Notice of Public Meeting – (As required by G.L. c. 30A, c §18-25)
BOARD: School Committee - SPECIAL MEETING
DATE: March 2, 2020
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: School Committee Room, 123 Cambridge Street, Burlington, MA

AGENDA*

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Public Participation
3. Old Business
4. New Business
   a). Student Opportunity Act
   b). 2020-2021 BHS School Choice – Public Hearing
   c). BHS Planning for Success – First Reading
5. Public Participation
6. Adjournment

*Agenda subject to change
Chair Martha Simon called this special meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:00 p.m. in the School Committee Room, Administration Offices, 123 Cambridge Street, Burlington, Massachusetts. Present: Mrs. Christine Monaco, Mr. Thomas F. Murphy, Jr., Mrs. Kristin Russo, and Mr. Stephen Nelson. Superintendent Eric Conti, Assistant Superintendent Patrick Larkin, Business Manager Nichole Coscia, and Director of Operations Bob Cunha also present.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ways & Means

Announcements

Members Susan Harrigan, John Iler, and Jaya Voruganti present.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

2020-21 BHS School Choice - Public Hearing

Moved by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mrs. Monaco to open the public hearing for 2020-21 BHS School Choice; motion carried 5-0-0. Dr. Conti stated that Burlington has participated in school choice for the past 12 years and BHS Principal Sullivan is again seeking to replicate the current limited school choice program at BHS by admitting non-Burlington students for a maximum of ten students in grade 9, five students in grade 10, five students in grade 11 and five students in grade 12. Principal Sullivan stated that new school choice students are not accepted until all Burlington students have been enrolled into the fall course schedule, they typically admit 4 or 5 students in grade 9, depending upon how many applications they receive. He further explained that approximately $3,500 is received for each school choice student, which is in a revolving account. The School Committee members were in support of this program. Moved by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mrs. Monaco to close the public hearing for the 2020-21 BHS School Choice public hearing; motion carried 5-0-0. Moved by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mrs. Monaco to approve for 2020-21 limited school choice at BHS by admitting non-Burlington resident students for a maximum of ten students in grade 9, five students in grade 10, five students in grade 11, and five students in grade 12.

BHS Planning for Success - First Reading

Principal Sullivan reviewed the Planning for Success 2019-22 document for the high school which was included in the Committee’s packet; his review encompassed the overall three strategic objectives for Learning, Equity, and Culture & Relationships. The objectives included detailed initiatives, strategies and outcomes by 2022. In response to Mrs. Russo, Mr. Sullivan replied that the new flex block scheduled for the fall will happen on Tuesday and Thursday for 30 minutes during which students can schedule extra support and enrichment. In response to Mrs. Monaco, Mr. Sullivan explained that seniors spend the last 6 weeks of school participating full time in an internship and if students are enrolled in AP courses, they are responsible for attending that class each day. Around 200 seniors are participating this year and 43 students are not participating. The Superintendent commented that BHS teacher Shereen Tyrell, with her computer science industry connections, has set up a reverse internship where employees of for example Oracle come to BHS to work with senior interns. The Committee commented: expressed satisfaction to see the Planning for Success becoming more defined over the years as well as providing continuity, an internship is great way for students to finish their high school career and they liked the focus on post graduate experiences, as well as the chance for students to be able to explore fields/careers they may be interested in. As this is a first reading, the School Committee will take this under advisement and vote on it at the March 10 meeting.

FY21 Draft Budgets

Student Information Office

Robyn Miliano Student Information Office Manager stated that this non-salary budget was down by 3% for a total of $100,300, a decrease of -$3,250. The $25,000 in contracted services for Aspen is to customize modules for RtI and ELL reporting. The Committee thanked Mrs. Miliano for doing a great job.
Music

Music Director John Middleton stated that his non-salary budget is up 21.71% to $107,825. The largest increase of $8,000 is in contracted services to produce a middle school play as well as an additional $7,200 for musical supplies at BHS. Band Director Sean Buchsbaum explained the $7,200 will cover expenses such as uniforms, awards, trophies, instrumental accessories, music stands, paint, etc. Mr. Middleton is not requesting any new staff positions. In response to Mrs. Russo, Ms. Coscia explained that currently revolving account expenses for both athletics and music operate similarly. In response to Mr. Iler, Dr. Conti explained the musical and high school program is funded through the operating budget. Dr. Conti further explained if there is a middle school play next year, it will not be funded through ticket sales and they want middle school students to participate and to not limit participation by having to purchase a ticket.

BHS

Principal Sullivan stated the BHS non-salary budget is up 11% an increase of $28,248 to $276,680. The largest increases are in the area of Principal’s Office contracted services a 23% increase of $29,245. These increases were: BHS Internship program $1,500, software to schedule students into flex period $4,000, Kaplan test prep services $9,995, enrollment fee for students in Virtual High School courses $11,250 and the BHS summer reading program expenses of $2,500. Principal Sullivan is also requesting new staff: a computer science teacher, an English tutor, four stipends to work on the new BHS advisory program with one stipend per grade, and a Grade 6-12 Curriculum Coordinator/Special Programs Director. In response to Mr. Iler’s questions about textbook expenses of $27,060, Principal Sullivan explained that the high school uses teacher created curriculum in Google docs but also needs to purchase/replace some textbooks, particularly in Advanced Placement courses. In response to Mr. Iler, Dr. Conti replied that the Evening Academy Program has been moved to a different area of the budget. In response to Mr. Iler, Principal Sullivan will check on expenses for the Principals Office for 2 summer institute expenses of $3,820 and $3,000 to see if they are duplicates and also if the social studies expense of zero for Scantron maintenance is correct. Chair Simon indicated that bottled water is one of her pet peeves and would it be possible to use filtered or Brita water in place of plastic water bottles to reduce the carbon footprint at the high school as well as the cost. Principal Sullivan stated that in the office area those options are not currently convenient however, they can look at other areas.

Guidance

Guidance Services Coordinator Joe Attubato explained the draft non-salary budget increased by 16.65% an increase of $4,369 to $26,242. The largest increase was in the area of equipment: $1,500 for a dual monitor for Mr. Attubato and $3,000 for long conference tables to be used for A.P. testing and other programs. In reply to Dr. Conti, Mr. Attubato stated that the Naviance system has been used by guidance since 2006 but they are also looking at other products and class section counts for next fall will be available in mid-April.

Athletics

This budget was level funded in the non-salary area. In response to Mr. Iler, Ms. Coscia will research the catastrophic athletic & student accident insurance expense of $7,686 and will also ascertain if the $15,536 laundry reconditioning expense has been removed from the budget.

Art

This budget is level funded in the non-salary area. A .4 art teacher is being requested for a part time teacher at Francis Wyman; this is the restoration of a position that was not filled after a retirement. BEA President Diana Marcus spoke in support for the restoration of this art position as Francis Wyman is understaffed this year and the teacher load is 20% more than in schools of the same size.

Physical Education & Health

This budget is level funded in the non-salary area. In response to Mr. Iler, Principal Sullivan replied that the refurbished outdoor Project Adventure course is well equipped and shouldn’t require additional equipment at this time. Mr. Cunha noted that there are also two indoor aspects to this phys ed offering including a rock climbing wall at the middle school and climbing apparatus at BHS. In response to Mr. Iler, Dr. Conti replied that the IHT Spirit System for $15K is geared more toward elementary students.

Elementary Science Center

The Science Center budget is level funded in the non-salary area.
The Superintendent explained that updates regarding coronavirus will be disseminated online and a letter to parents will be emailed tonight or tomorrow. A meeting with town, police, fire, and the board of health was held and the town has put updated information on their webpage. At this point, schools are not expected to close; however, a decision would be made with the Board of Health if there are confirmed coronavirus cases in Burlington. Nurse Leader Barbara Conley is monitoring the situation daily with the local board of health as well as getting updates from the CDC.

Moved by Mr. Nelson and seconded by Mrs. Monaco to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m.; motion carried 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Gilbert
Recording Secretary

Date submitted: 5/12/20
Date approved: 5/12/20