

BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES
REMOTE MEETING
May 18, 2021

Present: Ms. Amy Checkoway, Chair
Ms. Meghan Moriarty, Secretary
Ms. Catherine Bowen
Mr. Michael Crowley
Ms. Andrea Prestwich
Mr. Jamal Saeh
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations

1. Opening Business

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 a.m. as subcommittee.

2. FY21 Budget Closeout

Finance Director DiCologero began his review of the Special Education Out Of District (OOD) tuition costs and several hypothetical scenarios for tuition allocation between the general fund and non-general funds (Circuit Breaker grant, IDEA grant and Special Education reserve fund). Utilizing more Special Education reserve funds would allow other funds to be returned to the Town of Belmont for use as free cash.

The district incurred approximately \$600,000 in expenses due to DESE directives to return to in person learning. Currently, the district is working with the Town Assistant Manager to review what expenses may be charged to the Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act with the knowledge that the anticipated American Recovery Plan (ARP) will allow reimbursement of some expenses incurred since March 2020.

OOD tuition expenses are managed through a 3-year plan and funded by the Circuit Breaker grant, IDEA grant, Town budget and LABBB Collaborative credits. DiCologero reminded everyone that "Maintenance of Effort" mandates that the district spend a certain percentage of expenses from the budget in order to receive funding for the next year(s).

A dialogue of the subcommittee and administration followed regarding the amount the district should keep as a special education carryover balance. Superintendent Phelan commented that previously the administration and Warrant Committee agreed to keep at least one-year Circuit Breaker funds as a minimum guideline, which would be approximately \$1.5M. The State guidelines also recommend a one-year carryover.

Subcommittee Chair Crowley took questions/comments from the public.

Anne Helgen- Asked where the \$640K figure is coming from and what the reserve is for if there are increases in IDEA funding.

The administration reminded the subcommittee that special education expenditures are a fluid process throughout the year. It was determined the Finance Subcommittee would meet again next week to review the Special Education Out Of District three year plan and invite the Warrant Subcommittee for Education to take part in the meeting.

3. FY22 Budget

June 9 is the target date for the School Department's presentation to Town Meeting. The administration is requesting the School Committee review the presentation prior to that date.

4. Federal Funds

Superintendent Phelan reported there is an upcoming Financial Task Force 2 (FTF2) meeting with the Select Board to address new incoming Federal Funds from the American Rescue Plan. Finance Director DiCologero, Superintendent Phelan and Committee member Bowen will be at the meeting. The FTF2 members plan to set guidelines for spending and will decide which fiscal year expenses and categories to target.

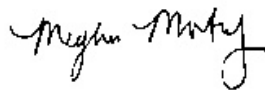
Committee member Bowen recommends including new positions (social workers, summer recovery) in the Town warrant articles, but realizes there is a timing issue with Town Meeting. Bowen also suggested doing a comprehensive long-term inventory of Capital needs in the District. Superintendent John suggests using ARP funds to "bridge services" that will be needed in the fall for students, staff, and families.

5. Adjourn

The Finance Subcommittee adjourned at 9:59 am

On a motion offered by Meghan Moriarty and seconded by Andrea Prestwich, the School Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:59 am and go into Executive Session.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Meghan Moriarty, Secretary