

**School Committee Budget Liaisons/School Administrative Budget Team
Budget Sub-Committee Meeting**

MINUTES

Thursday December 7, 2017

Time/Location: 3:00pm School Administration Conference Room

Present:

School Committee

Meredith Tedford, Chair

Jennifer Schaeffner

School Administration

Amanda Maniaci

Ken Lord

Robert Bellucci

FY19 Preliminary School Budget Review

- **Meeting brought to order 3:00pm**
- Discussion of Fiscal 18 extraordinary maintenance issue – Coffin School Boiler
 - Brief description of problem from Ken
 - Options presented – do nothing and hope it does not get worse in cold weather – prepare to close Coffin Annex with contingency plan which would close library, music, art rooms for general ed classrooms and create a Special Ed programming room in the Principals Office
 - Fix the problem – initial quote as expected to be approx. \$29k and one came in around that. Another quote came in at \$13k
 - If we fix the problem does the School absorb cost or seek other avenues of funding/approach Town for discussion?
 - Question: Can the School budget could absorb this cost. Ms. Maniaci responded that 13k was a lot better than the initial thoughts on cost would be and that potentially building rental revenue could be used to fund this expense though it would be extremely tight in the overall budget due to this year's Special Education tuition out increases, transportation increases and the reduction in grant funding (federal special ed) and tuition in to district revenue
 - Decision on moving forward with boiler fix was tabled until discussion with Superintendent
- Brief review of budget process document
- Brief review of FY19 budget calendar/timeline DRAFT

- Ms. Schaeffner asked why School Committee would vote budget same night as Public Budget Hearing. Ms. Maniaci and Ms. Tedford responded that it was more of a pro-forma vote to approve the budget to be moved on to the Finance Committee School Department meeting and not a formal vote of budget approval which does happen at a subsequent meeting. Ms. Schaeffner requested removal of that vote from the School budget calendar or clarification of the intent of the approval specifying that it is not a School Committee vote to approve the budget the same night as the Public Hearing.
- Review of FY19 budget drivers and assumption DRAFT document. Discussed major themes of fy19 budget:
 - **Salaries**
 - Ms. Maniaci noted School Dept is currently working with Town Finance on agreed upon number for level staffing contractual increases for fiscal 19
 - Budget assumption for salaries is level staffing, contractual increases contingent on collective bargaining outcomes and no new FTE requests
 - **Expenses**
 - *Fixed*
 - Buildings – level expense lines across maintenance and technology lines
 - Town building maintenance article request – written request from Schools for Town Building Article FY19 DRAFT was in budget liaison meeting packet. Town Finance will meet with Town Departments to finalize Article requests and departmental appropriation
 - Utilities – Assumption of level expense lines and thresholds to be eligible for Town Reserve for Energy (Heat/Gas/Electric) and Utility (Water/Sewer)

Variables

- Special Education – Stabilization/planning for increase special education placements, decreasing tuition in and increasing transportation expenses – see draft document outlining potential Special Education Reserve Fund
- Curriculum – Science, Go Math! Renewal, social and emotional wellness and PBIS initiatives, culture and climate. Funding within level services central and building can be reappropriated to meet FY19 curriculum needs.
- Technology – Supporting HS 1:1 rollout and increased mandated online testing

- Discussion of FY19 budget challenges/constraints – noted/outlined in FY19 assumptions DRAFT document
 - Question from Ms. Tedford if Special Education 274 grant was eliminated this year as well as FY19 and the answer is yes, we found out 25k grant elimination in Sept 2017

- Review Special Education Reserve Fund factsheet and comparatives
 - Discussion of other districts having gone this route and that contributes to the lower tuition in revenue as more districts set up their own in house special education programming
 - Ms. Schaeffner noted that the law regarding the creation of a Special Education Reserve fund caps any appropriation to this fund at 2% of Net School Spending and does that not limit the intent? Ms. Maniaci noted that that any amount discussed as a solution to special education variables would be within 2% of district net school spending

- Review pre-employment physical factsheet and district comparatives
 - Ms. Schaeffner and Ms. Tedford stated support of this potential Article on the Warrant exempting School staff from this Town by-law mandate

Adjournment: 4:20pm – motion Ms. Tedford second: Ms. Schaeffner