A Special Meeting of the Board of Education was held at the Blake Building, 25 Ogden Street, West Haven. The meeting was called to order by Raymond Collins III, Vice Chairman of the Board of Education at 5:30 p.m. The meeting opened with a pledge to the flag.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Raymond Collins, Vice Chairman  
George Monahan  
Eric Murillo  
Gerald Calabritto  
Robert J. Guthrie  
Mark Palmieri  
Howard Horvath  
Krista Pickering

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Chairman M. Toni Paine

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:** Dr. JoAnn Andrees, Superintendent of Schools  
Neil Cavallaro, Assistant Superintendent  
Garth Sawyer, Director of Finance

Ray Collins began the meeting by personally thanking Dr. Andrees, Paul Tortora, Neil Cavallaro, and Garth Sawyer for doing a fantastic job with the cards we were dealt. We were dealt a devastating blow but you really pulled things together in a way that was unbelievable. We want to thank you for the long hours you put into this. He wanted to personally thank all Board members for the time they took out of their day to come in individually to meet, ask and answer questions, and to input ideas that went into this budget. He then turned the meeting over to the Chairman of the Finance Committee Gerald Calabritto.

Jerry Calabritto introduced Dr. Andrees who presented the 2006 – 2007 Budget Presentation.

Dr. Andrees began by thanking the very dedicated Board Members for taking the time to come in and meet with Paul Tortora, Neil Cavallaro, Garth Sawyer and herself to work together to prepare this budget. She thanked Paul, Neil and Garth for the attention to detail and the collaboration that became a part of this process. They found it works better when you have the opportunity to talk with those who are in positions to help us by giving us ideas and suggestions. We met with principals, department chairs and
supervisors. We wanted to make sure the process again was correct. The sad part that we regret is the loss of even one position.

Our primary goal was, “How do we construct a budget that would provide the least impact on the delivery of instructions to students of this community under the circumstances?” Dr. Andrees feels that they were deliberate, collaborative and consistent in the process that was used.

The Board of Education requested $80,770,702 for its budget. The City appropriated $75,121,726. The budget that presented to you tonight will reflect the $5,648,976 difference.

Increases were made by taking this year’s actual when closing out the budget in two areas:

1. Tuition came in higher than projected and it was added to next year’s budget.

2. Benefits also came in higher as we had to deal with issues such as unemployment and a slight increase in both property and liability.

These funds were added to next year’s budget. $95,742.00 was added in the area of Tuition and $88,176.00 was added in the area of Other Benefits.

We then began the process of decreasing.

Transportation – With Neil working with the Winkle Bus Company we were able to realize a savings of $127,750. This was due to the 0% increase and slight adjustment due to year end actual.

Operation of Plant – We are reducing utilities by $323,839 based on year end actual, reduced supply accounts and repair accounts by 10%.

Benefits – We are reducing benefits by $2,933,448 as a result of our contract with the City.

Instruction – Instruction took a significant hit for next year. We are reducing this budget by about 50% down to about $801,356. Along with this reduction is the elimination of middle school sports.

Other – The other areas where we were able to reduce accounts came to $193,700. This came as the result of Garth working with City Hall to realize a $100,000 deduction based on the photocopier. The others deductions came from miscellaneous accounts.

Salary Accounts – The salary reduction came to 1,452,801.
The total decrease amount is $5,648.976. Neil Cavallaro will briefly go over some of the areas that are impacted by this amount of money.

Neil Cavallaro too thanked Paul, Garth, Board Members and Dr. Andres for the long hours that were put into this Budget. He feels they did the best they could to minimize the cut on instruction. Neil started with the para-professional group. We are proposing here tonight the elimination of 23 para positions. We have several building paras that are assigned to cover buildings for areas like bus coverage and work in our primary grades. We have left one para in every building but in any building where there was more than one we have eliminated those positions. There is a total reduction of five building paras. These positions once came with priority school district funding and were assigned to our all day kindergarten classes. We have since incurred the cost. Now that we are no longer receiving this funding we have the need to eliminate some of these positions.

We have a total of 5 general paras and 10 special education paras. We have been working with the Special Education Department to try to consolidate positions. Where we felt there was a duplication of services we are trying to coordinate and balance the para services for the medical and special ed classrooms and individual children who receive the services. For example where there is a learning lab if we have 1 medical para and there are two autistic children that medical para may cover those two children and you may have another regular para in the classroom as opposed to two medical paras and a learning lab para. This is just an example of how we are trying to consolidate and combine services.

We are proposing the elimination of 1 tech para position. We will try to use the remaining people in our tech department and spread out the services a little more to lessen the impact of the elimination of this position.

Dr. Andres stated that technology is certainly a very important area and our children are truly going to need these skills. As a result of this cut we will reorganize how we run technology pulling from the strengths and various talents that each of these tech people bring to the table. We will attempt to use these talents where they are best suited to give us the greatest impact for delivery to our students.

This brings us to a total of 23 para professional positions. As far as the AFSCME Union we have a reduction of 2 custodians. We have looked at 3 clerical positions in the elementary schools where there is a clerk in addition to a secretary. We have not eliminated these positions but we have cut them back to five hours. We feel that in a budget crunch they will still be able to do the attendance and make the phone calls for the absentees in five hours. We would rather have these people for five hours than a reduction.

We are proposing the elimination of a custodial position at Bailey and Carrigan Middle School. This is an evening position. We have three custodial positions in our elementary schools it is a second day custodial position that we are proposing lessening
the amount of hours from 8 hours to 5 hours. Again the total reduction in staff is 2 from the AFSCME bargaining unit, 1 position from Bailey and 1 from Carrigan, the other positions we are just lowering the amount of work hours during the day and therefore lessening the benefits the employees are entitled to.

There is a non-union position which we are proposing to eliminate; a transition teacher at Carrigan. We believe that in good times it was a luxury program to have. Students assigned to in-school suspension or out of school suspension or some other social work type services utilized this service. This is a non union position and unfortunately this program will be eliminated. Dr. Andrees interjected that the administrative team at Carrigan has been spoken with and has been asked to look into how they might reorganize their staff to help compensate for this loss. This will be looked into over the summer. Neil went on to state that there is a similar type open position at Styles where this person who has done some good work for us will be able to continue working at Styles. This is certainly a good thing.

There is a floater position which became vacant with the retirement of one of our nurses. We are not planning on filling this position. By eliminating a second position we are trying to distribute some of our coverage.

Dr. Andrees stated that we do give a considerable amount of service to our parochial schools and if we in the public schools are taking a hit with some services they too must make some adjustments in their services.

Neil stated that the teacher’s bargaining unit will have the most losses however we did try to minimize the impact. There is a business position at West Haven High School which is currently open due to the unexpected resignation of one of our teachers. The high school notified us that they can do without that position so we will not be filling this position.

There is a technology position that we will cut and utilize the three teachers that we have and maybe assign them to teach some classes and still do some technology work. There will be a total reduction of 1 person. Dr. Andrees stated that we support over 3,000 computers in this district in addition to the number of teachers; however we feel that because other areas are taking a hit this area too must make some adjustments.

Neil stated that they are proposing the elimination of the All Day Kindergarten Program. This is certainly not something we want to do however it is a program that was once funded by the State of Connecticut and we are no longer receiving this funding and it has been something that we have funded for the last two years. As you can see there is a reduction of one teacher for each one of our elementary schools.

The Literacy Teachers Program was once funded by Priority School District Money which we received. The District has since incurred this expense. We are not totally eliminating this program. The principals and PTA’s have expressed that they would like to keep this program. We currently have one teacher in each building and we
are going to cut this number in half and we will have one teacher service two buildings. Ann Valanzuolo, our Language Arts Coordinator, and I are looking at how best we can utilize what we have and assign them to buildings accordingly.

Dr. Andrees added that this is a big area and we are getting more students who come to us without skills. We have asked Ann to make sure that she keeps data this year as they redistribute how the program will be run. We will compare this against with last year’s program and as a result if we feel that there is a need and this is not working as a successful model we may be coming back to take a look at this again.

Title I loss of funds is a position that Pagels Elementary School qualified for for a very brief time. It qualified as a Title I School for one year actually. Rather than eliminate the program early in the school year when we found out we chose to fund the program for a year. However we can not afford to pick up this position since we have lost the funds.

The next set of positions are all at the elementary levels and there are a total of 5 classroom positions and we consolidated those classrooms. We combined a total of five classes and the class sizes are a little higher but the good news is we are not close to approaching maximum capacity. Dr. Andrees added that these cuts would have taken place whether we were at this point or not. Neil agreed and stated it was an excellent point.

Neil stated there are two Special Ed positions that we are proposing to eliminate and what we are doing now is asking Gary Palermo, Tom Lally and Kathy Cassell to look at some of our vacant positions and some of our speech teachers, psychologists, social workers and trying to redistribute the coverage. With the number of openings we have no one will loose a position from the Special Ed Department as a matter of fact we do anticipate some openings as a result of teacher resignations.

This accounts for a total staff reduction in the teacher’s unit of 25 positions. This is where we are utilizing our greatest savings. The total reduction of staff is 53. We maximized where we could take out the most with having the least impact on our staff. It still left us with reducing our budget by about a million and a half dollars and we were able to due that. The total net reduction with all of our staff is 1,452,801.14.

Dr. Andrees stated there are still some givens here and noted that we will be reducing overtime by 50%. Our discretionary accounts; for example textbooks, paper and those kinds of things have been reduced by 50%. We also have made some significant reductions in our consultant accounts which we will be using less frequently. Contracts is another area we were asked about. There has been consideration given to several union proposals that were presented to this Board of Education however we felt that the contracts that were submitted to us did not work financially for this school system and therefore those deductions were not realized and we chose to do those in different ways. Dr. Andrees then stated that this is the Budget proposal we would like to present to you this evening.
Jerry Calabritto thanked her and asked each individual Board Member if they had any questions. Mr. Guthrie was the only member who asked a question. He asked if we had received the final number of what the increase money from ECS is going to be? The response was $98,000. There were no other questions on the 2006 – 2007 operating budget.

All members voted in favor of the budget.
No one opposed.
The 2006 – 2007 Budget was passed.

Jerry also wanted to thank Paul for his help and guidance in putting this very difficult budget together. He stated that Neil stood up to the challenge and has guided us through some difficult times. He also stated to Garth that it appears that Paul has taught you well. He stated to Dr. Andrees that it is a pleasure to finally have her here and even though this budget is austere he hopes she can envision a first class education for our district and our children. He thanked his board colleagues for their input and guidance for what he stated in eighteen years is probably the most difficult budget he has ever had to be a part of. It is not what we would have wanted had we been afforded the funds that we had asked for but it is the best we could do with the money we have to work with. He is deeply saddened by the staff, both certified and non certified, whose lives have been affected by this budget. He wishes them well and thanks them for their dedication to the children of this district. Now is the time to move forward with the business of education being the children of our district.

In closing he would ask all those who support education to please remember next year’s budget process starts in January please try to attend the City Council’s Budget Meeting and the Council’s Meetings when they are debating on our budget so that never, ever again will the Board of Education ever receive less funds than it had in the prior year. His comments were met with applause from the audience.

The Board recessed at 6:00 p.m. and returned at 6:05 p.m.

Garth Sawyer proceeded to discuss Year End Transfers in light of next year’s budget. We tried to transfer as much as we could to try and get a head start. The main areas where we had some savings were Utilities. The heat and electricity came in under due to the mild winter. We came in significantly under on the telephone account because of the E-Rate money we received. The photocopying also because of the bid that went through we were able to reduce that account. Basically most of this money went into textbooks and instructional supplies in order to get a jump start for next year.

The Board members had no questions on the 2005 – 2006 Year End Transfers and were asked if they had questions.

There were no questions by Board Members regarding the 2005 – 2006 Year End Budget Transfers
Garth Sawyer then proceeded to discuss Stadium Transfers. Some of the transfers were made back in January (Yellow Column) and then we looked at how we will end the year (Blue Column). Some areas had more expenses that we did not know we would incur back in January so those areas went up a little bit.

The Board Members had no questions on the 2005 – 2006 Stadium Transfers and Jerry Calabritto requested a vote.

Bob Guthrie made a motion to accept the Stadium Budget Transfers for 2005 - 2006
Ray Collins seconded this motion
All Board Members voted in favor of the 2005 – 2006 Stadium Budget Transfers
No one opposed
No one abstained
The Motion passed

Garth Sawyer then proceeded to discuss the Stadium 2006 – 2007 Budget. There were a few revisions based on the actual year ends. There were no major ones except that electricity came in a bit higher than anticipated. The part-time security line item usually gets lowered when we do our estimate at this point in time.

The Board Members had no questions on the 2006 – 2007 Budget and Jerry Calabritto requested a vote.

Ray Collins made a motion to accept the 2006 – 2007 Stadium Budget
Bob Guthrie seconded the motion
All Board Members voted in favor of the 2006 – 2007 Stadium Budget
No one opposed
No one abstained
The Motion passed

Garth Sawyer proceeded to discuss the Rink transfers. Based on this year’s actual there is one thing to note. There is a maintenance account where we had to repair a rink. It was either repair it or shut down the rink. He also wanted to say thank you to Harry because you can see from 2002 – 2003 actual the revenues have increased significantly while the expenses have remained stagnant.

The Board Members had no questions on the 2006 – 2007 Rink Budget Transfers and Jerry Calabritto requested a vote.

Ray Collins made a motion to accept the 2006 – 2007 Rink Budget Transfers
George Monahan seconded the motion
All Board Members voted in favor of the 2006 – 2007 Rink Budget Transfers
No one opposed
No one abstained
The Motion passed
Garth Sawyer proceeded to discuss the 2006 – 2007 Rink Budget. This is based on this year’s actual with a few minor adjustments. We brought the repairs and maintenance back down to the original budget because it was raised due to the emergency nature of the repairs. We have two bids going out for skating rental and food concessions so we adjusted the revenues. Once these bids go through and come back there might be a difference.

Bob Guthrie made a comment to Mr. Conlan that it was nice to see public skating back by $15,000 to assist his accounts. He asked if there were any future plans on the rates and changing them or plans relative to the sport shop to make that more attractive to a renter or lessee. Mr. Conlan stated he though about it a lot but doesn’t think it will work. He talked to local people who have lost one sporting shop in town but there is no interest. One fellow in Milford showed some interest but he has never followed up and come back to see me. The only way to sell this concept is to put a door outside to allow the vender access from outside while we aren’t there. It is not a closed deal by any means. There was never revenue there before for those reasons.

George Monahan asked for clarification on one point. The lack of interest in operating the shop did include their knowledge that they would have outside access or not. Mr. Conlan stated no it didn’t. Yes, before that I said flatly out I did not think it would work but when you brought that suggestion up I said that could work. But it still didn’t work.

The Board Members had no questions on the 2006 – 2007 Rink Budget and Jerry Calabritto requested a vote.

Ray Collins made a motion to accept the 2006 – 2007 Rink Budget
Krista Pickering seconded the motion
All Board Members voted in favor of the 2006 – 2007 Rink Budget
No one opposed
No one abstained
The Motion passed

Jerry Calabritto requested a five minute recess.

The Board recessed at 6:15 p.m. and returned at 6:20 p.m.

Ray Collins made an official motion to accept the 2006 – 2007 Budget
Mark Palmieri seconded the motion
All Board Members voted in favor of the 2006 – 2007 Budget
No one opposed
No one abstained
The Motion passed

George Monahan stated we need an official motion for transfers as well.
Ray Collins made an official motion to accept the 2006 – 2007 Budget Transfers
Mark Palmieri seconded the motion
All Board Members voted in favor of the 2006 – 2007 Budget
No one opposed
No one abstained
The Motion passed

Garth Sawyer was asked to discuss Food Service Transfers. Again we are going from yellow to blue for the 2005 – 2006 transfers.

Alan Belchak made a comment on the revenues. Basically why some are off is because at the high school they did a lot of testing and when you have a day off it tremendously hurts our income. Also half way through the year when Connecticut Schools State Assembly passed the new standards there is no fooling around. We have to serve the healthy lunch next year so we started to experiment now to see if it did slack off on some of the sales. We basically have a better feel of what it will be for next year. They are basing their numbers for next year on how many lunches we serve this year. We serve approximately 690,000 meals and instead of getting 4 ½ cents we will be receiving 14 ½ cents from the State. This will increase the budget area. The major plan for next year which affected this year is that we stopped selling ice cream which has the higher fat and sugar content. We also were encouraged to sell baked Lays Chips rather than regular chips. We only are serving French fries when they are on the menu. This does have a significant impact on the menu and items we are serving. We will be receiving more funds from the State which will help us tremendously at the middle schools and high schools. Our elementary schools currently serve all healthy fruit as snacks and we will not have any problems with the adjustment there. Most of the elementary schools hit target or were above target.

Garth discussed the reductions due to the contract negotiation so that came in a little under. The health insurance is a line that typically in the past was not in there but in the past few years we actually have put it in because it was needed to show the proper expenditures. With this we actually had to increase the Board contribution.

The Board Members had no questions on the 2005 – 2006 Food Service Budget Transfers.

George Monahan made a motion to accept the 2005 – 2006 Food Service Budget Transfers.
Ray Collins seconded the motion
All Board Members voted in favor of the 2005 – 2006 Food Service Budget Transfers.
No one opposed
No one abstained
The Motion passed
Alan Belchak discussed the 2006 – 2007 Food Service Budget. He stated that the number 3072 reflects the State Board of Education new mandate that they will increase the amount of funding per meal from 10 cents to 14 ½ cents. This will be a two part payment. We will receive a check in September and again in January based on the meals that were served this year. This is called the Healthy Edge Concept which we as a Board always supported. We should begin teaching good nutrition at all of our schools at all different levels. With the few changes at the middle and high schools we feel that the other account miscellaneous receipts because there will be only one type of ice cream sold we will put vending machines in our cafeterias which will be operable 24 hours a day. This will produce extra income. The same snack machines we have at the high school with only State approved snacks will be also be put in the middle schools.

Garth discussed the expenses which are based on this year’s actual so we increase accordingly. The food, commissary purchases, is based on 50% of the sales.

The Board Members had no questions on the 2006 – 2007 Food Service Budget.

Krista Pickering made a motion to accept the 2006 – 2007 Food Service Budget
Mark Palmieri seconded the motion.
All Board Members voted in favor of the 2006 – 2007 Food Service Budget
No one opposed
No one abstained
The Motion passed

Dr. Andrees stated to Mr. Belchak that in light of the fact there are some open positions right now she questioned how many of these would you not fill in an attempt to support the budget. She doesn’t need an answer right now but would like him to go back and examine this. He will go back and examine this and get back to her on this. He agreed that this is a very good point.

Jerry Calabritto thanked Garth Sawyer again along with Paul Tortora and his colleagues. He then turned the meeting over to Ray Collins for the appropriate motion.

Ray Collins made a motion to adjourn.
Mark Palmieri seconded the motion.
All Board Members voted in favor
Meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marylou Amendola
Board Clerk