

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES
REMOTE MEETING
DECEMBER 22, 2020**

Present: Ms. Andrea Prestwich, Chair
Ms. Catherine Bowen, Secretary
Ms. Amy Checkoway
Mr. Michael Crowley
Ms. Tara Donner
Ms. Evelyn Gomez
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

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 8:06 a.m.

2. FY21 Bus Fee (Vote)

The Committee discussed the possibility of reducing the bus fee due to a reduction in service. Tony DiCologero presented a report explaining the methodology used to calculate the bus fees. The normal fee for bus transportation is \$575 for the school year. Students are given the choice of riding the bus in the morning, afternoon or both. They also have the option of choosing to ride the bus for the first semester, second semester or both. The district administrators suggested a bus fee of \$100 due to students being in hybrid. This fee would not be refundable. School Committee members debated whether \$100 or something higher. After taking a poll, it was agreed a \$120 non-refundable fee would be best. The cost per ride was noted to be \$1.38.

On a motion offered by Catherine Bowen and seconded by Amy Checkoway, it was VOTED unanimously on a roll call vote to reduce the annual school bus fee for morning and afternoon service for FY21 to \$120 per student. This fee is non-refundable.

3. FY22 Budget Update

The School Committee discussed the strategy related to determining how \$3,000,000 in free cash should be used. Should the Town use the free cash to cover the deficit if the override is not approved or use it for the budget now and ask for a lower override number? If that is the choice the Town makes, an override will be necessary the following year. The school district has gone from being a small district to a medium to large one but has not dealt with infrastructure issues. Class sizes are still large. Mike Crowley offered a review of the last 6 years of positions and rollover, yielding an average of 6% increase year over year, on par with the previous version of the financial task force model that used 5.9% to project staff rollover costs. The modeling group reduced the percentage to 4.9% in the summer. Most

town departments are in need of additional positions, those costs will be more definitively presented in the coming week.

Due to the time, the School Committee did not discuss the Equity Subcommittee agenda item.

4. Equity Subcommittee Update

6. Executive Session

On a motion offered by Tara Donner and seconded by Amy Checkoway, it was VOTED, unanimously on a roll call vote to enter Executive Session at 9:10 a.m.


Catherine Bowen, Secretary

Respectfully Submitted by: