

Minutes – Wayland School Committee Finance Subcommittee  
May 23, 2019

A meeting of the School Committee's Finance Subcommittee was called to order at 10:08 AM by Kathie Steinberg.

Present were:

Kathie Steinberg, Chair  
Ellen Grieco

Also present:

Susan Bottan, Business Administrator  
Arthur Unobskey, Superintendent

1. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

2. Financial Matters

a. Discussion of Financial Summit for 2021 Budget Process

Susan reported that the town is planning a Financial Summit for the 2021 Budget Season. The schools and town will be working on the multi-year models over the summer months and anticipate a group meeting of the boards/commissions in September, similar to last year. Susan also recommends that the town adopt a similar capital budgeting process to the successful operating budget process from last year.

Susan will begin working on the multi-year model to incorporate the current financial information. The committee discussed adjustments to the model to reflect the increased costs for maintenance and repairs as well as any adjustments that may emerge from the Long-Term Strategic Budgeting (LTSB) process. Currently, there are proposals being reviewed by Administrative Council that may involve a reassignment of resources or additional resources that will need to be added to the budget.

The committee discussed different options to communicate these changes to the School Committee and the town (Fin Com, Board of Selectman, Finance Director, Town Administrator), and eventually to the community at large. A quarterly report to the School Committee was discussed, and Ellen volunteered to work with Arthur to prepare the information. Kathie will present the idea to the School Committee at the June 3 meeting for feedback.

Susan reported that Jay Sullivan from DESE was interested in our multi-year projection model to present to MASC and MASS. He may ask members of the School Committee to share their experiences as more districts become involved in multi-year budgeting.

Susan is also working to better understand Chapter 70 funding and has reached out to Jay Sullivan at DESE and Rob O'Della. Funding is voted by the state legislators over the summer.

Susan also recommends a review of the School Committee guideline language to align with the current philosophy that 1) reflects the Committee's renewed commitment to

take care of its assets; 2) recognizes/quantifies the costs associated with maintenance and repair deferrals; and 3) proposes to fully fund these costs. Susan will also review the language to reference the legal requirements of the School Committee, as defined by Massachusetts General Laws, to clarify with other town committees and boards. Susan will prepare some language for the Finance Subcommittee to review at its next meeting.

b. Quarter 3 Financial Report and End-of-Year Status

Susan reported that the Maintenance and Repair budget is \$360K over budget due to a number of unanticipated expenses related to the Loker roof, HVAC, electrical, air quality, and several other expenditures detailed in prior reports. Some of this overage is offset by utility savings as well as a surplus in the Personnel budget related to unissued degree changes. The wastewater and phone (VERIZON) budgets were also higher than expected and Susan is reviewing those further.

Susan reported that several High School technology items are failing and need to be replaced, including the auditorium sound system, classroom voice lift systems to accommodate hard of hearing students, and some of the AV equipment. If any funds are available at year end, they will be used for these purposes, and for some additional items that have been identified.

Susan anticipates that the school department will break even for FY2019. She will give her full report to the School Committee at one of the June meetings.

c. Summer Capital and Maintenance Projects

Susan detailed the process by which the summer work will be scheduled. She has accumulated a large spreadsheet detailing the various projects and will meet with the principals who will prioritize the projects at each building.

The committee discussed the issues surrounding the multi-year scheduling of some of the larger projects. There is concern that this has proven to be more costly and definitely less efficient. In addition, it has been very disruptive at the building level to have the projects extend over so many years. Susan is working with the town administrator to develop a better model.

d. Discussion of 2021 Capital Request Process

Susan would like to propose that the capital budgeting process follow the operating budget process and will bring this up as part of the Financial Summit discussion. She envisions a more standardized capital process that follows along with the operating budget process. The process felt very disjointed and confusing last year. Capital requests were finalized by departments and due to Fin Com in mid-September, but were not discussed or voted on until January.

The process might benefit from having a similar timeline and type of discussion as the operating budget, more clarity on the decision-making process, and specific guidelines. The subcommittee will bring this to the School Committee for further discussion, including a discussion regarding the multi-year scheduling of capital projects.

e. Update on the OPEB payments and Special Fund Balances

The town administrator will be looking at the entire structure of OPEB during the upcoming year.

3. Administrative Matters

a. Future Agenda Topics and Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, June 11 @ 10 AM.

b. Outstanding Projects

Susan will be participating in the final interview for the Payroll/Benefit position. The MUNIS upgrade continues and is in the final stage of cleaning up the data. An intern will help with data verification. The bus routes are almost completed and will include a stop at the library for those MS/HS buses that proceed up Route 126.

4. Matters Not Anticipated by the Chair

There were none.

5. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

6. Approval of Minutes

Upon a motion made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the Finance Subcommittee voted to approve the April 4, 2019 minutes as presented. The meeting minutes for January 24, 2019 had previously been approved and were included on the agenda in error. The meeting minutes for March 6, 2019 will be considered at a future date.

7. Adjournment

Upon a motion made by Ellen Grieco, seconded by Kathie Steinberg, the Finance Subcommittee voted (2-0) to adjourn the meeting at 12:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathie Steinberg

*Corresponding documents*

Agenda

Summary Five Year Capital Improvement Requests for FY2020-2024