

The Regional District 13 Board of Education held a District Meeting on Monday, May 24, 2010 at 8:00 p.m. in the auditorium at Coginchaug High School. Board members present: Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Boyle, Mr. Currin, Ms. Gara, Mr. Hennick, Mr. Hicks, Dr. Ochterski, Ms. Parsons. Also present: Mrs. Viccaro, Mr. Melnik.

Mr. Hennick called the meeting to order at 8:03 p.m. and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Hicks read the call of the meeting.

Mr. Hicks made a motion, second by Rick Parmelee, to elect Jim Finley as moderator. No other nominations were made. Mr. Finley was unanimously elected as moderator.

There was no presentation by the Board of Education. Mr. Finley opened the floor to questions.

Rick Parmelee of Durham said the State is in bad physical straights and there are many needs in the towns. The towns may have to make up the difference if the State cuts back on what they give them. In Durham the grand list is flat. The District enrollment is down and the budget is still going up. The cuts made were not significant enough. It is wrong that families are expected to pay fees. The District should have come back to the voters for the building projects instead of going to Hartford to resolve the problem with the vote.

Paul Marose of Durham asked about cost sharing for the group health insurance. He feels the teachers should be paying a higher percentage of their health care. He wanted to know if it is going to be addressed in the next contract negotiations. Mr. Melnik said all employees share in the cost of their insurance. Teachers pay 18% of the cost this year. It is higher than many other teachers' contracts. Mrs. Adams said everything will be on the table when negotiations begin again in the next contract negotiations.

Mr. Marose said that if the towns have a large surplus and the contracts go to binding arbitration, the arbitrators will side with the teachers because they feel the towns have the ability to pay the raises. Mr. Melnik responded that the surplus of either town was never raised by either side during the binding arbitration process.

Mr. Marose also questioned whether a member of the public would be allowed to observe the contract negotiation process. Mr. Hennick said that members of the Boards of Finance from both towns are invited to sit in on the negotiations but members of the general public are not allowed. The Board of Education is elected to do this job.

David Montgomery asked for a couple of clarifications from the revised budget booklet.

Rick Parmelee said if a contract is settled through binding arbitration the selectmen can call the contract and the public will have a chance to vote on them.

With no further questions presented, Mr. Finley adjourned the District Meeting at 8:20 p.m.