no teacher concessions.

Ms. Laone indicated that she spoke with the Board's insurance broker and was able to net an additional \$40,000 savings or 6%. (\$349,000 - \$40,000 savings = \$309,000 budget reduction)

After further discussion, and keeping in mind the Town's Finance Chair's request for a 0% increase, it was the consensus of the Board to honor his appeal.

To get to a 0% proposed budget would mean that 11 teaching positions would now need to be eliminated if there were no concessions.

The Superintendent indicated that she would be meeting with Administrators when school reconvened to discuss which positions would be eliminated.

V. Adjournment:

On a motion made by Lucy Santopietro and seconded by Holly Herbert to adjourn the Special Meeting of the Board of Education at 7:50 p.m. No further discussion; motion carried unanimously.