

BOARD OF EDUCATION, NEW FAIRFIELD, CT
Business Operations/Resource Management Subcommittee Meeting

Name of Subcommittee: BO/RM Meeting type: Regular
Date of Meeting: 1/21/21 Minutes submitted by: K. LaTourette
Members present: Dominic Cipollone, Greg Flanagan, Kimberly LaTourette, Ed Sbordone
Members absent:
Other attendees: Patricia Cosentino, Rich Sanzo
Place of meeting: BO/RM Subcommittee (1/21/21 at 6:00 p.m.)
Web: <https://zoom.us/j/92264814438> Dial In: (929) 205-6099
Meeting ID: 922 6481 4438

Meeting called to order: at 6:00 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

A. November 19, 2020 – Regular

Motion: To approve minutes of the November 19, 2020, regular meeting as presented

Made by: Ed Sbordone

Seconded by: Greg Flanagan

Recording of vote: All in favor

III. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Monthly Summary of Budget vs. Actual Expenditure/Encumbrances Report for FY 2020-21 at December 31, 2020

Dr. Sanzo shared information about the projections, typical actuals, including the amounts of expenditures as if reallocated to COVID relief funds (about \$500,000, of which \$130,000 went to business management upgrade at MS). We have not yet applied the ESSER II funding that was part of the CARES Act (about \$200,000) to the budget. After this funding, we will have a deficit of half a million, but that will be covered by the prior year's surplus that was awarded to the BOE.

Some of the things that have changed since we last saw this report:

School Lunch Fund - The district is providing free breakfast and lunch to students, fully funded through a federal grant. Our meal counts are down from prior years. Some catering opportunities are not happening this year either. We are running at a loss in the lunch program right now; we do not typically see this. If we do not break even, Aramark will pay the difference (in a normal year). This will have to be a point of negotiation. We have to break even at the end of the year, and the BOE would have to subsidize.

Payroll - Deficit overall in payroll is due to reallocations and who we have had to hire. This is trending positively - seeing a surplus in our substitute fund. We have not been able to get subs in the buildings this year. Buildings are doing their best to cover for teachers/staff who are quarantined.

Special Education - High cost out placements, contracted services, staff working on IEP review, supplement SLP services due to leaves and increase in the number of students with challenges.

Non-payroll Accounts:

Emergency Repair account is being monitored, more expended in this year than typical due to extra testing, replacing part of the Consolidated boiler. Rich does not think we will have a deficit by the end of the year. This is not predictable, just here when things break and need to be fixed/replaced.

PD/Enrichment Services - A reflection of COVID, items that have been deferred.

Utility Accounts – There is concern about the electric bill. We have not had a bill that reflects a full month of in-person schooling. We are projecting that we will have a deficit, but Dr. Sanzo hopes to be proven wrong. We will know better by March, after having winter month bills.

Bus Contract - We have some additional costs with cleaning and monitors, rate was negotiated for a lower per day rate if buses are not running. We also have a ride share agreement with Danbury for a student attending Naugatuck.

Technology – We will continue to look at this. Karen has deferred some of our recycled purchases but has had to make additional purchases for staff who are covering for teachers who are teaching remotely.

Athletics - High number estimate, modified season for the fall (\$30,000 less from transportation and officials). We did not have gate receipts. We will see what a modified winter season will bring, and what the spring will look like.

Conferences/Field Trips - Not occurring due to COVID.

We are expecting additional funding from the state in the stimulus bill that was passed in early January. The amount may be twice as much as the ESSER II funding (approx. \$400,000), but we do not know what expenses that money can be used for. Depending on that answer, we may reallocate to best utilize the funding that is coming to impact the deficit, but also items that we could possibly remove from next year's budget and purchase with this funding source. We just need some clarity on this funding and how it can be used.

B. Quarterly Summary of Budget vs. Projected Year-End Expenditure/ Encumbrances Report for FY 2020-21 at December 31, 2020

C. School Lunch Fund at December 31, 2020

Dr. Sanzo said that we are working with Aramark to put together some marketing information to share with families to take advantage of the school meals. Every meal taken is money saved for the district. It will generate "meal count." We want to encourage families to take the meals that are available to them, trying to mitigate the deficit. The deficit comes from the fixed costs within the lunch program. The free meals will be extended through the end of the school year. The vendor is running out of chicken nuggets, but she will try to get them if she can.

Every five years districts need to go out to bid for their food service provider, and this has been waived by the state. Many districts are taking advantage of the waiver. We are happy with Aramark, so we plan on using the waiver. We will work with Aramark to negotiate the rate and skip the bidding process for now.

D. Capital Improvement Plan 2020-2030

This was previewed last meeting and we have to figure out how to best meet the funding needs of the district. The Middle School was built in 1995, is in good condition, but is approaching 30 years old, and we will have to start thinking about the financial constraints with the building projects. How do we plan for the needs of the MS so we do not end up in the same situation as Consolidated and High School?

What has to be replaced, due to be replaced, will need to be replaced in the next decade or so? The plan is broken up into phases. We are projecting a need for capital funding over the next decade. The annual contribution is at 0. This year Dr. Cosentino presented the amount that is equal to old debt. Initial design services to replace the underground storage tanks at the MS (for oil). They have to be removed no later than 30 years after installation (1995). We insure these tanks, and when we went to insure them this year, CIRMA had to seek out other companies. We are looking to allocate funds for the design, then the following year allocate replacement.

Everything else on this list can be part of a conversation about how the town will handle the needs of the MS.

There is \$100,000 difference in funding and projection. Instead of putting money into budget, we may be able to use surplus to fund some of these items to buy some time to have a conversation with town leaders and community. Dr Sanzo asked the committee for feedback about how to proceed.

E. Google Vault Reconciliation – October 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020 – No issues of concern over the last quarter. Three accesses, FOIA request, student investigation, and Rich is running the report for this meeting.

IV. ACTION ITEMS - none

V. OTHER

Rich mentioned that Karen Fildes is working on, and wants us to review, a Chromebook insurance that is available to families. It protects against accidental damage, screen breaking. This has not been in place, but many other districts do offer it. The cost is \$16 through remainder of the year, and families would be protected for accidental damage. District would handle repairs, but then families are not charged. This is a great option for families and is not mandatory.

Motion to adjourn: Made by: Ed Sbordone
Recording of vote: Aye – Unanimous

Seconded by: Greg Flanagan
Meeting adjourned at: 6:53 p.m.