

**TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES
BUDGET/MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

June 1, 2020-- Monday
Zoom # 850 4395 0223

Present: Michael Molisse, Chairman
Jane Hackett, Vice Chairman
Pascale Burga, Councilor
Christopher Heffernan, Councilor
Maureen Kiely, Councilor

Also Present: Richard Swanson, Town Auditor
Joseph Callanan, Town Solicitor
Dr. Jennifer Curtis-Whipple- School Superintendent
Brian Smith, Asst. Superintendent
Lisa Belmarsh, Chair, Weymouth School Committee
John Sullivan, School Committee

Recording Secretary: Mary Barker

Chair Molisse called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. A roll call vote was taken:
Councilor Burga-Yes, Councilor Heffernan-Yes, Councilor Kiely-Yes, Vice Chair
Hackett- Yes, Chair Molisse- Yes. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Continued discussion of the school budget, from May 5, 2020. Additional questions were
submitted after the meeting. a copy of the responses were sent (dated May 14, 2020).

20 055 Z-Schools

Auditor Swanson reviewed the power point with Asst. Supt. Brian Smith.

- Appreciation During Difficult Times
- \$74 million
 - Projected Enrollment – preK and half Day count as .5 in state aid calculations
 - Vehicle Fleet (Supt. -at mayor request, stopped vehicle allowances in contracts- removed and new don't include. Added to fleet that have constant travel)
 - Org Chart and Admin Compensation
 - Paid Consultants
 - Kindergarten Revolving-
 - Expended
 - Structure
 - Revolving source
 - Revolving disbursements
 - Public Relations Firm

- Specialize in work with public school districts, nonprofits, etc.
 - communication
 - public outreach
 - admin reviews (mandated by DOE)
- Tuition Based Programs
- Kindergarten Program
- Number of classrooms
 - Full-day K positions
 - No new hires
 - Number of classrooms
 - Increases anticipated in operating budget – none
- Enrollment numbers –
 - projected 5828 and trending down
 - historical
- Per pupil expenditure
 - NSS
 - RADAR – comparable districts
 - Student demographics
 - Similar wealth
- Collective Bargaining Agreements
 - Eight units – 4 settled
- Contracts
 - CBA’s
 - Individuals
- Revolving Funds
 - Reported quarterly to SC
 - Listed and reviewed
- Revolving Funds
 - Monthly reconciliation
 - Quarterly report
 - Annual review
 - Monthly or bimonthly
- Grants \$3,638,019
 - Federal – entitlement and SPED
 - State
 - Private/Foundation
- Capital Projects
 - Maintenance
 - Vehicles
 - Technology
 - Infrastructure
 - Devices
 - Curriculum CTE
 - Robotics
 - Auto Technical
 - Curriculum materials

- Maintenance Services
 - Utilities
 - Cleaning supplies
 - Contracts
 - Process
 - Consortiums with town and others
- District Instruction
 - Increased head count
 - Salary / steps
 - Reallocation of positions
- Instructional Technology
 - Headcount
 - Increase salary/steps
- Professional Development
 - Contractual
 - Supplies
 - Alice training
- Transportation Services
 - First Student Contract
 - 4 positions added
- District Administration
 - Reallocation
 - Correction of omission
- Special Education
 - Increase of head count
- Circuit Breaker
 - projected funded at full 75%
 - FY21 commitment at 75%

John Sullivan noted that Brian Smith received the questions last Thursday and he appreciated the work. He highlighted that schools run more leanly than others in the state, but still below average in state. This is a low taxation town. The unusual anomaly in how IT was funded – remaining in capital requests per the request of town, and for leases the department is already beholden to. In the last meeting, he had assurance from the Chief of Staff that would be coming, and learned in a subsequent meeting that is not the case. Intentions are good. Chair Molisse thanked him for his comments.

Auditor Swanson reported the responses are thorough and he has no further questions.

Councilor Kiely noted for the new year –with CARES act promising some funding and the new rules with regard to social distancing and other requirements; what does it look like relative to this budget? Brian Smith responded that transportation could be widely varying scenarios; all costly. A working group is being formulated; however they were notified they will not have any guidance until at least the middle of June for the fall. It's a

difficult situation; for an example, athletics which typically start in summer. It is all on hold. They don't know what the mandates will be, so they are taking a proactive approach by building a working group that will look at a return to work, and a return to school group. The task force will be 20-30 members and will offshoot into multiple smaller subgroups. All summer programming will be remote. Building each group - >250 volunteers. 20-30 task force...multiple smaller subgroups. They do not have enough direction from DOE. Summer is their busiest time of year, and first and foremost is safety. They were advised to have 3 month's supply of PPE, but there were issues with the ability to obtain them. the Superintendent advised there are no further planned furloughs at this time. Regarding slide 14- funds that are in revolving will transition to operating. This is for full day kindergarten; first year pilot; after that it becomes a structural deficit.

Councilor Heffernan asked if the PPE requirements and others are unfunded mandates. The superintendent responded absolutely, but the commissioner of Education is aware of how this will impact the district. Councilor Heffernan commented that it is an interesting situation in that this is happening with all cities and towns, and they will compete for the same resources. He hopes the state will release information sooner rather than later. The superintendent noted she is getting quotes for some of the other items- cameras, equipment to monitor mass temperatures, etc. The PPE crosses to technology.

Vice Chair Hackett noted they are dealing with a huge unknown, but required to take a snapshot at this point in time, and without knowing what services will be required to deliver, or how much will be needed-numbers will change. She urged they stick together, first and foremost is the safety of students and staff. There are tremendous resources to identify and use. They are working hard to save each and every job. 1/12 budget (monthly) or collaborative budgeting might be required. this is not the end- until they have guidelines, and know how much, it's just a picture of a point in time.

Superintendent Whipple agreed; they have to work what's best for the entire community. If any Councilors would like to join the subcommittee, they would be welcome.

Chair Molisse thanked the department for the presentation. He is happy to see a plan coming forward for PPE without knowing what's happening. What have the schools planned for furloughs? Asst. Superintendent Smith responded that round was completed with one program. There are no plans through the summer, but don't know what next year looks like. School budgets are fluid. There are no furloughs out of the operating budget.

Chair Molisse asked how many classrooms will be needed for full day k – 19 classrooms – right now. Historically over the summer, enrollment increases and they may need to shift. The plan is to keep at 21 per class – if there is an increase in enrollment, it might be 20. This is a pilot for this year. Chair Molisse reported he has a huge concern with it. The money in the revolving account- \$850,000? Asst. Superintendent Smith reported they are still paying from it and still collecting. Chair Molisse asked will expenses take into account PPE and social guidelines? Supt. Whipple responded that they could use funds

from that account only for full day kindergarten. She noted the social distancing aspects are better in the K classrooms because they are significantly larger spaces. Chair Molisse responded that he is not in favor of providing anything free with the current situation. With St. Jerome's closing, the public schools would be impacted. Supt. Whipple responded that they are not philosophically on the same page; at a time when kids are home doing remote learning, it is not easy for families. They typically see a summer loss of skills and they will see a COVID slide. This is a best-case scenario to fill the gaps. It gives a much-needed educational foundation. Children are experiencing trauma and they need to be back in school all day. Chair Molisse responded that he respects her opinion, but the cost of the program is taking away from other things. School will be a challenge whenever they come back.

Councilor Burga noted current enrollment is 158 students at St Jerome's; it dropped with the virus to 108. They are currently doing remote learning. 158 will need to be absorbed somewhere. Their program is Pre K to 8th grade (and they have full day K). This is new news and is devastating to the families. The school is financially sustaining, but it is the archdiocese' decision.

Chair Molisse asked about the role of the consultants and if it is new for FY20? Asst. Supt. Smith responded that the first consultant was required to effect remote learning. 2nd is a compliance item. The 1st could potentially be reimbursed under the CARES act. Cost is \$29,000 - \$55/hr. position? Payroll shows \$110 / hr. The Asst. Supt. clarified that \$110 is the retired consultant hourly rate.

The chair asked what is the role of the public relations firm. Why is it needed? The Asst. Supt. responded that a portion is for a required administrative review (grant component). Supt. Whipple added, when the DOE reviewed data, there was some concern. It was an opportunity to participate in a Professional Development opportunity- to increase/decrease trends in learning. They will analyze some of the data; make an analysis of data and make recommendations for more positive interactions with regard to absenteeism and suspensions to enhance or remedy rates. The school department will share the report when complete.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:53 PM, there being no further business, a motion was made by Vice Chair Hackett to adjourn and was seconded by Councilor Kiely. A roll call vote was taken: Councilor Burga-Yes, Councilor Heffernan-Yes, Councilor Kiely-Yes, Vice Chair Hackett- Yes, Chair Molisse- Yes. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Attachments: Town Council Budget Management FY21 Budget-School Questions dated 6/1/20

Respectfully Submitted by Mary Barker as Recording Secretary.

Approved by Michael Molisse as Budget/Management Committee Chairman
Voted unanimously on 7 July 2020