WEST HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Finance Committee Meeting  
March 20, 2006

The Meeting of the Board of Education was held at the Blake Building, 25 Ogden Street, West Haven. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Gerald Calabritto at 6:41 p.m.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:  
Chairman Gerald Calabritto  
Robert Guthrie  
Toni Paine  
Raymond Collins

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:  
George Monahan  
Howard Horvath  
Eric Murillo  
Krista Pickering  
Mark Palmieri  
6:50 PM

Gerald Calabritto: We have two items on the Agenda, what I have asked is that once a month in our informational section that Garth place a break down, so we can keep track as to where we are at least quarterly we will have Garth go over it. More if necessary. If you would just keep a red flag on tuition and let us know where that’s at. Anything that comes in 10% of their budget, I think we should have red flagged. We should be made aware of.

Garth Sawyer: As Jerry said we will be doing this on monthly bases. One revision, That I will do from this point on. Will be to have an extra column, for projected. We have budgeted; year to date and we will have projected. Going through some of the accounts.

Gerald Calabritto; when you do the projected, I would like you to bold anything that is within 10 percent.

Garth Sawyer: To follow up your question on tuition, we do come before the board two or three times a year to make revisions and that’s when we will take projections. So that if we find tuition is a little in the hole, like in January we made revision to that account adding money. The last revision done in May or June we pretty much know what we are going to do. Right now in the first section as Gary had indicated we have an estimate of about 40 thousand that will be needed in tuition. That can change at any given time. His staff gives a report every couple of weeks. When it comes time to do budget revision we will have a good handle on that. Looking over to the D- Section operation of plant, we are doing well; we had a pretty mild winter. At this point we will pick up some money from heat to buildings. We are looking at about a sixty thousand dollar savings. Here. Bills are coming in lower then estimated because of the mild winter. Electricity is another we are doing well in, we picked up about another thirty thousand there. So we can have these meetings and you will be able to see the check and balances. In May if we find we have a balance then we get direction from the board on spending it.
Eric Murillo: asked what is done with surplus

Neil Cavallaro: that’s when decide to put it towards supplies or textbooks.

Garth Sawyer: your not talking a lot of money, usually about 100 thousand or so. Fro a 75 million dollar budget, 100 thousand is not that much. But that where we will transfer it. Building Security, that’s another that we had built in, because we were thinking of having an outside security fore come in. That we had budgeted for this year. We reduced it in January transfers by 50 thousand, which left another 50 thousand in there. Because Paul thought we would go with an outside Security system at the High School. So, at this point since that has not been put into place. The money has not been spent. An area in which we have to keep an eye on is repair to buildings. That is an area that if something goes wrong. Like we just had the boilers at the High School pool that needed re-tubing, which was an expense we had not counted on. So that was about 20 thousand. We did put it out to bid. Next page is Benefits; we were doing very well at the beginning of the year. But Nov and Dec we had very bad months. We had some serious health issues, so the claims went up. This is an account that will jump around. Since we started out with such a good year, we were able to minimize that. Jan came in at the highest all year we have ever had. 900 thousand dollars in claims. We are looking at about 30 thousand to the bad in that account. We estimated and now that we are putting in the actual numbers that where these figures are coming from. If you look at the F’s Postage is going to need a bump because we still have three months left. Mailing of report cards and everything. That account will probably will be about 5 thousand. Photocopy account, all the leases came up this year. So we are replacing the fleet. ICON was the lowest bidder on that. That actually came in well below what we were paying. It is probably about around a 70 thousand dollar savings. When we went out to bid, we expected it to come out higher then we were paying. This was not the case. That was threw the state bid. Basically that about it, right now we have more accounts to the good then are to the bad. We are in good shape this year. If something happens with kids that have to be out placed, right now we could handle it.

Howard Horvath: asked about retirement account

Garth Sawyer: we ended the early retirement last year. A lot of the saving we had in place went to other things.

Howard Horvath: How much was saved by not having the package.

Garth Sawyer: about six hundred thousand that will be used for salaries this year.
Gerald Calabritto: any other questions? Garth Thank you, like I said if you could provide this information monthly.

Neil Cavallaro: next month we only met once, what I thought was maybe the 12th we would schedule a Finance Committee meeting and if there are any other committees that have business, we could do it then.

Gerald Calabritto: so, on the 4th we will have the sheet in informational.

Garth Sawyer: we usually get the bills around the 10th of the month.

Gerald Calabritto: is that enough time?

Garth Sawyer: I will give you the year to date and then I can supply further information.

Gerald Calabritto: the second thing on the Agenda, Mr. Guthrie has proposed some state legislation that he would like to see proposed CABE would like to see us support it and also city council. So I am going to turn this over to Mr. Guthrie now.

Robert Guthrie: to touch on some of Mr. Murillo and Mr. Palmieri previous comments. As everyone here is aware, we are about to try and create a budget, which is one of the hardest things we are going to do. Mr. Murillo you asked about the 100 thousand dollars left at the end of the year. In previous years, it has been a use it or loses it. It would be returned to the City as Mr. Cavallaro said, or we might put it towards books. What I am suggesting is that for consideration, would be actually we would have to change the statue for all boards of Ed, not just us. The ability to carry over or roll over some funds, then rather then have a large unmanageable amount. Just looking at our budget, I a proposing 5% of the last approved fiscal years budget. Based on the current fiscal year it would be 375 thousand. At no point could we roll over more then that 5%, meaning that it would a just a little bit to accommodate the 5%. It would always be based on the last approved fiscal year budget. The reason I am thinking that is if you want to account for your 100 thousand and Mr. Cavallaro has a series of books he wants to buy for the Middle Schools. The series is expensive, it could run him 175 -200 thousand dollars. You might have a greater purchasing ability if you could roll over some funds from one year and incorporating the additional purchase of a second fiscal year, to be ale to buy the series.

And obviously if there was some unforeseen circumstances, you would try not to put it towards your day-to-day expenses, but some unforeseen or to get you ahead of the curve. That’s why I proposed that suggestion.

Eric Murillo: where would these funds go?
Robert Guthrie: I think Mr. Cavallaro or Mr. Sawyer would have to add a new line item and a new account number to handle that.

Gerald Calabritto: What we are looking for is this board to support the concept because this would have to be a statue change under Connecticut statute. CABE position on it is getting your board and City Council to support it first. Then we can propose it.

Robert Guthrie: West Haven board of Education approves, Letter of Support from Superintendent, West Haven City Council write resolution or letter of support, Letter of Support from Mayor, then send to local legislative delegation for support, Introduction in Fall Session, Submit proposal to CABE for inclusion in 2007 Legislative Priorities.

Toni Paine: if passed it is not part of the new budget, it is a completely different line item.

Robert Guthrie: correct, if you have zero funds, you have zero funds. There is no roll over.

Gerald Calabritto: I would like to make a MOTION to add tonight’s agenda at the appropriate time, that this committee recommends that the board add an item to the agenda which would be a motion to support the proposed legislation. I will accept that MOTION now. Toni Paine motioned and was SECONDED by Raymond Collins. MOTION was passed

Copy of letter sent by Mr. Guthrie:

Robert J. Guthrie  
11 Spruce Peak Lane  
West Haven, CT 06516

9, February 2006

M. Toni Paine  
Chairman  
West Haven Board of Education  
25 Ogden Street  
West Haven, CT 06516

Dear Chairman Paine,

As you are well aware trying to prepare a budget is one of the most difficult things we must do. It is balancing act to meet the educational needs of the students but yet recognize the residents ability to pay.
I have a proposal. I think it might be beneficial to the Board of Education, the students and taxpayers. Current State Law does not allow Boards of Education to carry over money from one Fiscal Year Budget to the next Fiscal Year Budget. This process results in one of two things happening currently. The Board of Education can either spend the money before the end of the Fiscal Year or the money goes back to the City General Fund.

I submit the following for consideration. I urge for a change in State Statue to allow Boards of Education the ability to carry, or roll, over five percent of the last adopted budget. For instance, if our last adopted Budget from Fiscal Year 2005-2006 was $75 million dollars we could roll over no more then $375,000. At no point could we roll over, or hold, more then five percent. The benefit would be if you were able to rollover some funds from year to year you could purchase new books, repair Roofs etc.

The process I envision for this suggestion is as follows:

1- West Haven board of Education reviews (if approved)
2- Letter of Support from Superintendent
3- West Haven City Council (resolution or letter of support)
4- Letter of Support from Mayor
5- Sent to local legislative delegation for support, Introduction in Fall Session.
6. Submit proposal to CABE for inclusion in 2007 Legislative Priorities

I feel that this is something that would be beneficial to Boards of Education throughout the State of Connecticut.

Sincerely,
Robert J. Guthrie

Chairman Calabritto asked for a MOTION to adjourn
MOTION was made by Toni Paine, and SECONDED by Ray Collins

Meeting Adjourned at 6:59 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Rose McDonnell
Board Clerk