

BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES  
REMOTE MEETING  
May 4, 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 8:04 a.m. as subcommittee.

**2. Identification of Subcommittee Officers**

Nominations for Finance Subcommittee officers were offered for Mike Crowley as Finance Subcommittee Chair, and Meghan Moriarty as Finance Subcommittee Secretary.

**On a motion offered by Jamal Saeh and accepted by Mike Crowley, it was VOTED unanimously on a roll call vote (6-0-0) to nominate Mike Crowley as Finance Subcommittee Chair.**

Meghan Moriarty put herself forward for the position of Finance Subcommittee Secretary.

**On a motion offered by Meghan Moriarty and seconded by Jamal Saeh, it was VOTED unanimously on a roll call vote (6-0-0) to nominate Meghan Moriarty as Finance Subcommittee Secretary.**

*The Warrant Committee Education Subcommittee – Anne Helgen, Geoff Lubien, Liz Goss, Jack Weis, and Paul Rickter- joined the School Committee Finance Subcommittee meeting.*

**3. FY22 Budget Draft 2.0**

The meeting focused on the operating budget in order to prepare for Town Meeting. The Superintendent's recommended FY22 General Fund Reductions draft document was presented, and School Committee recommendations will be incorporated and part of the presentation at the School Committee community forum later in the evening.

The School Administration identified positions they put forward for possible reductions, which totaled in excess of the \$2.07million required to allow for School Committee input. Some positions were identified for retention, such as the district-wide Equity Director, math teacher, foreign language teacher, middle school music/band teacher, librarian, community service coordinator and athletic extra-curricular positions. At the high school level, the administration opted to retain positions (Librarian, Community Service Coordinator) due to higher

enrollment numbers and repurpose them as full time educator (FTE) teaching positions. Unemployment costs were built into salary figures.

Superintendent Phelan gave a detailed list of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities to be reduced, based on the Director of Fine and Visual Arts recommendations. The Athletics Director position will be split into a half time Athletic Director and a half time Health and Wellness Coordinator position, keeping in line with other districts. The athletics recommendation was to restore freshman sports (which was originally set as a reduction) as a social and emotional learning bridge to the high school level. Middle School basketball was reduced, but cross-country restored. Other items such as events manager, uniforms, supplies, scrimmages (which include officials and transportation costs) will be reduced.

After Superintendent Phelan's presentation, the School Committee asked questions and offered their positions on the reductions. It was asked if raising fees would help with the budget and what positions should be prioritized. Committee member Prestwich did not support keeping sports instead of increasing teachers at the middle school level, while most other members thought the reductions were balanced. Committee member Moriarty recommended restoring one of the new elementary special education chairs, seeing as there was a backlog of work last year.

Superintendent Phelan reminded the Committee that his approach was for one year in reductions to keep the structure of all programs for when the district can build the budget up again. He also relayed the importance of the district-wide equity position to carry on with the equity, student access and community partner work the district has done over the last three years.

The subcommittee took questions and comments from the public.

*Lisa Pargoli- Asked what the High School athletic fees are used for and if PTA helps in this regard.*

*Joe Bernard- Voiced support for Equity position and posed the district should ask why do they not need it seeing where other districts do have them.*

*Bill Anderson-Thanked the administration for the level of detail and asked what consideration was given to administration salary reduction.*

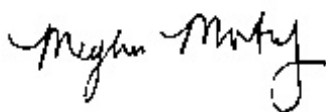
*Idith Haber – Voiced support for keeping academic specialists over making new hires such as the Equity Director.*

*Christine McLaughlin-Asked the district to separate special education needs from equity and noted if people are not for having an Equity Director position they are not necessarily against equity.*

School Committee members requested the budget reductions options menu document be made available to the public before the meeting later that night.

#### **4. Adjourn**

The Finance Subcommittee adjourned at 9:56 am



Respectfully Submitted by:

Meghan Moriarty, Secretary