

**Norwich City Council/Board of Education Ad Hoc Committee**  
**Wednesday, May 19, 2021**  
**6:30 PM**  
**Virtual Meeting**

**Committee Members Present:** Chair Alderman Joseph DeLucia, Vice Chair Alderwoman Stacy Gould, Alderman Mark Bettencourt, BOE Chair Heather Romanski, BOE Member Patricia Staley, BOE Member Carline Charmelus, BOE Member Christine DiStasio and BOE Member Yvette Jacaruso (joined at 6:42)

**Ex-Officio Members Present:** City Manager John Salomone, NPS Superintendent Dr. Kristin Stringfellow and Comptroller Josh Pothier

**Committee Members Absent:** Mayor Peter Nystrom and BOE Member Swarnjit Singh Khalsa

**Administration and Staff Present:** Assistant Superintendent Tamara Gloster (arrived at 6:44), Director of Student Services Jamie Bender and Business Manager Robert Sirpenski (arrived at 6:39 pm)

**Others Present:** BOE Member Mark Kulos

**1. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:** Alderman Joe DeLucia called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM. It was determined that a quorum was present.

**2. Review of Committee Scope and Purpose:**

Alderman DeLucia briefly reviewed the scope and purpose of the CC/BOE Ad Hoc meeting to be: Promote transparency and collaboration on the school budget between the CC and the BOE with the purpose to make recommendations to the CC regarding BOE funding request for the next fiscal year.

**3. Adoption of Previous Meeting Minutes:**

On a motion by Heather Romanski, seconded by Alderwoman Stacy Gould, the 3/21/21 and 4/21/21 meeting minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

**4. Public Comment:** None presented.

**5. Old Business:**

**a. Update: Letter to City Council regarding non-lapsing account for BOE capital projects**

Alderman DeLucia referred to the decision made by the committee at the last meeting to send a letter to the city council recommending a non-lapsing account for the BOE. He reported that he has spoken to the city's counsel for recommendation of the proper language. City Manager John Salomone reported that the draft form of the memo was currently with the city's attorney. He noted that he has shared the draft memo with Dr. Stringfellow today. Alderman DeLucia noted the importance of cohesive language in the memo as it will be the basis for the ordinance. There was general agreement among committee members.

**b. Discussion and possible action: City Manager’s Proposed Budget for the BOE**

Alderman DeLucia opened the item for discussion noting that public meetings and council discussions have taken place, along with associated edits to the budget.

Heather Romanski made a motion that this committee recommend the Board of Education’s initial budget request be honored by the City Council. Yvette Jacaruso seconded. Alderman DeLucia opened the motion for discussion.

Alderman Bettencourt spoke positively to the superintendent’s candidness during the budget hearings. Alderwoman Gould agreed.

The difference between the BOE’s original budget and the currently proposed city council budget for the BOE is \$1.2 million. Dr. Stringfellow spoke to the concept of a potential structural budget deficit.

Alderman DeLucia made an amendment to the motion recommending that the City Council fund the BOE budget to an amount at least covering the increase in fixed costs. Alderman Bettencourt seconded the amendment. Examples of fixed costs were given as high school tuition, salaries, health care costs and utilities.

After discussion, Alderman DeLucia withdrew his amendment. Alderman Bettencourt agreed with the withdrawal.

A roll call vote was held on the original motion to recommend that the City Council fund the original BOE budget request for upcoming fiscal year. The motion passed on a 6-2 vote. Alderman Bettencourt and Alderwoman Gould voted nay on the motion. Alderman DeLucia noted that he will write the memo for this vote and get it on the next City Council meeting agenda.

**6. New Business:** None

**7. Other Business for the Committee:** None

**8. Agenda Items for future meetings:** Alderman DeLucia proposed that this committee cancel the two June meetings for this fiscal year’s budget. He thanked the members for serving the committee’s purpose completely and honorably. Members echoed the cooperative sentiment. On a motion by Heather Romanski, seconded by Alderman Mark Bettencourt, the committee canceled the June meetings by a unanimous roll call vote.

**9. Adjournment**

On a motion by Heather Romanski, seconded by Mark Bettencourt, the CC/BOE Ad Hoc committee meeting adjourned at 7:49 PM by a unanimous roll call vote.