



Newtown Public Schools

BOE CFF Sub Committee Meeting
April 22, 2025

Shared Meeting Room 1
3 Primrose St.
Newtown, CT 06470
6:00 PM

As citizens of our community, we will conduct ourselves in accordance with Newtown's Core Character Attributes as displayed in our character tree. We will be responsible for our actions and show respect for each other. We will interact peacefully, productively, and politely. We will be trustworthy and honest and show compassion toward others. Newtown's continued success is contingent upon our ability to persevere, to follow through with our commitments, and to stay focused on the greater good.

AGENDA

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - A. Approval of BOE CFF Subcommittee Minutes of March 18, 2025
3. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. Financial Report and Transfers
 - B. Transportation Update
 - C. Discussion and Recommendation of Propane Contract
 - D. Discussion of Out-of-District Transportation RFP
 - E. Review of Policy 3160
 - F. Facilities Update
 - G. Discussion of MP Planning Proposal
4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
5. **ADJOURNMENT**

Newtown Public Schools
CFF Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes
March 18, 2025, 6:00 PM
Shared Meeting Rm 1

PRESENT: Shannon Tomai, Alison Plante, Tanja Gouveia, Anne Uberti, John Barlow, Steve Goodridge, Board of Finance, Jill Soderholm, Legislative Council
1 Public

CALL TO ORDER: Mrs. Tomai called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm.

BUSINESS

Mrs. Tomai made a motion to approve the BOE CFF Subcommittee minutes of January 28, 2025. Mrs. Plante moved the motion. Mr. Leonardi seconds the motion. All in favor. Motion passes to accept the BoE CFF minutes of January 28, 2025.

NEW BUSINESS

Financial Report

Ms. Gouveia presented the February Financial Report. She gave an update on the Excess Cost Grant. She stated the grant provides important offsets to the high cost of special education out of district tuition and transportation. We typically receive a reimbursement rate of 70% for expenses above approximately \$100,000; totaling anywhere from \$1.4-\$1.8M in reimbursement funds. Newtown was counting on a receipt of just under \$1.7M when the Gov decided to cut our reimbursement rate to 59.96% leaving us \$219,667 short. We were ready to initiate a soft budget hold until it was announced, just last week, that a bill was passed to reinstate districts to their expected reimbursement rates. Newtown is slated to now receive 72.8% which equates to state legislators. This percentage provides and additional \$54,127 over our December estimate and \$273,824 over the states estimate that was presented in January.

Major objects – salaries continue to be the major driver. The balance is coming from non-certified staff which has to do with Paraeducator unfilled positions. We have had a lot of turnover this year and we are also not filling some positions in anticipation of next year's budget.

Special education salaries has a small surplus of \$85K which will be transferred over to Contracted Services as we continue to outsource for BTs for the unfilled positions.

Small deficit of -\$32,788 in the total certified salaries account. Ms. Gouveia noted that we did not meet our turnover number of \$500K and because of this, there is a deficit of \$54K in the teacher salary account.

Mrs. Uberti stated we assumed there would be more turnover then we actually had so we budgeted a higher number.

Ms. Gouveia stated typically we budget \$400-500K and this year we were short \$141K, however there are some savings in the teacher salary account that have absorbed a portion of the deficit. Salaries overall are now showing a \$458K projected balance attributed to our non-certified staff.

Employee Benefits – Ms. Gouveia stated we are looking at the FICA and Medicare accounts. There is no projected balance in these accounts right now as we typically do not make adjustments until the last quarter of the year in order to capture any changes in our unfilled positions. However, we do anticipate a small projected balance in this area.

Professional Services – looking good. This area houses psychiatric evaluations and professional learning for staff.

Purchased Property Services – She wanted to point out that in the building site & emergency repairs there is a zero balance. We are doing well in these accounts. The insurance has reimbursed us for the August flood less the \$50,000 deductible. The total cost was \$104K for damage to 3 buildings. All of those costs have been captured and account for. In rentals we have a small deficit of -\$7,905 due to the new copier lease.

Other Purchased Services – contracted services continue to have a large deficit of -\$279K. This has to do with our BT contracted services. She stated we do have some estimates and encumbrances included in the balance and we are hoping it will be enough to take us through year end. If we move the special ed salary balance of \$85,000 to cover the contracted services, we would still be looking at a deficit of around -\$200K which is a cause for concern.

The transportation balance has increased from \$29K to \$80K due to the additional \$50k of excess cost grant that was allocated to that account.

Communications has a deficit of -\$37K which is for our long-distance fax/phone lines. The lines are made of copper and because they are old phone lines we are paying an exorbitant cost for them. Our technology director is looking into a more cost effective solution; however, this is a timely process as it involves many moving pieces.

Mrs. Uberti stated it is complicated. She stated we don't have a lot of land lines. We have fax lines and it boils down to old phone lines.

Tuition out-of-district had a deficit of \$59k last month which now shows a positive balance of \$155k. This is entirely due to the reinstatement of our excess cost grant that was just passed by legislators.

Supplies – the projected balance stands at -\$256K which is due to our electricity. Ms. Gouveia stated she is anticipating that the demand will back off a bit. Virtual net metering credits were down by 42% and demand was up by 42%.

There is a surplus in propane of \$90K. She also stated the Director of Operations was able to sell off 34,700 gallons of oil and sold that for \$1.55/gal and we should be receiving a check for \$53,785. Those numbers are included in that projected balance. The reason we are not seeing a large surplus in this line item is because we are anticipating topping off all of the tanks before year end and if we do that we should break even or have a small surplus.

Transportation Update

Ms. Gouveia presented a spreadsheet on the parked buses for the year. She said we have been billing All-Star back for all of the Parked buses back through February. Year to date we have had 34 days of having to park one or more buses. We have recouped \$4,800. She stated it is not a large amount but it is part of the contract. The big piece is athletic transportation. We have been billing All-Star for differential in cost between an outside service and what All-Star would charge us for an athletic trip. YTD we have billed them \$88K on recoup costs of differential.

Facilities Update

Mr. Barlow stated the NHS roof for the auditorium with the change orders was \$482,176 and with \$600K approved there is a balance of \$117,824. That left the council approving \$3.7M for the remainder of the roof. He stated we did get a rough estimate back and at this point it now stands at \$3.5M which leaves about \$180K left on that contract. There will be some changes made to bring the cost down a bit. He stated he thought they were good with moving forward with the roof project. Mr. Barlow stated all of the rest of the facilities is routine stuff.

Discussion and Recommendation of Propane Contract.

Ms. Gouveia stated she is not actually ready to award a contract. She stated we did receive two (2) bids. One from Hocon and one from Mitchell. She discussed the two vendors, past relationships and their bids. As of now this propane contract has been put on hold for a short period.

Discussion of Master Planning

Mrs. Uberti stated that she and Ms. Gouveia are in the processes of reaching out to consulting services who specialize in all aspects of school planning from demographic studies, school facilities master planning and even school redistricting. The more services we sign up for the more costly it will be and we are in the beginning of this process. We will start with the demographic study and get some pricing on it and if we can pay for it out of our budget assuming it is not absorbent we would want to complete this portion as soon as we could because the results will drive what the next steps will be. Once we have the first piece she is thinking it will then be the time to put together a representative committee with all stake holders before we go into the next phase. And with this committee we would then be deciding on are we looking at master facilities, potential districting, etc and have the whole committee weigh in on that. These kind of services will incur more costs so we would want to partner with the town.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

ADJOURNMENT: Mrs. Tomai made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Leonardi moved the motion. Mrs. Plante seconds the motion. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Joanne Morris

THESE ARE DRAFT MINUTES AND ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE BOE CFF SUB COMMITTEE.