A special meeting of the Litchfield Board of Education was held on Tuesday, March 12, 2019, at 7:15 p.m. in the L.C.S. gym.

Present were: Ms. Carr, Chairperson; Ms. Stone; Mr. Falcetti; Mr. Pavlick; Mr. Shuhi; Mr. Simone; and Mr. Terzian.

Absent were: Mr. Clock and Mr. Morosani.

Also present were: Superintendent Turner; Mr. Fiorillo; and members of the public.

**New Business**

a. **Health Insurance Renewal.**

Superintendent Turner and Mr. Fiorillo distributed a handout on Employee Health Insurance including a chart, “Litchfield Board of Education (with Town) – Anthem Self Insured Allocation Rates and ConnectiCare Fully-Insured without Town,” and discussed: thoughtful process; budget issues; quotes from broker; joint self-insurance pool; forecasted increases; aligning with existing union contracts; possible future aligning with Region 6 insurance; new plan meets the standard “substantially equivalent to or better than,” for union contracts of teachers and AFSCME; saving of $250,000; very excited; smooth transition; budget to 3.87% increase; and still include $7,000 for instruments.

**MOTION** made by Mr. Simone and seconded by Mr. Pavlick: to approve the Employee Health Insurance change to the stand alone ConnectiCare as presented.

Board members discussed: issues with changing brokers; issues with ConnectiCare having a bad reputation with some people who have it; some with tests not covered; issues with percentages; change providers not plan; issues with claims this year; projected costs; issues with United Health Care option; many surrounding schools have ConnectiCare, Reg. 6, 7, 10, 14 and Suffield; meets the criteria for unions, same or better; input from employees to make sure it works; have purchasing power; rate cap for next year; concerns with impact with the town; attorney advised can go on our own; budget savings 1.75%; if don’t change rates go up substantially; can separate insurance in the budget; possible issues with ConnectiCare coverage; least expensive option; State plan not good for small districts; input from BOF and BOS; keeping 5% increase and staying with old insurance option; wait for input from BOF; possibly give both options to BOF; have opportunity for feedback; issues with BOF possible choices; keep same insurance with town but go down to 3.87% increase and not 5%; option discussed with staff; if want to stay in town pool then do nothing; possibly back ourselves into a corner; give BOF false sense of choice; change options to save money; asked to do two weeks ago; issues with covering janitors; accommodating
buildings; need to negotiate; won’t get better if go with town; future collaboration with other districts is more likely than staying with town; have more power; budget must be fiscally responsible without sacrificing staff which would be next; possible collaboration with other regional schools and municipalities; will end with town then; conversations held last summer; shortfall taken out of operating budget; had audits to do that; contribution issues; fiscal savings to taxpayers and employees; lower copay to 10%; now 13% to 15% of total health care; health insurance costs have risen 50%; accused of not making steps forward in regionalization; this is a step in that direction; town will not be included then; difference in self-insurance and fully insured; types of risks; rates go from 28.4% to 39.2%; fully insured status; savings earned; costs do go up; good for lower income employees; savings for them is proportionally good; 3.87% increase on new adopted budget and concerns about not getting any input from the BOF and BOS before adopting.

MOTION carried. Mr. Pavlick; Mr. Simone; Mr. Falcetti; Ms. Stone; Mr. Terzian voted in the affirmative. Mr. Shuhi voted in the negative. There were no abstentions.

b. 2019-2020 Budget Review.

MOTION made by Mr. Simone and seconded by Mr. Pavlick: to approve the adjustment to the 2019-2020 budget at 3.87% increase as the new adopted budget.

Board members discussed: prefer 3% increase; issues with part-time teachers; community input; at same exact spot in the budget; need to examine more closely; input from the Superintendent; need to look at staff; Superintendent makes decision with staff not the Board; need to be A-plus school; communicate with community; advertise to outsiders will help success of town; too much in taxes for community; taxpayers let us know in the vote; BOF sets tax rate; BOF meeting on Monday; have meeting on Wednesday to discuss options after rate is set; and will have options.

MOTION carried. Mr. Pavlick, Mr. Simone, Mr. Falcetti, Ms. Carr voted in the affirmative. Ms. Stone and Mr. Terzian voted in the negative. Mr. Shuhi abstained.

c. Letter to the Editor.

Ms. Carr distributed copies of three letters to the editor from Richard Quay, Sky Post, and James Stedronsky, on school regionalization issues and a sample of a possible response from the Board as a whole and discussed: good for Board to respond; parents send students to private schools; sounds abrasive; will collaborate more with Region 6; not helpful to be negative; simple citizens stating their opinion; right to own opinion; not comfortable responding; regionalization not necessarily a panacea; in favor of sharing services; everyone entitled to their own opinion; can write back on an individual basis, and not as a group; community not aware what we are doing; need to get the whole story; seems reactive; two points of view; appreciate effort to protect Board,
but not necessary; have statement details on website; have full data; community pleased at what doing; different audience on BZ.

**Policy Review**

a. Second Reading

i. Bylaw # 9500 Philosophy and Bylaws of the Board of Education.

   **MOTION made by Mr. Simone and seconded by Mr. Falcetti**: to approve the Bylaw # 9500 Philosophy and Bylaws of the Board of Education as amended.

   **MOTION carried.** All votes were in the affirmative. There were no abstentions.

   **MOTION made by Mr. Falcetti and seconded by Mr. Terzian**: to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

   **MOTION carried.** All votes were in the affirmative. There were no abstentions.

Respectfully submitted,

Mathew Terzian, Secretary
Joanne Bertrand, Recording Secretary