



NORTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT FINANCE COMMITTEE

Ashby – Pepperell – Townsend, Massachusetts

MINUTES – MARCH 18, 2022

Virtual

PRESENT

Chairperson	Lisa Martin	Member, At-Large
	Craig Hansen	Member, Pepperell
	Randee Rusch	Member, At-Large
	William Hackler	Citizen Member

ALSO PRESENT

Brad Morgan	Superintendent
Nancy Milligan	Assistant Superintendent
Nancy Haines	Business Manager
Robin Eibye	Recording Secretary
June McNeil	Member, Ashby
David Amari	Facilities and Grounds

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

- Lisa Martin opened the meeting at 7:32 a.m. Ms. Martin announced the Committee was meeting in a virtual setting, fully remote via teleconferencing, practicing social distancing, and in accordance with the Governor's suspension of specific open meeting laws.
- Roll Call

Roll Call:			
Randee Rusch	Yes	Craig Hansen	Yes
William Hackler	Yes	Lisa Martin	Yes
Brad Morgan	Yes	Robin Eibye	Yes
Nancy Haines	Yes		

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

- Following review, Randee Rusch motioned, and William Hackler seconded the Committee vote to approve the Finance Committee meeting minutes dated March 1, 2022, and March 11, 2022, as presented.

Roll Call Vote:			
Randee Rusch	Yes	Craig Hansen	Yes
William Hackler	Yes	Lisa Martin	Yes

Vote: The motion unanimously passed 4/0/0.

OLD BUSINESS

- FY23 Budget:
 - Randee Rusch proposed a list of budget detail questions. (See attached)

1. Grounds Maintenance 4210

A discussion ensued about grounds maintenance. David Amari said they were often forced to overlook grounds due to the tasks of building maintenance and lower staff availability. Mr. Amari said they were sharing the department request with the requested grounds budget. And, with COVID and the additional constraints of added cleaning and staff turnover, he said he would try not to compare spending levels for FY20 and FY21 due to the intense changes that occurred to take care of buildings. Instead, he suggested that the FY2019 spending was more in line with what was typical.

Mr. Amari said snow removal was always an estimate. Without an entire staff on board, it could be necessary to hire additional contractors, not all custodial staff are snow removal/drivers, and some equipment requires additional licenses. Mr. Amari said the district experienced relatively low snow loads the past couple of years and warmer days, which helped. Mr. Amari said they had been trying to balance the schools so that it makes more sense regarding snow removal supplies. All had ice melt, sand, etc., so having a line for each building made sense.

2. Facilities 4110

Ms. Haines said Ms. Rusch was using the FY23 Budget compared to FY23 Expended/Encumbered to Date, which includes all currently encumbered staff and expenditures to date. A number of staff had exited this year, and new staff was hired. There had been unfilled positions for part of the year this year. Ms. Haines shared the FY23 Budget with the FY22 Projected staffing plan, which the FY23 budget includes. Ms. Haines said some staff was covered in the revolving account for building rental.

FY23 Budget to Fy22 Projected

School	FTE	FY23 Amt	Current FTE	Projected Cost FY22
Custodians				
AES	2.00	\$ 97,405.20	2.00	\$ 89,603.12
SMS	4.00	\$ 167,154.05	3.50	\$ 155,364.42
SECC	1.50	\$ 54,079.20	1.50	\$ 51,681.09
VB	4.50	\$ 203,725.40	5.00	\$ 213,864.95
HB	4.00	\$ 164,012.40	4.50	\$ 145,454.30
NMS	3.00	\$ 139,909.28	4.00	\$ 127,314.08
HS (includes DW staff)	11.50	\$ 581,706.36	11.00	\$ 491,668.49
Flacc Rental	2.50	\$ 91,621.44	-	\$ 60,809.26
Total	33.00	\$ 1,499,613.33	31.50	\$ 1,335,759.71
Other				
Director	1.00	\$ 127,583.00	1.00	\$ 125,081.00
Asst Director	1.00	\$ 85,000.00	-	\$ -
Secretary	0.75	\$ 40,684.68	0.75	\$ 39,115.51
	2.75	\$ 253,267.68	1.75	\$ 164,196.51
All Facility Staff	35.75	\$ 1,752,881.01	33.25	\$ 1,499,956.22

Difference \$ 252,924.79

3. Health Services 3220
Ms. Haines said the charge was due to a long-term substitute for a nurse on a leave of absence.
4. Athletics 3510
A discussion ensued about officials/tickets/site managers. Ms. Haines said the last budget had all the officials, ticket takers, and site supervisors mixed in with Police details/officials, and she pulled it out and created its own line item. Ms. Haines confirmed there was no budget impact.
5. CIT 2415
The Committee discussed IT and hardware costs, and Jeremy Hamond confirmed that the hardware budget request was determined based on the cost of replacing existing equipment following a consistent refresh cycle of five years for computers and Chromebooks. \$320,000 accounts for replacing 1/5 of 568 computers, 40 laptops, 3985 Chromebooks, and 166 charging carts and stations, with the charging stations estimated at a ten-year refresh. The original FY22 request was \$330,000, but the difference was supported by COVID-related ESSER grants for some mobile devices. In addition, \$10,000 was cut from last year's original request to this year's due to a plan to discontinue laptops in high school science due to increased Chromebooks. The budget for internet services had not changed from FY22, but it was not wholly spent yet, and not all the remaining

funds are encumbered. Typically 60% of district internet services are paid for through the federal erate program. It is recommended that districts budget for 100% of the internet services, but we have never budgeted the entire difference. The budgeted difference but covered by erate is put towards wiring and network repairs that come up throughout the year.

6. CD2110

Ms. Rusch said CD software increased from \$71,000 to \$150,000, which was \$20,000 in previous years, and CD Supplies and Materials increased from \$78,721 to \$220,474. Mr. Hamond said CD software consisted of the following:

- Vector Evaluations (formerly Teachpoint) - \$9000
- Discovery HSS Techbook - \$10,500 (yearly payment until 2024)
- iReady (Added in FY20 but partially supplemented through other funding, Increased in FY21 with a large portion free due to a trial in FY22) - \$101,000
- EdPuzzle (Added in FY21) - \$7500
- LearnZillion (Added in FY21, prepaid through FY23)
- Pearson Savvas (Added in FY21, prepaid through FY25)
- Screencastify (Added in FY21) - \$5000
- OPTIC (Added in FY21) - \$1000
- Teachable (Added in FY21) - \$1000
- Anticipated need for one time purchases - \$10,000

Nancy Milligan confirmed that 2110 includes Math curriculum and ELA implementation.

Ms. Milligan provided the following and a discussion ensued:

- Math total cost= \$455,000 (new program)
- Use Title I= \$125,600
- Esser III= \$94,371
- Esser II= \$30,803
- Remaining balance for local= \$204,226

- ELA Total= \$29,000 (15,000 PD and 14,000 materials)
- Use Title I- \$7838
- Title IIA= \$4914
- Remaining balance for local= \$16248

- 2110-CD-Software & Licenses-CO*

7. IS 2305

Ms. Rusch said she was confused why the increase was so much. Ms. Haines said 2305 included all classroom teachers' regular and special ed. It included rolling all current teachers a step (roughly 4% steps) and adding the correct COLA - Year 2 of the contract 1.5% on all and an additional 1% on the top step. In addition, there were changes to FY22 that resulted in extra savings (beyond the contract settlement). Ms. Haines talked about the following reductions:

- specialists positions at elementary
- HS WL teacher
- 2 FTE at Middle school team reduction

- o 0.10 FTE adaptive PE reduction
- o 1.0 FTE Special Ed Gateway teacher and any other changes in salary happened due to staff leaving. For example, staff member leaves at Step 12 and the new position is Step 4.

Ms. Haines confirmed adds to 2305 included: Therapeutic Learning Teacher 80K, 1 Elementary Teacher 75K, Specialist configuration TBD (music, library, etc.), pending final elementary enrollments, Funding for Middle School WL, and Lane changes of \$75K

8. A discussion ensued about the differences between the FY21 budget and spending. Ms. Haines said FY21 staffing created a lot of challenges. See as follows:
 Covid had an impact as well as just general staffing changes
 There were 124 Leave of Absence requests in FY2021 vs. 32 in FY2020
 The leave requests may have been a paid leave or a leave without pay.
 There were 82 new hires in FY21 compared to 57 in Fiscal 2020.

Ms. Haines said to answer why there were remaining funds in the 2305 lines, they would have to look at all changes and if they were anticipated vs. unexpected. There also may have been positions unfilled for a variety of reasons. For example, there were changes to the middle school world language after the budget was voted. Any late retirements could account for a portion of the funds remaining.

Ms. Rusch asked about the contracted services and said she thought it was generally for Superintendent searches, which the district was not expecting in FY23. Ms. Haines said the FY23 included the School Committee's PR firm. Ms. Haines said the actuals for FY21 and FY22 had the PR firm contract at \$9,588.

The Committee discussed moving a portion of E&D to the operational budget and stabilization account.

Randee Rusch moved, and William Hackler seconded to vote to approve the District transfer of \$300,000 from E&D to the operational budget and \$300,000 to the stabilization account.

Roll Call Vote:			
Randee Rusch	Yes	Craig Hansen	No
William Hackler	Yes	Lisa Martin	Yes

Vote: The motion unanimously passed 3/1/0.

Mr. Amari thanked the Committee and reassured them he would work closely with the Capital Budget Committee to fulfill the needs of the schools.

Craig Hansen suggested inviting the member town's town managers to Monday's School Committee meeting. It was agreed Robin Eibye would send the invites.

NEXT MEETING

- The Committee agreed to meet again on March 29, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:56 a.m., William Hackler moved, and Randee Rusch seconded to adjourn.

Roll Call Vote:			
Randee Rusch	Yes	Craig Hansen	Yes
William Hackler	Yes	Lisa Martin	Yes

Vote: The motion unanimously passed 4/0/0.

Documents Reviewed / Referred To:

- 2022 03-18 Finance Agenda
- March 1, 2022 Finance Minutes
- March 11, 2022 Finance Minutes
- 2022 03-18 Rande Rusch Questions FY23 Budget
- Credit Opinion – North-Middlesex-Regional-School-District-MA -12Jan22
- GFOA Fund Balance Guidelines
- Moody's Press Release – North Middlesex RSD MA

Respectfully submitted,
Robin Eibye, Recording Secretary

APPROVED: March 29, 2022
