

Minutes
Watertown Board of Education
Budget & Finance Subcommittee Meeting
Monday, February 13, 2017
Watertown High School
Lecture Hall

Members Present: Tom Lambert, Chairman, Budget & Finance Committee
Cathie Rinaldi, Committee Member
Josephine Cavallo - Rosa, Committee Member

Members Absent: Janelle Wilk, Committee Member

Others Present: Dr. Bridget Carnemolla, Superintendent of Schools
Jill Browne, Business Manager
Leslie Crotty, Chairman, Board of Education
Cheryl Albino, Board of Education
Rob Makowski, Board of Education
Vic Vicenzi, Board of Education
Jeff Turner, Director of Technology
Janet Parlato, Director of Curriculum
Ray Ceniccola, Facilities Manager

1. Convene Meeting

Mr. Lambert, Chairman of the Committee, convened the meeting and immediately turned the meeting over to Dr. Carnemolla.

2. Discussion regarding the Proposed District Budget for Fiscal Year 2017-2018

Good evening. I sent the board and updated workshop sheet which is a reflection of where we are since the last time we met. To be frank, there is not a lot to say except for the fact that since we last met, I mentioned that we were expecting a double-digit increase in our health insurance premiums. At that time, we had in our working draft of the budget, a 12% increase and by all indications, that was being conservative. In the meantime, we were updated over the course of several weeks, and finally our health insurance number was given to us, and initially it was about a 23% increase. That on the overall budget would have been about a 5.6% increase. At that time, we were knee-deep in preparing the budget the way we last spoke of and the plan very quickly changed. We knew we would never pass a 5.6% increase in the budget and is not fiscally responsible. We also have the spending cap that the governor had passed via legislation relating to not increasing more than 2 ½% between the Board of Education and the town or risk losing

state funding. For those reasons, we needed to stay below a 2 ½% percent increase. As you can imagine, that has been very difficult. We have had many meetings and telephone conversations with the town and the insurance provider and in the end, we were able to get the premium reduced a bit after forcing the numbers to be gone over and a careful look at who is still participating and so forth, and that brought us down to 18%. An 18% increase over an enormous premium is what it is. The total increase is \$886,297. That number alone will represent a 2.16% increase over the overall budget with everything else at zero. If you look back at the worksheet you will see some of the decisions we had to make and what we may priorities in the budget. The first thing I want to draw your attention to is the contractual agreements for salaries. That represents a 1.06% increase in the overall budget and with putting the health insurance together with the contractual obligation increase; we are at a 3.22% increase in the overall budget. We have mitigated those increases a lot and I will remind you, that this is the second year of the contracts with the teachers and this was the year we expected the very large increase. We have been able to mitigate that increase by the way we have done the hiring over the past two years. I also want to mention that the central office administrator's line is a 0% increase over last year. As you know, we don't have a negotiated bargaining contract, so we are able to do that. These employees are myself, Dr. Parlato, Ms. Browne, and Mr. Turner. Moving forward to the priorities, you can see that we took off the instructional supervisor. We felt that we could absolutely not let go of the mathematics specialist, but if we had not figured out how to pay for that through our grants, we would've had to take that off as well. That person will be paid to our Title II grant. I left the school psychologist on which is an absolute necessity. With the dynamics in the district and the additional special education students that we have received, it was one we had to figure out how to fund. For technology, we had to reduce that line by about \$61,000.

For climates, communications, and safety we left the two way radio improvements because they are necessary and they have been cut from various other budgets. We have also left the nursing coordinator on as that is a small amount to a current employee, and it is a way of returning to our way of doing business in the district. The college and career Center at the high school is a change because at this time we have to look at that to cost nothing. That would have required an additional staff member the way it was originally presented, but now we will have to try and make do with what we have with different configurations. An additional item for the security area is the need for a second entry phone at Judson. Because of the way the office is configured, both secretaries need an entry phone for the front door. This is not an addition to the budget, but something we had not previously discussed.

For facilities, you know that over the past three years we have tried to bring it back up to par from a funding perspective. This year, we will have to reduce the budget overall. Even with the reduction though, there are still some priorities. We will need a floor and tile and carpet cleaner in all of the schools, and we own one right now. This is necessary not only for deep cleaning, but to maintain the floors as well. The zero turn mower is still left on the list because as you know, the one we own is over 16 years old. The walk behind auto scrubber will also need to be replaced at John Trumbull, because of its age. We have taken off the gym floor refinishing. After speaking with the installers, and having them come out to take a look at the floors, we have

determined that this can be put off a little while longer. The scoreboard replacement we were also going to take off but it is needed, not only because it is old, but it is run by a wire that goes through trees and sometimes has issues. It is not appropriate when we are using our stadium for CIAC events. We must have a working scoreboard. We want to replace it with a wireless version that is LED and digital. We were going to take it off because of the price point, however, in the activities line at the high school, anything that has purchased out of it has to be for the direct benefit of students. A scoreboard does qualify, so we feel that this would be a reasonable use of some of the money that is in that line. That is how we will fund the scoreboard. We'll also replace the 2005 pickup. We have two remaining that need to be replaced, and both were originally in the budget, because they are both very old and both continually need repairs, and also I should mention, that last week both trucks were broken into and the plow controllers were stolen. The dashboard and one of them was damaged very badly. There's a reason they stole from the older trucks as they are not alarmed. To least one is \$8500 a year and at the end of four years we will buy the truck for one dollar. So we will purchase one this year and hopefully the second next year.

This is what we have put together for our priorities and this is what we will be presenting to the full board meeting.

3. Adjournment

Mr. Lambert adjourned the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

He then called for a motion to adjourn.

Subject: Motion to Adjourn

Motion Presented by: Ms. Crotty

Motion Seconded by: Mr. Vicenzi

Motion Passed

Respectfully submitted by,

Mindi Davidson

Recording Secretary