

EASTON BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING

Virtual Meeting via Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/94133873129?pwd=TXRnMFNONURyTTZYc1BHM1ZKOEEExUT09>

Meeting ID: 941 3387 3129, Password: 159875

December 16, 2020, 7:00 p.m.

Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Easton Board Members: Stinson, Goldstein, Parker, Chieda, Hicks, Wible

Administration: Harrison, Pierson Ugol, Zachery, Del Conte

Others: 4-5 members of the public

CALL TO ORDER

Jon Stinson called the Easton Board of Education to order at 7:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

J. Chieda made a statement asking for a snow day on Thursday. She mentioned that the time lost to learning would be more than made up by the mental and emotional health gains of having the time off.

J. Stinson stated that with our current learning model, parents have the flexibility to inform teachers that they will be letting their children play in the snow if they so choose. He then stated that the point of this meeting was to articulate the portion(s) of our budget where we have obligations that do not allow for much flexibility/adjustment.

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION: BOE SPENDING OBLIGATIONS OVERVIEW:
CONTRACTS AND HEALTH CARE**

C. Zachery provided the following insight into the Budget Obligations:

Salaries/Transportation/Health Insurance account for 81.74% of our total budget. When you add in other non-negotiable items this brings our budgetary obligations to 94.43%. Specifically, contractual increases are as follows: salaries up 3.17%, transportation up 2.37%, and health insurance up 10.18% over last year. In essence he stated that the vast majority of our budget is not-negotiable. The request for 4.5 additional FTEs across our district was also detailed (Media Specialist 1 FTE, BASES 1 FTE, PE Para 1 FTE, Social Worker ½ FTE, Grade 4 Teacher 1 FTE). The total increase would account for 237,000 dollars, bringing our budget to a 4.49% increase over last year. Discussion ensued regarding the predictability of health care claims, and whether or not we can make a reasonable comparison between fall 2020 and fall 2021.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Allison Bonoff, Gregory Farm Road, expressed her displeasure to hear board members ask for a snow day. She believes this is the time to work, not play. She is in favor of keeping school open whenever we can. She expressed that we pay high taxes and she expects a solid education in return.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

D. Wible reviewed some real estate statistics specific to Easton, stating that there has been a significant increase in house sales, the median sale price has increased, and suggested that families have moved

into town so we need to be sure to continue to fund our schools and invest in education as a top priority. She was very happy to hear about the suggested increases in FTEs, especially for a half time social worker as our children will need this come fall.

R. Hicks stated that he wants to be supportive of whatever decision is made regarding the model chosen for learning during the pandemic in our district, but feels we are lacking data to make an informed decision. He would like more info on in-school spread, etc. He would like the board members to be more involved in the decision, but again stated that data needs to be provided so we can make the best decision, and get our kids back in the building safely.

J. Chieda said that she stands behind her comments about wanting a snow day, and stated that her comments would not impact the decision that Dr. Harrison makes for our district.

ADJOURNMENT

**Motion: move that the Easton Board of Education meeting be adjourned (Parker, Wible).
Approved. Unanimous.**

The Easton Board of Education meeting was adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Submitted by,
Gretchen Goldstein
Easton Board of Education Secretary