

**WINCHESTER SCHOOL BOARD BUDGET MEETING
OCTOBER 22, 2020
WINCHESTER SCHOOL GYMNASIUM**

Board Members Present: L. Picard, T. Kilanski, J. Rokes, E. Holmes, T. Perkins

Administration Present: K. Dassau, V. Carey, M. Henry

The meeting was called to order at 6:34pm by Chair, L. Picard.

BUDGET DISCUSSION:

L. Picard explained she has double duty tonight; live streaming the meeting. Comments will not be monitored during the meeting.

V. Carey advised class sizes and staffing are more complicated this year than in even in the past.

V. Carey reviewed a handout with the Board regarding staffing options for 2021-2022. There were four options for the Board to review and discuss.

First Scenario:

Kindergarten and First Grade class sizes can't go over 25 students. The Middle School level Science Program with labs, can't go over 24 students. Other Middle School classes are 30 students max. An additional Preschool, additional Kindergarten, and additional First or Eighth Grade teacher would make a total of 21 teachers.

Second Scenario:

Includes additional remote teacher for First and Second Grades and Third and Fourth Grades. If remote learning-only remains an option, anyone who requests it needs to be provided the remote learning option.

Third Scenario:

V. Carey explained there are 29 rooms available for the beginning of next year. However there would be rooms such as Music, Art, Title I that might not be available and teachers would have to make other arrangements.

T. Perkins asked where V. Carey thinks the Board should work from tonight?

V. Carey feels they would have a difficult time getting 32 staff approved from the current 18.

T. Kilanski asked what would happen if we have the best case scenario and don't need additional teachers.

V. Carey advised if no contracts, we wouldn't have to hire additional teachers and monies would be unexpended funds to the bottom line. If we hire additional teachers and contracts are signed would need to keep staff. Money left would go back to offset taxes if the school is not already in a deficit.

V. Carey distributed information to the Board using the best case scenario and explained – includes three additional teachers. In an emergency situation, she would hate to become short; five teachers would be over \$100,000 and then we would need to hurry and find staff.

V. Carey advised there are different options to handle an emergency situation. Would move other items from different areas of the budget, request funds from the Town and require a special meeting. All staff would like in-person learning for all students. They won't know KHS tuition until November.

After discussion there would be \$364,862 overall for an additional 4.5 teachers in Option Two.

T. Kilanski feels it would be good to go to the taxpayers and then say we will return money to the taxpayers if we don't hire staff.

V. Carey – That is the typical process unless there is an emergency.

M. Henry – We don't overspend lines or move money.

K. Dassau – We don't spend; the Board approves how to spend monies.

M. Henry explained, when the kitchen roof leaked there was money in the budget and the request came to the Board and they made their decision.

L. Picard – Scenario Two does not allow us to bring all students back to campus if the distancing requirement is in place.

V. Carey feels Scenario Two is the responsible place to be.

M. Henry will work up the numbers and bring information back for the 11/5 meeting.

After discussion, **L. Picard MOVED to have M. Henry put in play the calculation for Scenario Two with 25.5 teachers; SECONDED by: E. Henry, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

V. Carey continued reviewing the Regular Ed portion of the budget.

The Board will wait to vote on the bottom number until they receive the calculation for the additional staffing.

Specialists:

V. Carey reviewed the Specialists portion of the budget with the Board. She would like the Board to consider a three percent increase for the following individuals: They are not administrators and did not receive an increase this year: Speech & Hearing, two Guidance positions that are not in the Union, the Nurse, OT, Speech Pathologist, Reading Specialist and School Psychologist.

They are continuing to budget for the School Psychologist half from the budget and half from the IDEA grant. The line represents half the salary and benefits if we have our own position. It is now through a contracted service.

An addition of \$2,088.55 is for a 3% increase in salary only for these positions. This amount is the difference between 2.5% percent currently in there and three-percent proposed.

K. Dassau explained Administration is advocating for a Speech Assistant. Even with the 3%, they would make less than \$31,000. If the person left, they estimate paying someone else \$85,000. Administration is asking for \$3,500 additional for market adjustment.

T. Kilanski – So, if we give her 3% she will stay?

K. Dassau advised there is no guarantee; but are you willing to take that chance for \$2,000?

People have a lot of ties; they want to stay in Winchester. Administration doesn't want it to sound like if they don't get a raise they would leave. Not saying the extra percent guarantees they will stay or if not, would leave. These are individuals in critical shortage areas on the front lines.

T. Kilanski advised he is not being negative.

V. Carey – No one is saying that. These are highly skilled staff; would push for 3% for those positions. Any little bit to acknowledge and recognize the job they are doing Administration is going to advocate for.

K. Dassau – Not trying to get the position to an average; would still be below average. Administrators are advocating for their skill and expertise and asking the Board to do that, too.

M. Henry – If we put money into positions through education, etc. and they leave because we pay less, we lose money.

L. Picard – That is also the same in the case of the bond.

K. Dassau explained they are trying to give the Board a heads up; warning them if we lose those people those positions are in the critical shortage area.

After discussion, **T. Perkins MOVED to increase the budget to 3% for the following eight positions; Speech & Hearing, two Guidance positions that are not in the Union, the Nurse, OT, Speech Pathologist, Reading Specialist and School Psychologist, SECONDED by: L. Picard, VOTED: 3-2 (T. Kilanski – no, J. Rokes – no), MOTION PASSED.**

SAU Management Services:

Administration reviewed the SAU Management Services portion of the budget with the Board and answered questions.

After discussion, **L. Picard MOVED to approve the SAU Management Services in the amount of \$290,053; SECONDED by: T. Perkins, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

M. Henry reviewed the Bond with the Board. There is no interest for the next two years. The final payment is due in 2023. The bond payment is \$3,500,000 and \$1,600,000 million in interest. It goes back to Ian Spencer building up the Capital Reserve instead of getting a bond.

M. Henry was told by many other Administrators to never make a bond due in August, December is better.

L. Picard advised there is nothing to do on the bond; just need to pay it.

M. Henry brought figures for the Board to show what a 2.5% increase would look like.

L. Picard MOVED to enter into non-public session at 8:33pm under RSA91-A:3(c) ; SECONDED by: T. Perkins; J. Rokes – yes, T. Kilanski – yes, E. Holmes – yes, T. Perkins – yes, L. Picard – yes, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard MOVED to leave non-public session at 8:45pm; SECONDED by: T. Perkins; J. Rokes – yes, T. Kilanski – yes, E. Holmes – yes, T. Perkins – yes, L. Picard – yes, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:45pm; SECONDED by: T. Perkins, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard encouraged Board members to find Board goals. They are listed on the website under Board documents.

Sincerely,

Peggy Higgins
School Board Secretary