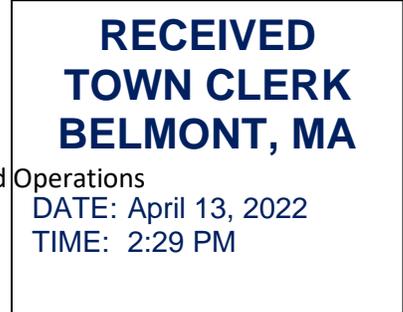


SCHOOL COMMITTEE FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES
REMOTE MEETING
MARCH 2, 2022

Present: Mr. Michael Crowley, FSC Chair
Ms. Meghan Moriarty
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations

Absent: Mr. Jamal Saeh



- 1 Call to Order at 12:06 PM
2. Warrant Committee Questions

Chair Crowley announced this meeting is a working session for the FSC and he will not take public comment. The purpose of the meeting is to review questions that were raised during the Warrant Committee meeting on February 16th.

Tony DiCologero presented the following responses to the questions recorded by Meg Moriarty, who attended the WC meeting:

Why has the proposed budget gone up \$10 M over 3 years?

This is currently under review. Please keep in mind that the FY23 Budget, prior to adding 6.2 General Fund FTEs, was lower than the FTF2 by more than \$200K.

Nonrecurring costs

- What was in the FY22 budget that will not carry over in the FY23 budget?
 - 13.10 FTEs that were added as intra-year positions only in FY22 are not being carried over in the FY23 General Fund Budget
 - These 13.10 FTEs were not in the FY22 Budget last spring
 - They are new positions added during and for FY22 only in response to student needs identified during the summer and fall of 2021
 - They are being treated as non-recurring positions, as they are funded from a non-recurring source, namely the projected FY22 General Fund Budget intra-year staff exchange savings
- What are all of the nonrecurring costs in the proposed budget (i.e. tents, 1-year positions, etc.)?
 - “Proposed budget” is interpreted to mean the FY23 Budget
 - Neither tents nor one-year positions are included in Draft 1 of the FY23 General Fund Budget
 - Non-recurring costs currently being charged to the FY22 General Fund Budget include
 - Large outdoor function tents
 - Intra-year positions, which expired on or before 6/30/22

13 FTEs

- What is the total dollar amount of these positions?
 - The anticipated cost of the 13.10 positions, if all were filled upon the date of approval is \$461K (\$340K salaries, \$121K health insurance)
 - A number of positions, although posted, were not hired, based largely on lack of applicants
 - The cost of the portion of the 13.10 positions hired, based on their respective hire dates is \$XX (\$XX salaries, \$XX health insurance)
- What is the total dollar amount and benefits of the approved positions by the SC that were hired?
 - The total estimated costs of health insurance for the 13.10 positions approved, based on the then anticipated intra-year start date is \$121K in one-time costs
- What are the separation costs?
 - Use of nonrecurring funds in the budget is a concern without knowing how the “cuts” (of FTEs hired for 1 or 2 years) hits us.
 - Employees hire letters state the school year of hire only

Add more visibility to the turn over savings in the salary lines (\$700,000).

- How is the turnover savings impacting the school budget going forward?
 - The FY23 Budget includes the following employees as it relates to turnover
 - Employees who are new for FY22 and have replaced employees who left during or before FY22
 - The new employees are included in the FY23 Budget
 - All staff exchange savings or cost is recognized in the FY22 Budget year
 - Employees who are on leave in FY22, covered by a substitute in FY22
 - Employees on leave are expected back for FY23 and are included in the FY23 Budget
- How do we plan to spend this money?
 - We intend to continue to operate as needed, with any unused funds turned-back to the Town at the end of the fiscal year
 - As noted in the accompanying memo to the Q2 report and in the comments in presenting the Q2 during the 2/23/22 Finance Subcommittee meeting, we are awaiting an amount to identified, representing Belmont’s share of closing costs for EDCO Collaborative; this amount, once identified, would reduce the School Department’s projected ending balance
- What would this number have been if we did not approve hiring 13 FTEs?
 - The estimated cost of the portion of the 13.10 positions hired this year is \$XX (salary plus benefits)
 - We could infer that, had we not hired these positions, the School Department projecting ending balance would increase approximately by this amount (\$XX), subject to the possibility of spending on non-salary expenses to help manage the underlying student needs, had we not hired these one-year positions
- Can this money be used to hire the proposed, incremental positions?

- These funds (i.e. FY22 projected General Fund savings) are being used to do just that for FY22
- Any unspent funds at the end of FY22 are turned-back to the Town at the end of FY23; FY22 General funds cannot be used to hire positions for FY23

SPED contracted positions

- What is the cost of the contract positions versus the FTEs, broken out by health insurance, benefits, separation costs?
 - The two additional FTEs for behavioral practitioners in the FY23 Budget is \$180K (\$72K each for salary and \$18K each for health insurance)
 - We are paying for approximately 70 hours per week for behavioral services for contract providers
- Can the money used to currently contract out these positions be reallocated to hire the FTEs?

To Do: Tony will do additional Staff Exchange calculations and present them to the FSC next week. He will confirm the number of employees from the 13.1 new temp hires who took Health Insurance and, get back to the SC with the hourly rate for contract workers compared with that of these 1 year employees.

Communication of the Budget

- How can we ensure that the budget book is made available to all WC members and on the website before the meeting?
 - The expectation to have the budget book available to Warrant Committee and Select Board members prior to the 2/16/22 joint meeting was not communicated to the School Department
 - In previous years, the School Department budget book was handed out at the joint meeting
 - The School Department did send approximately 24 FY23 Budget Books to the Town Administrator's Office on the afternoon of the joint meeting; and while we did not intend for that to be enough time for board members to obtain a budget book prior to the joint meeting, it has not been expected in previous years
 - Also, it seemed premature to publish a budget document on the website prior to the joint presentation

Mike Crowley suggests that the district hire

- ***data analyst to capture student outcomes including SEL,***
- ***a budget professional to help Tony organize and communicate the budget to ensure that the budget is better understood by the public, and***
- ***Social workers***

John Phelan notes he is asking to hire a temp position to help with the reconfiguration plan for the schools.

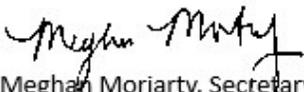
3. FY23 Budget –Potential Adjustments

John Phelan acknowledged that the WC wants the schools to cut from the proposed budget. He notes that \$150 K has been cut from the General Fund which included nursing supplies and technology, which were covered with federal COVID funds. If the district has fewer students enrolling, he suggested that additional reductions in staff and/or supplies are possibilities. There is also a possibility of combining classes but noted that the HS did not see a reduction in enrollment. He will work on other options and present them to the FSC noting that if the ARPA funds promised by the Town for the Schools does not get allocated, the district will need to reallocate ESSR funds.

4. Adjourned by Mike Crowley at 1:03 PM

Next meeting: March 8, 2022

Respectfully Submitted by:


Meghan Moriarty, Secretary