

**TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES
BUDGET/MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Town Hall Council Chambers
May 22, 2017, Monday**

Present: Michael Molisse, Chairman
Patrick O'Connor, Vice Chairman
Jane Hackett, Councilor
Rebecca Haugh, Councilor
Brian McDonald, Councilor

Also Present: Brian Connolly, Chief Financial Officer
Richard Swanson, Town Auditor
Joseph Callanan, Town Solicitor
Jennifer Curtis-Whipple, Superintendent, WPS
Susan Kuska-Assistant Superintendent, WPS

Recording Secretary: Mary Barker

Chairman Molisse called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**Review and Discuss School Department Budget with School Superintendent,
Assistant Superintendents and Senior Staff**

Deliberate the following measure:

17 025Z-School Department

This matter was referred to the Budget/Management Committee on April 18, 2017. Supt. Curtis-Whipple and Asst. Supt. Kuska were invited to the table to make a brief presentation. A handout of their presentation to the School Committee and the public were provided to the committee.

- Prelim budget development process
 - Overview
- Background and development process
 - Vision
 - State Accountability Levels
 - Level 3 – testing and data
 - Organizing for improvement –revised process
 - Alignment with District Strategies
 - Learning focused on instructional core
 - Effective use of data
 - Parent and community engagement

- Context and Drivers
 - State aid
 - Local contribution
 - Grants/federal aid
 - Revolving accounts
 - Collective bargaining agreements
 - Circuit breaker reimbursement
 - Capital expenditures and Comcast funding
 - Vo-tech program tuitions
 - Charter school tuitions
 - Projection and analysis of future costs
 - Insurance, pensions, utilities, SPED tuition
 - Personnel and programming needs
- Personnel Budget Drivers
 - Contractual step increases
 - Contractual COLA increases
 - CBA impact
- Budget Development – variables impacting
- Personnel Budget Drivers
 - Contractual step increases
 - COLA increases
 - CBA impact- one outstanding/ back to table on unit B
- Projected increases for expenses FY18
 - SPED
 - Transportation
 - Maintenance
 - IT
 - Supplies increase

Councilor Hackett asked what services are contracted, and what salary costs were included that are contracted services (not included in benefits). Councilor Haugh asked how many employees are covered in the budget, to which the answer was in excess of 600.

- Budget development process
 - By building/department for staffing, services and materials
 - Align with district and building data – strategic placement
 - Budget breakdown
 - Proposed level service
 - Proposed needs list- generated on full list and breakdown to spread over several years.

Councilor Hackett asked what the actual proposed budget is for.

FY18 budget overview- proposal and identify needs

- School needs
- Budget Subcommittee

- District Needs

FY18 Budget Breakdown

- Operating budget
- Personnel increase
- Expense increase
- Proposed needs list

FY18 Budget Needs

- Curricular leadership needs
 - NEASC report
 - DESE District review cited challenges
 - DESE District Review recommendations
- teacher support needs
 - curricular leadership
 - instructional coaches/math
 - interventionist support
- impact
 - stronger coordination, alignment and accountability
 - in-classroom support
 - address increasing state mandates
- Technology Needs
 - Funding for continued progress
 - Equipment
- Impact
 - Update outdated technologies
 - Increase opportunities for usage
 - Support for effective use

Special Education Program

- Number of students, staff and district-wide programs
 - Needs
 - School psychologist increase-Johnson
 - Team chair-Johnson
 - Special education teacher-Johnson
 - Middle school SPED teacher
 - HS SPED teacher
 - Impact
 - Reduce placement in out- of -district programs
 - Program development to meet preschool need
 - Compliance with state and federal requirements
 - Improve achievement
- Additional school and district needs
 - Curriculum leadership
 - Exploratory CTE, ELL teachers
 - Administrative support
 - Primary STEM teachers
 - Collective Bargaining
 - Nursing support

- Teaching and intervention positions
- State and Historical comparisons
- Per pupil expenditure
- Closing – excellent schools
- Retain and attract families
 - Preserve property values
 - Increase community pride strengthen the local economy/produce engaged citizens

Superintendent Whipple presented and addressed the Auditor's questions.

Councilor Hackett asked if any redistricting is expected. The superintendent responded that none will occur in FY18 but is unsure beyond then. Smaller families and movement to private and charter schools will affect future class sizes. Councilor Haugh noted the enrollment is trending down on the South Shore, and asked if SPED is similar; yet the budget has gone up. The superintendent responded that they are seeing more in Johnson who come in needing services than in the past. Councilor Haugh asked if they see the result of children born to addicts yet. The superintendent responded that they are doing research but it definitely is creating an impact. They are also seeking children being raised by others due to addiction issues.

The known salary increases are included in the impact, but there are still 2 bargaining units ungratified, and it does not include the potential shift of the traffic supervisors to the school's budget. Councilor Hackett asked if breakage is included and if those numbers can be provided. She also asked about the school lunch program with Chartwell. Employees of the program are under the school department, but the manager is Chartwell.

Councilor Haugh asked if any revolving programs are expected to increase in the next year. The superintendent responded that the FY19 program at Johnson and the day care at WHS are the only ones and next school year athletics and school lunch – these are reviewed every four years.

It was noted that grants are not necessarily continuous. They also discussed the interaction with IT department and collaborative purchasing which will give the school resource officers accessibility to police records directly from the school buildings and enable the use of the educational discount. They noted that the school department has moved into Chromebook technology but continues to purchase Apple products for more robust arts application processes. They are using the Google platform, which is free to educators.

Councilor Hackett asked if they are moving to more complete inclusion? The superintendent responded yes, but they don't have the appropriate staffing for a true modeling. Whenever possible, they provide for inclusion.

Councilor Hackett asked the status of the Chapman School design plans. It was noted that there is nothing definitive at this time. They are working within the state parameters.

Councilor Hackett noted she is hearing consistent feedback from vendors unable to use as much business by town. Have there been overall changes in procurement? The superintendent responded that they are in a better place than at the beginning of the school year. They have become cautious that contractors have the appropriate documentation and insurance. She also thanked the school department for cooperation in the parks improvement program. A discussion will need to be held about maintaining them. The spirit of cooperation has had a huge impact. A formalized central maintenance plan to benefit all is in the works. Discussion also needs to take place regarding the reporting structure for hall rental and is slated for the next budget subcommittee on May 31, 2017.

Chairman Molisse thanked the school department personnel for their presentation.

A Motion was made by Councilor Hackett to forward measure 17 0 to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action and was seconded by Councilor Haugh, UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:18 PM, there being no further business, a MOTION was made by Councilor Hackett to adjourn and was seconded by Councilor Haugh UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Respectfully Submitted by Mary Barker as Recording Secretary.

Approved by Michael Molisse as Chair of the Budget/Management Committee

Voted unanimously on 10 August 2017