

MINUTES OF THE REMOTE SPECIAL WOODBRIDGE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Thursday, January 27, 2022

Via WebEx

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Meeting Number: 2489 695 2732

Meeting Password: bF2Jmg2ENW3

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Piascyk, Chair called the meeting to order (9:34 AM).

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Lynn Piascyk, Chair; Dr. Jay Dahya (9:47 AM); Ms. Sarah Del Prete, Secretary; Ms. Brooke Hopkins; Mr. Jeff Hughes; Dr. Maria Madonick, Vice Chair; Dr. Michael Strambler (9:35 AM); and Ms. Erin Williamson.

STAFF: Dr. Jonathan Budd, Superintendent; Richard Huot, Interim Director of Business Services / Operations; Cheryl Kiesel, Special Services Director; Analisa Sherman, Principal; and Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board.

GUESTS: Dr. Tom Handler, BOF Liaison

The Board reviewed revisions to the WBOE 2022/23 Budget Proposal. Recommendations for reductions were phased into three tiers.

Tier 1A - \$599,053

➤ Medical Insurance – Active Employees	\$426,734
➤ Medical Insurance – Retired Employees	128,919
➤ Electricity	25,000
➤ Shift Food Services Supervisor Benefits to Food Service Budget	13,400
➤ Heating	5,000

Tier 1B - \$71,931

➤ Building Improvements	\$ 53,600
➤ Non-Public Transportation (Ezra)	8,000
➤ Professional Development – Shift to Grant	7,000
➤ SpEd Copier Elimination	3,331

Tier 2 - \$65,023

➤ Supplies	\$ 33,337
➤ Intern Reduction to 7	20,000
➤ Curriculum Writing	4,400
➤ SpEd Software	3,000
➤ Dues & Fees	2,786
➤ SpEd Teaching Equipment	1,500

Tier 3 - \$280,007

➤ 3 General Education Teacher Assistants	\$ 82,086
➤ Grade 3 Teacher – Additional Section	66,232
➤ Additional STEAM Teacher	59,111
➤ .5 Additional Social Work	47,578
➤ Proposed .5 Custodian	25,000

It was noted that the building improvements included HVAC, upgrades in technology and communications and could be moved into the Capital Budget. Also noted was the oil tank removal would incur an additional cost to the Operating Budget of \$40,000, as an environmental consultant would be required to determine if there is oil seepage in the ground.

Dr. Dahya arrived (9:47 AM).

Any reductions outside of Tiers 1-3, while currently not proposed, could include increased class sizes, reductions to services provided by literacy/math specialists, further reductions in teacher assistants, restructuring of support staff and program reductions in the arts, TAG, library media and/or STEAM.

If the Board chose to adopt all reductions identified in Tiers 1-3, and with the addition of the cost associated with the oil tank removal (\$40,000), the 2022/23 Budget Proposal would be reduced to a 7.25% increase.

Discussion ensued regarding comments made at the joint BOS/BOF meeting by various members. There was general agreement among Board members that while the budget presented was in the best interest of educating children for their future, it was made quite clear by the BOS/BOF that, if the Board of Education did not reduce their budget proposal, the BOS and BOF would. This Board was placed in this position because budgets over that last several years did not keep pace with inflation, 80% of the budget pertains to contractual obligations, and there is limited control over State mandates. Board of Education members are elected officials and have a responsibility to the taxpayers as well.

Suggestions were made to:

- ❖ Request the Town bear the burden of funding Ezra transportation and school nurse (\$70,000)
- ❖ Defer the building improvements to Capital Projects
- ❖ Reevaluate the costs associated with heating the pool and hosting the Recreation Department at BRS
- ❖ Allocating the Excess Cost Grant to BRS
- ❖ Analyze grant reimbursements / incremental revenues
- ❖ Continue long-term planning inclusive of consolidation of services
- ❖ Shifting funding of non-direct educational expenses, i.e. SRO, to the Town

There was general consensus that the only acceptable reductions were in Tiers 1A and 1B which would result in a 9.5% increase (9.2% if the oil tank removal is not included). The Board has a deadline of January 31 to render any additional changes to their submitted proposal. Given the tight timeline and the magnitude of the reductions, it was agreed the Board required additional time to arrive at a firm decision.

MOTION #1 – BUDGET DOCUMENTATION

Move that we prepare documentation that has different scenarios of percentage increases and specifies the impact of the reductions, and identify and separate those items that could be shifted to the Town.

Ms. Piascyk
Second Ms. Hopkins
UNANIMOUS

MOTION TO RECESS THIS MEETING UNTIL 1:30 PM FRIDAY, JANUARY 28: (11:26 AM)

Ms. Piascyk
Second by Ms. Del Prete
UNANIMOUS

Recorded by Marsha DeGennaro, Clerk of the Board