



MEETING OF BOARD OF EDUCATION
Meeting of the Building Committee
April 29, 2025 at 4:30 p.m.

Board of Education Goal:

Montville graduates will possess the skills and dispositions to navigate complex tasks. Our graduates are communicators, information consumers, problem solvers, and independent learners. They exhibit empathy, perseverance, inclusivity and self-awareness.

Large Conference Room, Board of Education

Item 1. Call to order/ Pledge of Allegiance / Moment of Silence – 4:30 P.M.

Board Chair Wills Pike called the meeting to order, thanked Lisa Terry for her years of service.

Board members attending were: Bonnie Bacon, Timothy Shanahan, Carol Burgess, Erika Streibel, Bob Mitchell, Donna Funk, and Tina Grove. Superintendent Vumback, Assistant Superintendent Flynn, Interim Business Manager John Spang, Director of Facilities Willie Quinones, and Vincent Savino, Action Air. Administrators Rob Alves, and Amanda Brown.

Item 2. Discussion and possible action on non-renewal of non-tenured teachers.

Motion: Moved that the contract of employment of Indigo Whisman, Timothy Lineburgh, Dorothy Griffis, Katlyn Martinez, Kristy Feragne, Hannah Annibalini, and Taryn Dawson not be renewed for the following year upon its expiration at the end of the 2024-2025 school year, and that the Superintendent of Schools is directed to advise such person(s) in writing of this action.

Moved by: Wills Pike
Seconded by: Bob Mitchell
Vote: Carried (8-0)

We need to take action on based on what we currently know about the budget, I want to stress to you that I made budget cuts before I presented the Superintendents recommended budget. We must take action now as a result of what might happen. This is strictly done on seniority and must be done at this time based on state statute. All teachers must be noticed by May 1, the Board votes first

We need to take action based on what we know right now with the budget.

As of now, all we know is that the mayor recommended a 3% budget increase. That means we are short \$675,495. And, as you know, the Town Council can cut that more, leave it as is, or add to the percentage. We do not know.

I want to stress to you that I made budget cuts before I presented to the superintendent's recommended budget. In that budget, I had already cut \$500,000 in staff, specifically 4.5 certified teachers (one elementary, two middle school and 1.5 high school). These were all retirement related.

My 4.49% budget request was 100% for fixed costs

- *wages 33%*
- *benefits 23%*
- *tuitions for special education and magnet schools 28%*
- *electricity 5%*
- *technology replacement 5%*
- *service and maintenance contracts 4% and*
- *liability insurance 2%.*

We did not ask for one addition to the budget (other than a .5 special education paraeducator that was driven by an IEP).

As a result of being in limbo, and needing to prepare for a \$675,495 shortfall, I need to share:

- *A top step teacher who shared with administration they were retiring, never put in their notice. That was a part of my cut prior to presented the Superintendent's budget. I must add that back in.*
- *We needed to pink slip non-tenured, certified staff.*
- *That means we are non-renewing them for next year.*
- *Please note this is based on seniority only. None of these teachers are being recommended for non-renewal because of performance.*
- ***In fact, it is quite the opposite. We are potentially losing amazing talent.***
- *Please know, it hopefully does not mean they will not be working with us. By state statute, I must give notice to all teachers who may be non-renewed by May 1st. The process involves the board voting not to renew the teacher's contract and then I must issue a written notice to the teachers by May 1st that his or her contract will not be renewed.*
- *I did meet with each teacher, along with the union president and the building principal to inform them that they will be non-renewed. This is good practice, but not legally necessary. I wanted to do this in hopes I can keep them if the budget works out.*
- *Keep in mind, people need to work and today I received 2 requests for letters of recommendations. One from someone who as pink slipped and one from someone who wasn't pink-slipped, but will be impacted by someone who was.*

Wills, John and I met with the Finance Committee. Tim May, Kate Southard (in for Joe) and Kevin Lathrop engaged in a VERY productive conversation and I truly believe they want to work with us. My hope is that they work quickly with us so I can pull back the pink slips and keep talent in our district.

Bonnie: Do the \$675K cuts include Capital? Supt. Vumback- No this is just operating Budget. Was there any thought to other areas to cut? Supt. Vumback: Yes - at best these teachers represent cuts of \$350—400, we already have proposed cuts to transportation, custodial staff etc.

Bonnie: Of course, the Town Council does not want to raise taxes; but they are willing to get funds from other sources. we need to request additional funds to make our budget, have you considered the recommendations the TC made to look at other areas of the budget? Superintendent Vumback – Yesterday we had a conversation as I mentioned, with the Finance Committee and yes they suggested we look at things such as Capital and they were going to look at other areas. Nothing was finalized but absolutely, that is why I said I was very hopeful when I left there that we may be in a better place than we are right now. Did we ask for additional money? Supt. Vumback: Oh yes, I asked that several times, I asked for \$675495 they really drove home asking for us to look at our capital and see what we can push out. Teachers were given a courtesy letter advising of this meeting, they will receive a letter tomorrow with the results of tonight's meeting, and we hope that they will eventually receive recall letters once the budget is finalized. We will have a subsequent meeting to discuss how to allocate our budget, where else to cut, etc.

Donna - what about the money we were supposed to get for Special Education, Supt Vumback: Yes, there is some potential there, there was some confusion, John may be able to speak more to this. We expect a dollar amount

John Spang: The Town budgeted \$450K for Special Education funds from the State, the state is estimating \$700, the town does not like to promise the money until it is received. We anticipate \$250K. Supt Vumback, this normally comes in June, in some districts this money comes directly to the district, here the money comes to the Town and sometimes there is a little bit of a lag.

Donna Funk: How will this impact our preschool program? Wills: we are not at that point yet; we will discuss the impacts at subsequent meetings. Superintendent: We do have staff who are appropriately certified to teach prek, based on state certification changes. Wills: We will have another meeting on this, this is going at light speed right now, this has all happened in the last 24 hours.

Bonnie: I just wanted to verify something because this is not something I (inaudible) but I did request a copy of an email that the mayor sent to you before our last meeting and it is a very precise email the mayor specifically says that I am proposing a 3% increase to the Board of Education's budget, he actually did calculations our proposed increase was \$2,032,823 and his is \$1,357,329. At our last regular meeting on April 8, you said that the Town hadn't gotten back to you, I know you have been working behind the scenes but I just get the impression that everybody thinks, that this is last minute, the last 24 hours. Supt. Vumback – So nobody on my

team thinks it was the last 24 hours, I don't recall saying that the town never got back to me at all. Bonnie: Well, it's in the [minutes](#), Supt. Vumback, well, I will have to go back and look, I carry that email around with me, I have it so that I can remember those numbers. Absolutely when you subtract what he is recommending from our ask the difference is \$675,495, but we have been as a leadership team working to try and come up with that difference. The whole process is challenging and I get the sense certainly that people point fingers and that is not my style, if I did say he did not get back to me I did not mean anything other than until it is voted on. To clarify I have gotten phone calls from people telling me it is going to be a 0 when it goes to the Town Council. So, I don't know how I am supposed to navigate that. It's not going to be final until they approve the budget, yesterday when I met with them, I said even if you could whisper in my ear what y increase is going to be so I can call teachers back. I apologize if I alluded to anything other than I don't have a final number. Bonnie: I just think that we should have been made aware of this 3% at the last meeting so that we know as you said, there is a lot of discussion but I take the mayor at his word (inaudible) and we should have been made aware that that was the mayors commitment. and as you said they could change, but. Supt Vumback – I do want to say I apologize if I did not tell you, it was 3%, with that said I absolutely took his word for it, and that is why I did the cuts, I was grateful for the 3%. I absolutely took his word for it, I respect him greatly. I hope that the town will be able to give us more money but they may not be able to, I certainly did not mean to keep that the mayor said 3% from you.

Bonnie: I feel like we are speaking two different languages I believe that they will approve the 3% and potentially give you more money without raising the school budget. Supt. Vumback: I do remember something being said yesterday and Wills saying does that mean it will not impact the budget. John: I saw it the way you did Dianne, it wasn't real clear or definitive. Bonnie: Because if they have the budget, they have to raise taxes to fund the budget but they have money in their (inaudible). Supt. Vumback, when we left there, just so we are clear, the charge was for us to look at our capital with the board to see if we can bush things off which means that money would not be in our budget.

I think we should have been made aware of this email at our last meeting.

Carol: I am optimistic that we might land with some additional money, but I am not 100% that we will receive the 3% nor am I 100% that we will not be cut further. Legally supposing that the council comes back and says oh no, its even less, because in the past, they have done that. Now we are going back to do more pink slips, where does that put us legally? Spt. Vumback- When the budget is finalized there is a provision for it, they were very clear on what the rights of our staff would be including a hearing and deadlines. I thought that yesterday's meeting was really productive but I might have missed something all that I'm not sure.

Wills- I must say I thought yesterday's meeting was a very thoughtful meeting, probably one of the best we have had.

Item 3. Discussion and possible action regarding HVAC Project – Vincent Savino, Action Air

John Spang: The district was awarded state aid 72% or \$3,800,000 through the Air Quality Grant. The original budgets are too low for a complete A/C project. Construction costs for labor and AC Materials have moved higher statewide. The projects have been bid twice.

An alternative to 100% AC is 100% climate control and partial AC. Climate control will also lower temperatures, although not as much. There is no state-mandated maximum classroom temp. Other districts enhance climate control with wall units (VRF's). This alternative is within the budget. \$3,800,000 state aid will be received. A second alternative is to add additional Town funds: \$3,800,000 state aid will still be received, partial, not total additions are plausible. State aid for all six schools is \$15 million of \$21 million. John introduced Vin Savino, Action Air.

Tim: Will we need to advise the TC we need to utilize more of the bonded money? Wills: Yes, that will be the next step, that is why we are meeting tonight.

Erika Striebel: Does the climate control system lend itself to moving towards full AC in the future. Vinnie: Great question, these units are designed to deliver filtered fresh air, that is exactly what these units are designed to do. Consider this the first phase to do what you want to have done. Right now, the air coming into the building will be pressurized and filtered. Will lend itself to helping with the humidity concerns. Will have an impact on the indoor temp. It will take care of the humidity, and it will have an effect on the temperature, and the air quality. We can review areas of importance to ensure that there is a focus to specific areas. Dehumidifies on its way in so it is cooler dryer. Tina: Filters- how often do they need to be changed? Willie: NE Mechanical changes our filters quarterly. Bonnie: Is this considered an interim solution? Vinnie: There could be alterations to the system but we are working with existing ductwork. Will have better quality, reduced temperatures and dehumidified air. You can add the VRF system afterwards.

Wills: I am a little reluctant, people voted in a referendum on this, I need to ensure that the Town Council understanding that what we are purchasing is not AC. Would the board like me to reach out to the TC Chair to have this discussion with him, I want to ensure that the TC is aware, is comfortable and willing to execute. John Spang: Could we get a conditional approval pending discussion with TC? Donna: The concern is AC vs Climate control. Erika:

Item 4. To award the March 20, 2025 and March 21, 2025 bid solicitations to Action Air Systems Inc. of Manchester, CT for HVAC improvements at Dr. Charles E. Murphy School in the amount of \$2,127,000 and Oakdale Elementary School in the amount of \$2,549,000 in accordance with the State of Connecticut HVAC grant program and a contractual agreement for such awards.

Motion: To conditionally award the March 20, 2025 and March 21, 2025 bid solicitations to Action Air Systems Inc. of Manchester, CT for HVAC improvements at Dr. Charles E. Murphy School in the amount of \$2,127,000 and Oakdale Elementary School in the amount of

\$2,549,000 in accordance with the State of Connecticut HVAC grant program and a contractual agreement for such awards, pending Town Council Agreement.

Moved by: Wills Pike
Seconded by: Bob Mitchell
Vote: Carried (8-0)

Item 5. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn

Moved by: Bob Mitchell
Seconded by: Tim Shanahan
Vote: Carried (8-0)

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Wills Pike, Chair
Montville Board of Education

Bob Mitchell, Secretary
Montville Board of Education

Minutes Approved: _____