

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE JOINT  
MEETING WITH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES  
REMOTE MEETING  
JUNE 16, 2020**

Present: Ms. Kate Bowen, Secretary  
Ms. Amy Checkoway  
Mr. Michael Crowley  
Ms. Tara Donner  
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent  
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent  
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations  
Mr. Michael McAllister, Director of Human Capital

**1. Opening Business**

1.1 Call to order

Catherine Bowen called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

**2. FY20 & FY21 Budget Discussion**

2.1 Renegotiated Special Education van contract reduction (vote)

Superintendent Phelan explained the request for votes on a Special Education transfer and Special Education transportation.

This request is being made to comply with the federal IDEA Maintenance of Effort requirement which was explained by Tony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations at a previous School Committee meeting. The School Committee is being asked to vote on the transfer of \$672,891 from the FY20 School General Fund to the Special Education Reserve Fund.

On a motion offered by Amy Checkoway and seconded by Michael Crowley, it was VOTED unanimously on a roll call vote to approve the transfer of \$672,891 from the School General Fund to the Special Education Reserve Fund.

2.2 Transfer of funds from Special Education to Special Education reserve account (vote)

The School Committee is being asked to approve discounted rates for Special Education transportation providers for days during the FY20 COVID-19 shutdown. The two transportation companies involved in the agreement are Van Pool who is receiving a 37% discount and JSC who is receiving a 22% discount.

On a motion offered by Tara Donner and seconded by Michael Crowley, it was VOTED unanimously on a roll call vote to authorize the School Administration to negotiate discounted payments with the transportation companies as needed.

**3. Resolution for Federal Funding**

Catherine Bowen updated the School Committee on a budget resolution that was put out by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC). She recommended the School Committee take up the newer MASC resolution and stated she will withdraw the current resolution on federal funding at this time, to consider the most recent MASC draft.

Superintendent Phelan suggested the MASC resolution be shared with the School Committee and voted on at the June 29 meeting.

**4. Budget Statement for FY21 Budget Town Meeting Discussion**

Michael Crowley reviewed his drafts on the budget resolution and discussed the different endings. He recommended the final version, which would be presented to Town Meeting. On a motion offered by Tara Donner and seconded by Michael Crowley, it was unanimously on a roll call vote to adopt the Resolution on the FY21 Budget as amended.

**RESOLUTION ON THE FY 2021 BUDGET**

**Whereas**, the Belmont Public Schools represent a critical community service, addressing the educational needs of over 4,700 children and their families; and

**Whereas**, meeting growing enrollment with additional hiring to maintain the quality of educational outcomes for Belmont's children has been a cornerstone commitment of the School Committee and the Belmont community for several years; and

**Whereas**, the level of resources available for the fiscal year 2021 budget prevent the Belmont Public Schools from maintaining levels of service and presents a risk to the educational outcomes of our community's children; and

**Whereas**, re-opening the Belmont schools in the fall of 2020 under continuing Coronavirus pandemic conditions poses considerable financial challenges for which available budget resources may not be sufficient,

**\*THEREFORE**, be it resolved that the Belmont School Committee expresses its deepest reservations and concern about the FY 2021 Budget for the Belmont Public Schools at a time when additional resources are needed to meet continued enrollment growth and plan for the re-opening of schools in the fall under continuing COVID-19 pandemic conditions.

**5. Discussion of Town Meeting Articles and Amendments (vote)**

The School Committee discussed an amendment put forward to Town Meeting by Julie Crockett. The amendment would authorize the transfer of some Free Cash to the School Department budget,

equal to the budgeted four teachers at the Chenery Middle School, while recognizing Town Meeting would not have the authority to dictate how the funds would be used.

The School Committee discussed the budget process and significance of the vote on the budget. On a motion offered by Michael Crowley and seconded by Tara Donner, it was **VOTED** 3-0-1 on a roll call vote to support the amendment.

The School Committee discussed opening remarks to be made at Town Meeting.

**6. Adjourn**

On a motion offered by Amy Checkoway and seconded by Tara Donner, it was voted unanimously on a roll call vote to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by



Catherine Bowen, Secretary