The Special Meeting of the Board of Education as a whole for our preliminary budget was held at the Blake Building, 25 Ogden Street, West Haven. The meeting was called to order by Mark Palmieri, Chairman of the Board of Education at Finance Committee at 6:24 p.m.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**
- Mark Palmieri, Chairman
- Gerald Calabritto
- Patrick O. Egolum
- Howard Horvath, Jr.
- T. Sean Maher
- Eric Murillo

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**
- Andrew DePalma
- Robert Saley
- M. Toni Paine

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**
- Neil Cavallaro, Superintendent
- Dr. Anne Druzolowski, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
- Dave Cappetta, Director of Finance

Mark handed the meeting over to Jerry Calabritto, Finance Chairman. Jerry stated the folder in front of the board members is the same budget they received in their packet but there are more pages with more explanations included. He stated there are no budget transfers for Food Service, Rink or the Stadium because last year we allocated funds in the general BOE Budget for them. In the past we would transfer money in. We will change the order because the Rink has a big game tonight and the order tonight will be: Rink, Food Service, Stadium and Board of Ed Transfers and Board of Ed Budget.

Neil Cavallaro said in the past we have transferred some money and helped out in the past. The three managers have really tried to increase revenue during very difficult economic times. Neil said we will know the exact amount of deficit surplus in June because of the money we have already transferred over to them. He turned the meeting over to Harry Conlan.

**2009-2010 Operating Budget Edward L. Bennett Rink**
Harry Conlan, Manager of the Edward L. Bennett Rink greeted everyone. He said the biggest expenses he has are utility expenses. Even though we went with Con Edison two years ago the Con Edison bill so far for 2008 and part of 2009 is $98,618.00. The bill for United Illuminating is $46,540 and the other two forms of energy are Hess $16,417 and Southern CT Gas at $4,000. That is a total of $166,305 and we budgeted for $147,800 so we are at a deficit of $18,500 under electricity. We have been hit pretty hard this year with more increases.

Revenue so far this year brought in $68,000 from ice rental through January 2009. We are budgeted for the total year to bring in $245,000 for rink rental. He has $160,000 coming from Youth Hockey - $112,000 and $50,000 from the City so $167,000 will be added on until June when we close this budget along with anything else we bring in. We budgeted at $245,000 and I think we will break that number and come in over it.

I brought in two new leagues this year the Police Officers from the State of Connecticut. I brought in the West Haven and Bridgeport State Police. I have them in a senior league at night. I brought in a local league of 6 teams so I have 12 new teams that are playing which I didn’t have last year. This will bring in additional $16,000 revenue.

I also was able to get East Haven in for $5,000 in April and also the Branford Girls’ Hockey. They are very happy and have picked up two to three hours a week late at night. I gave them a little discount on the price because everyone else was going to charge them a ton of money. If we get them here hopefully they will stay here.

I’m very pleased with the revenue side but on the expense side we are under budget on the utilities. I have had problems with our machines this year. We had an expense of $5,000 for the transmission on the Olympia which I had to put in two months ago. That bill has been paid but is not on the ledger yet. Three weeks later the transfer case went on it and that was another $2,500. So there is $7,500 that I never expected for a total of $12,000 for that additional expense just for the maintenance of the machine which I don’t even have back yet. The rental machine for the people doing the work on it is about $150 a day. The revenue should help offset the bad news relating to the machine. The rest of the items are all fixed costs.

Jerry asked for a motion to approve the Rink Budget for 2009 – 2010
Mark Palmieri made a motion to approve the Rink Budget for 2009- 2010
T. Sean Maher seconded this motion
No discussion
All in favor
Motion carried
Rink Budget for 2009 – 2010 is approved

**2009 -2010 Operating Budget Food Service**

Alan Belchak explained a few of the highlights of his program and was open to any questions the board had. Currently he serves approximately 600,000 lunches a year. Of
those lunches approximately 52% of these are free and reduced price lunches which are a 4% increase in free and reduced applications and this is very important for the figures needed with our grants and our assistance from the State of Connecticut. We also serve approximately 250,000 breakfasts of which eight of our schools serve in the classroom breakfast which the State highly commends us for doing. Students eat their breakfast under supervision in case of choking etc. Schools are under a POS service this year where we account for the lunch to the government for reimbursement purposes. This is completely computerized and all students have a lunch ID and this works extremely well.

One of the biggest impacts to our budget has been the Department of Defense Fruit and Vegetable Program. Currently this year I have not purchased any fruits or vegetables and we have a big array of fruits and vegetables at tall the schools. The government gave us an entitlement so we received from the Department of Defense $110,000. This helps us in our expenditures. We get our fruits and vegetables from a place called Sirocco Foods in Rhode Island and they service all the Navy Bases, all the Coast Guards, and all the schools in Massachusetts, Connecticut and some in New Hampshire and Vermont.

Whatever a case of fruit costs is taken off our entitlement and we don’t have to pay it back and I don’t have to go out and purchase this. You will always see a big tray of fruit at the schools.

New programs in place this year may help our budget. We are feeding all the Pre-K Children that are in the school system. This is paid for a grant through Mr. Palermo’s office. We are taking care of Kinder Care and those children currently are eating and we are the first ones to go with the Pay Schools on our website. Parents can put money into the child’s account from home. This way the children don’t forget their money as they go through the line. We are doing $3,000 to $4,000 a month and I expect it to go even higher. A further discussion of different programs ensued.

He sees some of the elementary schools falling off a little and feels the economy has forced some parents to make lunches from home.

He will not use all of the funds in Account #6600 Commissary Purchases and hopes to save and balance out the budget. It looks like we will have a balanced budget this year.

The other big thing we had this year is Summer Lunch we took in $92,000 item # 3150. The government changed the guideline from where you used to have to go to a site to get the food or somewhere to pick up the food. Now you can go to the main area where the foods are produced; any family can go. We had actual parents every day bringing their little children. Any child up to the age of 18 is entitled to a summer lunch. We would have 30 or 40 kids with their parents at the back door of Savin Rock Community School. One day while passing out the lunches we were being audited by the State and thought it was tremendous. We picked up a lot of big programs and in a lot of the playgrounds that weren’t doing big business the kids were coming in. Hopefully they were not just coming in for the lunch. It was sad to see some of the mothers taking the milk from the lunches so they would have milk for the morning cereal.
Jerry Calabritto said the sad reality is that there are children in this town who only get the breakfast and lunch they have in school. By continuing this through the summer those kids are getting nutrition that they might not have.

Mark Palmieri asked if the issue of turning in paperwork at the beginning of the year has been resolved. Yes, if a child’s name had inadvertently been left off the family application paperwork if we make the call from my office that child can be put on immediately. We are receiving applications every day. If a kid is charging his lunch and we see he is charging too much we contact the parent and usually 80% of the time the child is entitled to a free lunch. We wipe the child’s account out and get him/her a free lunch.

Howie Horvath said look at the high school for example; the revenue was high in 06 – 07 and went down and you attributed it to The Healthy Food Initiative so you reversed that and the revenues came up. When you compare the totals is it right to think the difference between the healthy and the non healthy approach equated to an additional $178,000. Absolutely was the answer. A further discussion ensued. The reason we are able to do better is because we are not on the Healthy Food Initiative and are able to sell more of those a la cart items. The PTA Groups no longer have a problem with cookies etc. at their bake sales. A lengthy discussion ensued.

**Correction inserted below**

Howie Horvath wanted to communicate that we need to assess the decision to drop the “Healthy Foods” program at the HS by looking at the impact it had on revenue and profit. That is to say, while revenues may have increased we really want to see whether the net profit after the additional expenses increased. Increasing the profitability of the program was the purpose of dropping the Healthy Foods program and the subsidy that comes with it. I think we need to reconsider the decision if there is in fact no, or little increase in profit.

Jerry Calabritto congratulated Alan as he has improved the bottom line for Food Service. He asked if there was anything besides the $110,000 from the Department of Defense for fruits and vegetables and by not being involved with the Healthy Food Initiative was there anything else that helped to improve the bottom line? Alan felt the summer lunch and the whole summer lunch operation that helped to improve revenue.

Jerry asked for a motion to approve the Food Service Budget for 2009 – 2010
Mark Palmieri made a motion to approve the Food Service Budget for 2009- 2010
Patrick Egolum seconded this motion
No discussion
All in favor
Motion carried

**Pools**

Neil Cavallaro asked Chris Everone to talk about the valves at the pools. Chris said that the Federal Government passed a mandate for all floor drained commercial public pools.
There is a specific code to meet effective January 1, 2009. Two of our pools are out of compliance. I contacted our Health Director and he sent a letter which informed me they were out of compliance and ordered me to shut the pools down. We are talking about the dive pool at WHHS and the Carrigan pool. The lap pool at the high school is a different system and I can get drain covers for those and won’t cost a lot of money to fix.

I have received prices for the high school. We have to drain the pool. They will core bore through the side of the pool, put the new drains in the side wall and concrete over the existing drains. The pool person who has been dealing with our systems for the last 8 years assures me he can get this done within the next couple of weeks if funding is available. If we hold off and wait until the funding we won’t get this done until next year at this time as everyone is getting them done in the spring and summer. It will cost about $10,000 for the high school and it will be more than that for Carrigan. The piping is more expense to run at Carrigan as it is set up differently and the walls are thicker there. He will try to drain the pool next week to get a look at the drains. We may be able to build them up the drains there and put a special cover on them. They are asking a certain amount of depth from the cover to the bottom of the drain. We won’t know until we drain the pool. If we do the same as we will do at the high school we are looking at approximately $20,000. He will get back to us in about two week with a number. Every municipality is going through this.

Mark Palmieri asked if our pool was shut down now. The dive pool is shut down. The regular high school pool must be shut down within three months if parts are available.

Jerry would like to see this on the agenda for our February board meeting.

**2009 -2010 Operating Budget Frank Fitzgerald Sports Complex**

Everything you see on the budget is what it is. We can’t do much with the cost of electricity. Last year we took a beating with electricity. The rentals are pretty much where they are supposed to be for this time of year. I have a big rental from New Haven Public Schools coming in. Our high school athletic events had a soft year. When the football team doesn’t do well attendance drops and so does our revenue. We are on schedule with the CIAC. The concession stand we have $2,000 in right now and it was shut down last spring and renovated it for the football season. Neil said we have to get that set to go out to bid.

A lengthy discussion about the format of the budget paperwork for the Complex ensued. It was decided the header format would be identical to that of the Rink and distributed to board members.

A description of the expenditure headers was explained. 65300 Communications would be the cost of the telephone 65910 Purchased Services would be police and fire personnel 65920 Game Personnel would be all the officials and workers.
Howie Horvath stated that Electricity ran quite high in 2007 – 2008 - $26,465. He asked what you would guess it would be for this up-coming year. It was budgeted at $17,000 and I think it will be around there because when we brought Con Edison in our rates dropped a little. We are usually between 17,000 and 20,000 in that range. Neil said to remember that we have a couple of dead months. The lights really come on in May and June. Howie wondered why the electricity usage at the rink was going up and that of the stadium was going down. Neil said we have had the U.I. Company at the rink to talk about ways to conserve energy like insulate the roof etc.

Howie asked about the turf and if we were pursuing this with a grant? Chris Everone said that with the grant we were hoping for you could get up to $200,000 but if was for design fees only. The project would have to be about 2M for us to get that money. We only want to replace the turf. The turf roughly costs about $600,000. The cost has gone down a lot because there are so many companies doing this now.

Neil said that the YTD budget we currently have if we continue at the current pace is the projected budget for 2009 - 2010 in line. What we are recommending is in line with what is currently being spent. At this point Chris is probably 2/3rds done with his year so we wouldn’t double it. A further discussion ensued about transferring money. In past years we transferred about $60,000 for the stadium, $140,000 for the rink and $200,000 for Food Service. Jerry said that last year was the first budget where we actually put it in our budget and in the past we did budget transfers.

Howie asked what Chris showed for revenue currently; approximately $34,476.00. This is significantly less than $144,000. Do we plan on making up $110,000 between now and the end of the year? We are not running $110,000 in the red but by the end of the year it is projected. Chris reiterated again that the revenue has dropped as far as the athletic events big time. Normally after football season we are close to $30,000 in revenue and we are only at $21,000. Neil said we were not in a playoff and you lost a rental to another stadium. Howie asked if the $144,000 reflect monies we put into this account in advance before we found out what the deficit was. Howie asked what we advanced - $45,000. So the $45,000 plus the $34,000 gives us approximately $75,000 as you can see I’m trying to see what the real deficit will be. Jerry Calabritto asked bottom line including what we added how much will we have to give the stadium to make it balance? We will need double what we allocated. We allocated $45,000 so it will take another $45,000. This is almost exactly what the salary ends up with.

Chris said a lot of the expenses that are on here are middle school fields and the gymnasium at the high school. We don’t have a separate budget for this so I pull it from our budget. Howie asked what the rink deficit was last year - $145,000.

Neil said the Board of Ed owns and operates these facilities but they are community facilities. The reality is there is a quality of life issue here. The community uses the rink 9 months a year, there is a dead time for the stadium but you operate the pools year round, you use the gymnasiums year round and when the budget first started we were not operating the buildings that you are operating now. We have a lot of increases in funding
as a result of this. The bottom line is whether it comes out of the City pocket in Parks and Recreation, like they do in Hamden and East Haven for their rink, or if it comes out of the Board of Education budget it must come from somewhere. The reality of it is people like the rink and the stadium and it is a quality of life issue. There is a cost for this. If we make $5,000 more in revenue we are having a great year at the rink but if the Zamboni breaks it cost us $10,000. These are issues we struggle with every day. The reality is that they are not wash accounts

Eric Murillo asked what is our responsibility as board members do we sit down and micro manage every account and say you are spending too much money – where are our choices.

Neil said Chris and his assistant are responsible for a football field, a softball field, a baseball field just at the high school. He also does the Bailey and Carrigan field not to mention if the football team is in a pinch he has to line Painter Park. There is also an interaction with the City if they need a field or we need a field so we help each other out. The rest of his staff (custodial) comes out of our operating budget.

Neil continued and said look at the rink it has a manager and a 5 hour secretary 10 months a year and three custodial people. Remember the rink is open 7 days a week and there are two shifts. By the way we had one custodian out the entire year with a serious illness and we brought in a sub custodian at a mechanics pay as they work nights and weekends. Are we overstaffed? No way. You are asking the right question but there is no easy answer.

Howie said if other districts are operating in the red then that is just the way it is and there is nothing we can do. A further discussion ensued about the way various cities and towns operate their facilities.

Mark Palmieri said if you wanted to close these facilities and give them to the City they will turn around and rent it back to us and we pay them.

Eric said we have a tremendous responsibility as a board to deal with these issues. Every year it is over $400,000 and I question it every time. This complex isn’t giving us any revenue yet we need new turf which costs $600,000. It is like putting money into a business that is not working. Where does our responsibility to the taxpayers come in?

Howie stated that as Neil said unlike other schools it is separate and distinct and somebody along the way said it should pay for itself. If the reality is 95% of all school systems that have these systems don’t pay for themselves it is just like education it is not a for profit business we are making an investment as a community in educating children and providing them athletics. If you don’t look at other environments and see what their numbers are you have no basis of comparison.

Neil said everyone at the rink gets a good salary and is a member of a bargaining unit and get good benefits. We have four teams and there are four hours a day we can’t rent. We
have ice skating classes during the day and we can’t rent the rink. A lot of Harry’s rental is subsidized by the Park Dept. which pays for Youth Hockey. Then you look at Shelton’s rink which has party rooms and three floors and the Zamboni diver gets $7.00 an hour and every time someone steps on the ice they get a fee there is a huge difference. We are not there to make money but we have to look at what the benefit is. If we advertise we are going to close the rink I’ll bet you would have to move the board meeting to accommodate the number of people that would show up.

Howie again stated we should make a comparison with other towns and see how they are doing and what they are doing. If they are doing something better what is it and maybe we can adopt it. Sean said if they are operating at a loss then that is the norm. Neil said we have to see who actually operates a complex and he is sure Jon Capone can network with others in the area. A discussion ensued.

Jerry Calabritto asked for a motion to accept the Stadium Budget for 2009-2010 as corrected on the new heading sheets we were presented
Mark Palmieri made a motion to accept the Stadium Budget for 2009-2010
Patrick Egolum seconded this motion
Discussion: Howie said he would abstain as the numbers don’t reflect the reality
Howie Horvath and Eric Murillo abstained
Remaining members were in favor
No one was opposed
Motion carries - you only need a simple majority to have the motion carry
2009 – 2010 Stadium Budget is approved

**Budget Transfers 2008 - 2009**

Dave Cappetta said these are the transfers to date to bring under budgeted items back to balance through the end of June.

Howie asked if the $55,000 under C44 Salary – Severance reflect that some folks retired or what does it reflect. Jerry said it reflects contractual benefits paid to non-certified and certified staff upon retirement or death. Neil sail this encompasses unused sick time and vacation time etc.

Neil said we signed an agreement during this year with the city we will save about $75,000 this year in our budget. Next year we were told not to plan on getting this money.

Howie said all utility and power costs seem to be going down but the rink seems to be going up. Neil said the U.I. Company feels the rink is the first place they should work. A further discussion ensued about the rink reiterating what was previously said.

Howie asked about item G29 Technology. He asked if that is the annual line item we put but in $230,000. Neil said it is and Dave Cappetta explained it.
Howie asked who procured the computer. They were purchased off of a State Contract and they are HP computers.

Eric asked is the $30,000 basically the labor cost to put everything together. No, that is not correct labor doesn’t come out of technology. So the grant only pays for the computers. The grant pays for the computers 100%.

Jerry Calabritto asked for a motion to accept the 2008 – 2009 Budget Transfers
Mark Palmieri made a motion to accept the 2008 – 2009 Budget Transfers
T. Sean Maher seconded the motion
All in favor
Motion passes
The 2008 – 2009 Budget Transfers are approved

2009 – 2010 Board of Education Budget
Jerry said the packet that was placed before board members is the same as the previous one received but it just exemplifies and gives you the definition of each line item.

Neil thanked Dave and Anne for all their input and help along with all the principals, administrators and managers who put this document together. A slide has been prepared which gives the following information:

- West Haven
  Department of Education

- 2009-2010 Recommended Budget

- As presented by

- Neil Cavallaro

- Anne Druzolowski

- David Cappetta

- January 20, 2009

- The Timeline

- Board of Education is required to submit a proposed budget to the Mayor by February 1st

- The Mayor is required to submit a proposed budget to the City Council by March 16th

- The City Council will adopt a budget by May 4th
The Board will adopt an operating budget by June 30th

**Requested Budget**
- The baseline budget which continues services at current levels in 2009-10 while meeting contractual and legal obligations, allowing for anticipated utility increases, and to support rising health benefit costs results in a 3.77% or $3 Million increase.

Neil said that all of the increase we are asking for is contractual and/or related to anticipated contractual obligations such as utilities. Less than 4% is actually our discretionary money.

**Budget Distribution**

**Special Education Costs**
Neil said we are anticipating an increase in IDEA Funds that would pick up any costs for out of district tuition or support transportation. We are not looking for more money out of the requested budget. If there are increases we feel we will be able to cover them based on increased IDEA Funding.

- **Out-of-District Tuition**
  - No increase $-0-
- **Transportation**
  - No increase $-0-

**Student Transportation**
- Represents a minimal 1.5% or $39,000 increase to Transportation

We are going into the last year of our contract which was renegotiated a couple of years ago for the set amount of $39,000 which is very reasonable.

**Personnel Costs**
- The contractual salary increase for current personnel is slightly more than $1.4 Million

This amount actually represents about half the total increase we are asking for.

**No New Personnel Requested**
We are not asking for new personnel we are hoping we can maintain the current level of services with the number of personnel we have on staff for all of our unions.
• **Employee Benefits**

• Health Insurance
  - Represents 0.95% of the total budget or $780,000
  - Health benefits are 15% of the total budget

• No increases in other Employee Benefits.
  - Life insurance
  - Workers’ Compensation
  - Unemployment Insurance

Neil stated this is a status quo budget and there are a lot of unknowns and we are watching very closely what is going on in Hartford. The Governor announced that the budget deficit was almost a Billion Dollars and this will certainly have an impact on the fund. We feel we can justify our line items. Some of the initiatives we are taking with the U.I. and the copy machines we will be able to show the board some savings. We did real well with the computer purchase this year and hope to do a lot of upgrading this year and will be able to slow down now that we are on a good pace with our switches and upgrading services. We feel like we will be alright. If we can maintain status quo for a year we can continue with professional development and some of the other initiatives that we have started.

Jerry said this is just our requested budget our work really begins once we get a bottom line.

Eric Murillo asked how we were doing with salaries with all of the expenses we are going to have. Most of the money spent on professional development is coming from entitlement funds. By law we have to use 10% of the Title I allocation for district school improvement. That amount of money can be used for the whole district to support that type of effort including substitute teacher pay and anything else to do with it. This is to our benefit.

Howie said technology is changing at a rapid pace. 238 computers loaded up create an expense in software and support of that software. We should be attune to what is going on. Soon we will buying lightweight appliances that run on a server somewhere else. Imagine not having to service or replace all these computers. We should be on top of these changes. Anne Druzolowski said there is a new five year plan due and as soon as they come out with the application itself we will definitely be doing that.

Howie asked on March 16th if we have the same kind of cuts we had two years ago would we deal with it in the same fashion. Neil said we will do whatever it takes not to layoff
first of all teachers and any other full time employees especially those that directly impact
instruction.

Jerry Calabritto made a motion to accept the Board of Education 2009-2010 Budget. Mark Palmieri made a motion to accept the Board of Education 2009-2010 Budget Patrick Egolum seconded the motion
No discussion
All in favor
No one abstained
No one was opposed
Motion carried
2009 – 2010 Board of Education Budget is approved

On behalf of the board Jerry Calabritto thanked Dave Cappetta for all the work he put into preparing all these documents for the board. He also thanked Anne and Neil for all the hard work that took place in preparing this budget.

Neil said as he receives information he will pass it along because there are so many unknowns and we will work the best we can to make do.

Jerry asked for a motion to adjourn. T. Sean Maher made a motion to adjourn Patrick Egolum seconded the motion

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola
Board Secretary