

Minutes – Wayland School Committee Finance Subcommittee
Thursday, October 24, 2018

A meeting of the WSC’s Finance Subcommittee was called to order at 10:09 AM by Kathie Steinberg

Present:

Kathie Steinberg, Chair
Ellen Grieco

Also Present:

Arthur Unobskey, Superintendent
Perry Graham, Assistant Superintendent
Susan Bottan, Director of Finance & Operations
Heidi Paisner-Roffman, EL Coordinator
Klaus Shigley, Finance Committee Liaison

1. Comments and Written Statements from the Public

Klaus Shigley will follow up the discussion at the Finance Committee meeting to work collaboratively and design a budget presentation to make the Budget Book/Presentation more useful. Additional information regarding hiring practices (salary levels) will be helpful to understand trends, policy, etc. and exhibits showing what we are doing may be helpful. Klaus discussed George Uvegas’ request for a breakdown of non-salary expenses and identification of shared resources (w/ other depts). Carol Martin also requested information that Susan will compile in time for the Fin Com’s next meeting on November 5. Everyone agreed it would be most efficient to have Klaus compile the requests and serve as a conduit in his role as liaison.

2. Financial Matters

a. FY202 Capital Improvement Plans and Five-Year Capital Plan Follow-up Discussion

Susan will create a table to reconcile the differences between the CIPs and the Onsite Insight Report, as discussed at the Fin Com meeting. A discussion about prioritization and delaying some of the items followed. Concern was raised about continuing to incur costs for NOT doing projects and the increased costs that result from delays. Pushing projects into subsequent years has already started to catch up with us. Susan will combine both FY20 and FY21 CIP requests to see whether delaying projects will cause an undue burden next year. Further discussion will follow with the School Committee.

b. FY19 Quarterly Financial Report

The report will be available at a future meeting

c. Staffing Request Discussion

This item was taken out of order and was discussed first. Perry Graham and Heidi Paisner-Roffman presented their request to hire an additional EL Teacher Assistant to meet the needs of the growing EL population. In addition to the exponential growth in the EL population, the state has also changed its criteria for eligibility for services. This has also increased the student population that qualifies for the different levels of services, especially at the higher levels of intervention. Funding for this position can be achieved through the current EL budget due to some unanticipated savings in staffing turnover.

The district supports students who speak over 27 languages, and while there is a cohort of students who speak Russian, Chinese/Mandarin, and languages spoken in India, there are students who speak some very unfamiliar languages. The district will also need to support communication efforts going forward, such as translators, interpreters and other collateral support.

d. Presentation of Support Organization FY18 Year End Report

The Boosters is reviewing its practices and protocols with the intent of creating a new manual. Its new board would like additional time to prepare the information. Susan will wait to present the report until all information is complete.

It was recommended that the School Committee schedule an acknowledgement of the contributions of these organizations at a future meeting, as was done last year.

e. Presentation and discussion of Support Organizations' FY19 Budget

Susan will present the budgets once they are complete, as Boosters is still working on theirs. The district is most appreciative of the efforts of these organizations to provide for things needed OUTSIDE the school budget as these monies are not intended to fund things that need to be supported through the budget process (taxpayers).

f. Special Revenue Fund Discussion regarding Program Expenses and Next Steps for School Committee Consideration

The discussion focused on the FDK program. Kathie proposed considering program costs only in calculating the FDK tuition fee.

Program costs were defined as incremental costs that occur as a direct result of the operation of the program, and that would go away should the program dissolve. This would include the direct salaries and personnel costs, supplies, Medicare tax, and any other incremental costs related directly to the program. Cost sharing expenses, such as utilities, custodial, benefits or other expenses that would be incurred regardless of the presence of the FDK program should not be included in calculating the fee and should not be the responsibility of the fee payors. Only the benefit costs that result from the incremental salary cost (ie. Medicare) should be considered, while those benefits costs related to the 0.65 benefit-eligible district position (as a kindergarten teacher) should be included in the operating budget (and not part of the FDK program budget).

Looking at the FY19 budgets, FDK pays just over \$83K in "cost sharing" expenses. If these were no longer considered to be the responsibility of the fee-based program, the tuition fee could be reduced. Kathie recommended implementing the change over at least two budget cycles.

A discussion about FDK followed. The value and importance of kindergarten was highlighted by Arthur. Ellen asked if the goal here was to consider fully funding FDK, in which case this proposal would confuse the issue. If we feel that full funding of this program is warranted, we should be discussing that option. Kathie suggested that until full funding is implemented, we do what we can to make tuition as affordable as possible. This program is unique in that other programs for which the district collects fees do not cost share including Athletics, Instrumental Music, or Food Service. This seems to put an undo burden on the FDK fee-payers.

The proposal will be brought back to the School Committee for further discussion.

g. Enrollment Report Presentation and Discussion

Susan presented the Enrollment Report. Overall, the district enrollment has experienced a net decrease of 10 students. However, the demographics of the enrollment shifts need to be evaluated to fully understand the impact. The projection of incoming Kindergarten students was not realized and two Kindergarten classrooms were not needed. Forecasting enrollment is becoming increasingly more difficult. Students are entering throughout all the grades, with 31 new students at WMS. Susan identified classrooms that are bumping up against the higher class size limits. The School Committee will review and discuss the Enrollment Report at its next meeting.

h. FY20 Budget Process including Review of Calendar, Guidelines, Presentations and Future Planning

Discussion was deferred to the School Committee meeting.

i. Fin Com Questions, Follow up and Discussion of Next Steps, including Review of Possible Topics and Scheduling Dates with Finance Director and Fin Com Liaisons

Klaus will coordinate this effort as discussed during public comment.

3. Administrative Matters

a. Future Agenda Topics and Next Meeting Dates: November 8, November 29, December 6 vs. December 13

Discussion was deferred to next meeting.

b. Receive Updated Status on Outstanding Projects by the Director of Finance & Operations

Susan will provide an update on Munis at the next meeting.

4. Matters Not Anticipated by the Chair

There were none.

5. Comments and Written Statements from the Public

There were none.

6. Approval of Minutes

a. September 18, 2018

Approval was deferred to next meeting.

7. Adjournment

Upon a motion made by Kathie Steinberg and seconded by Ellen Grieco, the subcommittee voted unanimously (2-0) to adjourn at 12:09 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathie Steinberg

Corresponding Documents

Agenda

Summary Five Year Capital Improvement Plan FY20-24 as approved 10/15/18 by School Committee

Memo dated 10/24/18 from Graham and Paisner-Roffman requesting additional EL staff

Current vs Projected Enrollment as of Oct 1, 2018

NESDEC Enrollment Report

Draft FY20 Budget Development Calendar

Program Costs for Shared Revenue Funds prepared by Kathie Steinberg

Revolving and Special Funds Analysis by ClearGov

Tuition Rates for FDK in Massachusetts by Early Education for All (Table and Map)