

Vice Chair A. Bonavita called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. in the Agawam Junior High School auditorium.

Present: R. Doering, L. Galarneau, D. Juzba, K. Mouneimneh, S. Reed  
Dr. Czajkowski, W. Sapelli, P. Cavanaugh, R. Jury, all principals & directors

Absent: R. Cohen

A Bonavita explained that R. Cohen was absent due to a medical procedure. He further explained that the evening's presentation of the FY'12 Budget is another version with several different options.

A Bonavita then turned the meeting over to Dr. Czajkowski who said she had received a communication from AEA president, Robert Janik, asking that the information be shared with the school committee. This communication refers to health insurance.

Dr. Czajkowski reminded the Committee that, at the March 22<sup>nd</sup> Budget Workshop, she was directed to prioritize 17 positions, which were to be laid off. She then met with her administrative team to look at various proposals, which are included in this latest version of the FY'12 Budget. Dr. Czajkowski said she would be looking for a tentative consensus from the Committee, so she can move forward to present the FY'12 Budget at the April 12<sup>th</sup> school committee meeting under "Reports."

She then presented her latest proposal, which included the following:

- Budget Assumptions
  1. Staff layoffs
  2. Do not replace retirees
  3. Some fees for service
  4. \$1,604,348 reduction
  5. Maintain reasonable class size
  6. Maintain 8 Reading Recovery teachers
  7. Eliminate DLC Team at junior high school
  8. Eliminate Instructional Coaches

Next, Dr. Czajkowski reviewed the following proposed reductions:

- Central office administrative assistant to Director of Finance/HR
- School Resource Officer at high school
- 10-month secretary at Doering School
- Extended day
- Instructional coaches
- Administrative Transition Plan

She then outlined the following lay offs totaling \$1,111,785.00:

- 1 grade 6 teacher due to low enrollment
- 1 high school business teacher due to low enrollment
- 1 high school technology education teacher due to low enrollment
- 1 elementary teacher at Phelps School to maintain staff equity among four elementary schools
- 1 Special Education secretary
- 1 high school 10-month secretary (transfer to vacancy at elementary school)
- 1 junior high school library secretary
- 1 .8 Speech Language Pathologist
- 3 paraprofessionals at Clark (1K & 2 LB)
- 2 paraprofessionals at Granger (2 LB)
- 1 paraprofessional at Phelps (1K)
- 4 paraprofessionals at Robinson (1K, 3 LB)
- 3 paraprofessionals for DLC Team at junior high

Then, Dr. Czajkowski reviewed the following non-replacement of retirees totaling \$392,641.00:

- AHS Math teacher
- AJHS Social Studies teacher
- AJHS Math teacher
- Granger School teacher
- Phelps School teacher
- Robinson Park School teacher

Next, she reviewed the following proposed fees, which would generate \$97,318.00 (70% collection rate):

- Athletic fee
- Band fee
- Extra-Curricular fee
- Parking fee

Dr. Czajkowski then outlined the following amounts to maintain a level-service budget:

- FY'12 Deficit of \$1,886,413.00
- Less FY'12 Reductions of \$1,111,785.00
- Less FY'12 Retirement positions not filled \$392,641.00
- Less FY'12 Fees of \$97,318.00
- Remaining FY'12 Deficit of \$284,669.00

She also noted the following 18.8 positions to be laid off:

- 13 Paraprofessionals
- 3.8 Teachers (1 position retained to cover a leave of absence)
- 2 Secretaries

In addition, the following 13 FY'12 retirement & non-replaced positions were noted:

- 6 Teachers
- 1 Secretary
- 1 School Resource Officer
- 5 Instructional Coaches

Dr. Czajkowski concluded her presentation by explaining that a total of 31.8 positions would be lost.

A lengthy question and answer session then took place during which L. Galarneau asked if the \$300,000.00 in the substitute line item could be reduced. Dr. Czajkowski said Miss Cavanaugh is investigating an outside company that looks for substitutes and provides them to districts. S. Reed asked what the class sizes at Phelps School would be with the elimination of one class. Mrs. Palazzi said approximately 23, 24, or 25 students similar to the other 3 elementary schools. Mrs. Reed then asked if a guidance secretary at the high school could be used as a back-up for the main office, which is losing a 10-month secretary. Mr. Lemanski said yes. She also asked if there will be support for DLC students at the junior high school with the loss of 3 paraprofessionals. Mr. Robbins said yes. K. Mouneimneh suggested that perhaps PSAT tests could be eliminated at the high school. Mr. Lemanski said that the PSATs have had a tremendous impact on SAT scores and helped to triple students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses. Mrs. Mouneimneh also questioned losing a Technology teacher at the high school and how it would impact STEM classes. Mr. Lemanski said that two teachers in the department will teach STEM classes. She then asked about the ratio of students for eight Reading Recovery teachers. Dr. Czajkowski said that Reading Recovery teachers also work with students in Guided Reading. D. Juzba asked Mrs. Palazzi why three paraprofessionals were being eliminated at her school. Mrs. Palazzi explained that one would not be needed in Kindergarten due to low enrollment and three service Language Based students who will be going to the Doering School next year. A. Bonavita then asked for and received a consensus of the Committee to allow City Councilors in the audience the opportunity to ask questions. Councilor Rossi said it would be better if Dr. Czajkowski spoke directly to Jill Simpson, City Council School Budget Subcommittee chair.

Next, A. Bonavita said he was in favor of the proposal stating it is the best so far and impacts students the least. He also said he is hopeful that the Mayor can find funding for the remaining deficit. D. Juzba said the proposal is the best the Committee has seen so far. Although not in favor of lay offs, Mrs. Juzba noted that there are tough years ahead and this proposal has the least impact on classrooms.

R. Doering complimented Dr. Czajkowski and her administrative team for doing a top-notch job on the budget. She echoed her colleague's sentiments and said she is hopeful the Mayor can find the funding to cover the remaining deficit amount.

Dr. Czajkowski assured the Committee that she will continue to see the FY'12 Budget process through to the end even if it goes past June 30, 2011, since the City Council will not approve the final FY'12 Town Budget until late May or early June. L. Galarneau said she is concerned if the City Council cuts the bottom line of the FY'12 Budget and additional cuts must be made on the school side that there won't be adequate time to send out lay off notices by the June 15<sup>th</sup> contractual deadline.

After a brief discussion, it was the consensus of the Committee to have Dr. Czajkowski send a letter to the Mayor and City Council asking that they notify the Superintendent if any additional cuts must be made to the school side of the budget by June 1, 2011.

Next, S. Reed said it is sad that the schools have been level-funded for 4 years. She is hopeful that Agawam can maintain its good school system and that the Town and Schools can work together. K. Mounimeh said she acknowledges the hard work of the Superintendent and administrative team in preparing the FY'12 Budget proposals, but she cannot support lay offs and maintaining freshman sports. Consequently, she will not support the FY'12 Budget. A. Bonavita said he disagrees noting that freshman sports build character and keeps students busy.

Prior to adjournment, it was the consensus of the Committee to direct the Superintendent to move forward with the latest proposal and to present it for tentative approval at the April 12, 2011, school committee meeting.

There being no further business, the workshop adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Alexis Ferioli  
Executive Secretary to the Superintendent & School Committee

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Roberta G. Doering, Committee Secretary