

Minutes
Board of Education Special Meeting
April 21, 2020
6:30 p.m.

Board Members Present: James Chakulski, Jr., David Crim, Linette Dooley, Christopher Lent, Michael Maziarz, Joseph Napolitano and Kathy Tolsdorf

Others Present:

Finance Director Beverly Ciurylo, Superintendent Maria Geryk and Brenda Morey

I. Call to Order

Chairman Lent called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Action Items (Discussion and Action)

Chairman Lent thanked everyone for meeting on such short notice. The purpose of this special meeting is to discuss potential areas where the 2020-2021 budget could be decreased. Superintendent Geryk had presented the Board of Education and capital budgets to FIPAC on Wednesday. Questions were asked of the Board and Town, asking if there are areas we can cut. That is the purpose of tonight's meeting, to have an update for tomorrow's FIPAC workshop.

a. Discuss BOE Budget Recommendations

Superintendent Geryk said she and Bev Ciurylo want to give an overview of recommendations if we were to try to come in with a 0% mill rate increase. There is an \$840,000 gap. We are looking to see how much to use from the reserve, in addition to reductions, to offset the gap.

Ms. Ciurylo said the concern is the current COVID situation. A few FIPAC members requested no increase. That is what we are all trying to figure out – how we can bring the budget down. Superintendent Geryk came up with a list of considerations.

Superintendent Geryk laid out highpoints from the capital budget. Many of the reductions in the capital budget will be covered by this year's operating budget. She proposes cutting back on floor replacement, painting and ceiling tiles. In all, she proposes the capital budget request be reduced by \$60,000, of which \$30,000 can be covered this year.

A track study was to be completed. The town has \$17,000 in an engineering line and made contact with a company for us to start the process. Discussion about the track ensued, including why a feasibility study is warranted. We have a gravel track and the study is looking at what options we have to make improvements. Rubber surface instead of the current gravel, grading/drainage, and a standard size track are all part of the options in question as part of the planning stage. The phys ed teachers and athletic director will meet with the engineer on Friday. These individuals have a lot of knowledge about the track and will be able to provide requested information. Discussion continued and it was decided to move forward with the track study at this time because this is something that has been in the budget for multiple years, only to be cut each time.

Operating reductions were discussed next. Two interns, budgeted at \$20,000 each, are in the budget annually. We have not had any luck finding interns recently, so we have been transferring the funds to building subs. Superintendent Geryk recommends removing one of the two intern positions, \$20,000.00, from the budget. She anticipates having enough funds for two building subs and the balance in the sub line of \$30,000.

Before-school care was discussed. Approximately 80 students are part of the before-school program and it costs approximately \$9,000. We could consider having the YWCA provide this at a cost to the individual families, not the school. Consensus was to not pursue this option at this time. Cutting a budget to eliminate a mill rate increase to then increase costs to individual families defeats the purpose of the cut in the first place.

Other proposals include reducing the following; enrichment position to 0.5 FTE, minimal amount to the non-reimbursable transportation line, \$5,000 from the after-school club line, \$3,000 from worker's comp, \$2,000 from commercial insurance, \$2,000 from musical accompanist and drama, as well as having no increases in diesel/oil or supplies.

There was considerable discussion about reducing the enrichment position to 0.5 FTE. We can see what experience the person comes in with. \$32,000 is the budgeted amount for half-time. Reducing the position to half-time aligns better for our moving toward universal design. Integrating arts, curriculum, instruction making dramatic changes. This is middle ground that provides us that bridge.

Superintendent Geryk said she does not want to hire a person, only to eliminate the position in one or two years, which would most likely happen. Ms. Dooley asked how many students or classes this part-time enrichment position would work with. Superintendent Geryk said she will have to get the numbers, but this person would work more as a coach. They would be working with classroom teachers, art teachers and coaches.

It was confirmed that if this position, as half-time, is not sufficient, we could contract out for additional time. Another option is to have this be a contracted position, rather than staff member. All agreed eliminating this position entirely would make it much more difficult to get it back again. Superintendent Geryk reiterated she believes having this position as half-time is reasonable middle ground for the situation we are facing.

Mr. Maziarz said the fact that the position is retained in some form is important. He, like the others, is glad something is in place. Mr. Crim likes the proposal as it is now. Enrichment is not about gifted kids; it is about all kids. Going to the universal design services all students. Ms. Dooley asked if this person would help develop and roll out what the program would look like. Superintendent Geryk answered yes, because it is always better to have a train the trainer situation whenever possible.

Responding to Chairman Lent's question, these proposed reductions bring our request to -0.16% compared to current year. Superintendent Geryk said there will be at least \$300,000 to return to the town at the end of the year.

Mr. Crim MOVED, Ms. Dooley SECONDED to revoke the previously-approved 2020-2021 operating budget of \$12,786,543.
MOTION CARRIES 7:0

Ms. Tolsdorf MOVED, Mr. Crim SECONDED to approve the 2020-2021 operating budget of \$12,716,285.
MOTION CARRIES 7:0

Ms. Tolsdorf MOVED, Mr. Crim SECONDED to revoke 2020-2021 capital budget of \$90,000.
MOTION CARRIES 7:0

Mr. Crim MOVED, Mr. Napolitano SECONDED to approve the 2020-2021 capital budget of \$30,000.
MOTION CARRIES 7:0

b. Motion to Approve up to \$26,000 for Security Camera Project

Superintendent Geryk said the total security camera project costs approximately \$26,200 The Board previously approved up to \$17,000 for this project. At that time, it was believed approximately \$9,000 would still be available to supplement the \$17,000. That did not happen, so Superintendent Geryk is requesting the full amount now.

Ms. Tolsdorf MOVED, Mr. Maziarz SECONDED to approve up to \$26,200 for the security camera project.

DISCUSSION;

Ms. Tolsdorf sought clarification. Is the Board being asked to approve \$26,200 in addition to the previously-approved \$17,000? No, it was confirmed the total amount needed for this project is \$26,200, which is \$9,200 more than what had been approved. This project is being funded in current year.

MOTION CARRIES 7:0

c. Motion to Approve up to \$13,500 for Carpet Replacement in Divided Room

Ms. Tolsdorf MOVED, Mr. Crim SECONDED to approve up to \$13,500 for carpet replacement in the divided room.
MOTION CARRIES 7:0

Approved 6/1/2020

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IV. Adjournment

Mr. Crim MOVED and Mr. Maziarz SECONDED to adjourn.
MOTION CARRIES 7:0

The Board adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Christopher Lent, Chairman

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