DEPT./BOARD:  Ways and Means School Subcommittee  
DATE:    April 23  
TIME:    3:30 PM  
PLACE:     via Webex  

Meeting number (access code): 715 699 128  
Meeting password: wednesday  

Thursday, April 23, 2020  
3:30 pm  |  (UTC-04:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  |  2 hrs  

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Agenda  

School Operating and Accommodated Budgets  
Discuss any outstanding items
Ways and Means School Subcommittee Minutes  
Thursday, April 23, 2020, 3:30pm.  
All participants via video/phone conference due COVID-19 pandemic

Present
Members: Diane Creedon, Susan Harrigan, John Iler, Robert Neufeld, Jayashree Voruganti  
Administration: Dr. Eric Conti, Nichole Coscia, Bob Cunha  
School Committee: Thomas Murphy, Stephen Nelson, Martha Simon (joined 4:00p) 

Discussion

[Conti] The proposed FY21 operations budget has been reduced to FY20+3.75% guideline. Two nurses are the only new FTEs. All other proposed hires have been removed.  
It is likely teachers will agree to a one year contract with a 2.5% increase which removes the largest budget uncertainty and is consistent with the budget plan. The clerical contract is still open, but is a smaller total line item. There is still uncertainty as to costs that may be incurred with SPED Summer program and how things will go in the Fall. 

There was general discussion the operations budget and concern for the future. The ongoing open item list (see end of minutes) was discussed and updated.  
[Neufeld] Will stipends be paid for Spring sports that are not happening?  
[Conti] Yes, agreed to as part of the contract negotiations, but Fall stipends are TBD.  

[Creedon] Asked what issues may result from the reduced hiring and if the two planned hires (nurses) were the highest priority. Conti discussed and confirmed hiring priorities.  

[Coscia] Worked with 7 school business managers to discuss a consistent plan for transportation payments during the COVID shutdown, in order to help ensure survival of our vendor company. It is likely that payments will be 78% of the full amount. Transportation company employees will remain employed and outside reimbursements and aid to the vendor will reduce BPS payments.  

[Harrigan] Repeated concern about $14k budget to transport 3 students to Minuteman. This is arranged by BPS and is not an assessment from Minuteman. [Conti] Working with other Shawsheen communities to see if can find common solution for Minuteman. [Coscia] to find out what study area students are taking that is not covered by Shawsheen.  

[Harrigan] Highlighted concern about revenues from last night’s Ways&Means meeting and the possible need to reduce both capital operating spending in the future. [Conti] already reviewing capital projects with School Committee.  

[Coscia] Proposed accommodated budget has increased due to reducing the estimated state Circuit Breaker reimbursement from 70->65% (different assumption for transportation). This increases the AA budget to FY20+5.0% (relative to guideline of FY20+6.36%).  

[Conti] Residential SPED students are no longer ‘residential’ (have been sent home).
[Harrigan] Community custodial warrant article has not been voted upon. Discussion on surplus in FY20 article.

[Conti/Coscia] Verified that probably have enough net rental income to cover Summer custodial costs.

[Iler] Noted earlier comment that Spring stipends are being paid as part of contract negotiations. Expressed concern about any stipends paid in the future for work that is not actually done (e.g. sports or clubs that did not have activities due to COVID restrictions).

[Harrigan] Scheduled next meeting for April 30, 3:30pm. [Iler] to create Webex. Plan to vote on operating and accommodated budgets and remaining warrants. This will be after April 28 School Committee vote and before May 6 full Ways&Means vote.

The ‘open item’ list below was discussed and updated.

**Open items: (added to and updated list started in March 5 minutes)**

Coscia: Provide list of stipends for athletics/clubs. List to include amounts, actual staffing with longevity.
Closed 04/23/20: List in 04/22/20 Coscia email
Note: ‘matching plan’ stipends $90k is for retirement plans and is unrelated to other stipends.

Conti: Document stipends associated with MSMS musical in draft budget.
Closed 04/23/20. If musical occurs, the plan is to run it without any new stipends.

Closed 04/23/20. Coscia: All devices are for twelve months of service. Some of the plans are $55/month, others are $75.

Coscia: Review p149 Art supplies and understand why Pine Glen is much higher per capita than other elementary schools. May be related to SPED programs.
Closed 04/23/20. PG art budget explained in 03/31/2020 Coscia email forwarded from George Ratkevich (Visual Art Program Coordinator). PG rotation teaches Art art 2x every 6 days, so $ are in line with student-days relative to other schools.

Conti: Provide detail on budget p168 PD $47k (# of people, for what?)
Closed in 04/22/20 email. This includes memberships/conferences;
American Association of School Administrators
BACC Membership Dues
Coffee/refreshments for admin council meetings
EdTech Conference
Mass Facilities Adm Association
MASC membership dues
Mass Assoc of School Supt dues
Mass Assoc of School Supt Meetings/summer institute/executive institute
Mass Partnership for Youth | School Safety Summit

Merrimack Valley Superintendent Association | Meeting Registration

NESDEC Affiliation Fee

New England Assoc of School Superintendents | Membership dues

Coscia: Review Athletics insurance item and check to see if current approach is more cost effective than adding to Town main policy. Nelson notes that schools/charitable organizations generally have their liability limited to $100k per incident. See [https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartIII/TitleII/Chapter231/Section85K].

Open

Coscia: Provide list of grant/aid and other revenue estimates. Estimated to be ~$1.1M for entitlements and ~$100k other.

Closed in 04/22/20 Coscia email.

Estimated to be ~$1.1M for entitlements and ~$100k other.

Conti: If included in final budget, provide # devices in budget p136 IHT Spirit system and describe ongoing costs.

Closed in 04/22/20 Coscia email. $15035 includes 80 devices (= $188 average)

Per Matt Jackling; This cost would cover approximately three different schools, albeit there is some variance in how we plan to proceed with it. We are focused on using them at two elementary (which for next year is planning to be FW and Mem), which equates to two sets of 25 devices. Additionally, this will also include a 30 device set that we have some flexibility in regards to location. Before all the COVID-19 reaction, I was talking with teachers at both the high school and the middle school who were interested, so this 30 device set may go to either. Also, please note that the cost includes all licensed software, online training for staff, the classroom reader, and the storage/charging system for each set.

Coscia: Provide previous years’ warrant status (amount spent, closed, etc.)

Closed in 04/22/20 Coscia email. List includes a total of $896k allocated but not yet spent

Cunha: Provide 10 year capital plan with understanding it is evolving.

Closed 04/23/20. See Town 10 year plan.

Conti: Provide student counts for the following programs

Closed 04/23/20:

DSC: 25 students
HS Connections: 5 students
LABBB (number of BPS students in program and total LABBB students served by BPS):
41 Students anticipated to be enrolled in LABBB Programs in FY21. Of the 41, 8 are attending LABBB programs located in Burlington Schools.
I checked with LABBB—there are 32 students (Burlington and non-Burlington) that are currently enrolled in LABBB Programs located in Burlington.
Coscia: Resend breakdown of baseline FY20 Operating and Accommodated budgets. This will include allocation of transportation increase and subsequent decrease.
Closed 03/06/2020 – Coscia resent and Iler confirmed budget baselines are consistent with this.

Iler: Budget p8 L65 transportation assumes minimum increase of 1.5%. Noted that COLA should not be applied to mileage rates. Doublecheck CPI increase.
Closed 03/10/2020: Iler confirmed 1.5% is a good projection

Adjourned 4:23pm

Iler to email minutes to meetings@burlington.org