

Regional School Committee Meeting
minutes 11/19/2008

Present

Ellen Williamson, Rainie Pearson, Bev Madden, Clare Graham, Richard Robinson, Nate Van Duzer (arrival 7pm)

Others Present Valerie Spriggs- Superintendent, Richard Mathieu- Business Manager, Denise Lonergan –HS Headmaster, Frederick Randall –MS Headmaster, Paige Hamilton (Student), teachers, community members and Sherborn Advisory, Dover Warrant

Called to order at 6:30pm.

- 1. HS Latin course for 2009-2010-** Due to the AP Board’s cancellation of the AP course, Ms. Lonergan proposed a new course –Advanced Topics in Latin Poetry at the Honors level, which results in an increase of 0.2 FTE. Alternative course arrangements, costs and class sizes were discussed.

Ms. Pearson made a motion to approve a new course “Advanced Topics in Latin Poetry” at the honors level. This approval is subject to FY ‘10 budget approval. Ms Madden seconded.
08-62 Vote: unanimous in favor

- 2. Parking Lot Bids-** Mr. Mathieu provided an overview of the parking lot bids. These bids were lower than expected and the project should start as soon as possible. The project should take 1 - 2 weeks to complete.
- 3. Budget Overview-** Mr. Mathieu began the review of the proposed FY10 budget by saying that this budget was prepared with financial constraints in mind. It is a low increase for a “first pass” at the budget -5% increase. Historically, 1st drafts of the budget have shown about a 7% increase.

Note, SPED costs are divided among multiple cost centers as well as in the SPED section, but each is included only once in total.

Ms Spriggs indicated a desire and need to review stipends which are in the teacher’s contract and those that are not. She would like to bring before the Committee a summary of whom and how stipends are paid as well as any recommendations from the administration.

The budget was then reviewed by sub section with the following comments of note

#4 contracts to be agreed in FY10- secretary unsettled; food, support and custodial contracts; legal services shows Regional regular and special education costs

#5 Supt. Office shows reserve as a consolidation of contingencies including health care; this section included TEC assessment

#6 Info Tech is level funded due to recommendations of former IT Director; software expense will vary by # of students

#7 School Leadership- includes student success program

#8 Curriculum Leaders and Dept Heads –per contract

#9 Teachers –does not include retirements, deadline of Feb 1 for teachers to notify Supt.

- #10 Instructional Coord/Team Leaders-per contract, down from 3.5% increase; substitutes level funded, balances with maternity leaves
- #11 Librarians –reduction in Asst as no extra weeks included
- #12 Professional Development –per contract summer per diem work is \$145 or \$150 day, Middle School reduced days requested
- #13 Textbooks – books are on a rotation replacement schedule and often rebound, new texts for Honors 2 World History; discussion on the use of online texts

- #15 Instructional Equipment- reduction in maintenance
- #16 General Supplies-minimal increase
- #18 Classroom IT-level funded, as agreed last year high school language lab to be upgraded
- #20 Med/Health Services- removed nurses aide, athletic office (qualified school nurse) to provide 1 hour services each school day
- #21 Transportation –will run the remainder of the contract which had no fuel escalation clause,
- #22-Athletics –no new teams, Freshman baseball, girls soccer, JV hockey and..... not carried forward to budget as per individual votes
- #23 Other student activities- advisors paid as per contract
- #24 Custodial services-custodial overtime increased due to the length of the school year due to how the holidays fall which leaves a shorter summer period to be ready for the opening of school; painting is being done in house to save money; using outside help for stadium field; waste water increase due to consulting and testing regarding chemicals
- #25 Utilities-historically was under funded, now up to date

Ms Graham left meeting at 8:30pm Mr. Robinson continued with minutes.

Mr. Robinson suggested taking a look in the long-term at shifting vacations to allow school during the April period, when heating costs are lower, and taking that time off in the winter. It was noted that the buildings traditionally remain open (and heated) during vacations. A past parent survey indicated parents were not interested in combining the two week-long vacations.

Ms. Spriggs indicated more research was needed on telephone bills.

Tab 26: Retirement costs will be shown as flat until the actual arrives later this year. Workman's compensation is large due to 2 ongoing cases. These will diminish over the course of several years. The unemployment trust fund expense is not shown here, because it is now off budget. The figures are looked at during the audit process. The increase in health insurance is budgeted at 10%. Some of this expense is budgeted within the reserve fund, not in this tab.

Tab 28: Debt—Mr. Robinson asked whether we might present the debt projections visually to see how it will change over the coming years. It was noted that the Medfield land is almost paid off.

Tab 29: SPED: spending on an additional aide at the MS will be taken from a grant, and is therefore not on budget. It was noted that home tutoring is sometimes required when a student is out of school for a certain number of days. Director Pam Travers has been meeting with elementary school faculty to anticipate needs of incoming students.

General comments

Mr. Van Duzer noted that the combined expenses in tabs 26-28 account for about 30% of the budget, and that these are locked-in expenses.

Ms. Madden suggested adding a column on the right-hand side of budget summary pages to accommodate explanatory notes. Mr. Mathieu noted it may not work in the Budget Sense program, but it may be possible to add in.

In response to a question from Ms. Pearson, it was noted that percentage distributions for shared positions are shown on the payroll detail page.

Ms. Spriggs noted that departments have already considered the anticipated tight budget, and generally have not submitted for requests. Ms. Spriggs expects no increase in state aid for the coming year. Budgets must be submitted to both towns by the end of December. Ms. Spriggs asked committee members to review the budget and send thoughts and questions to her.

December Agenda Items

Budget discussion

Assistant superintendent—RSC goal

Bond allocation issue—it was noted that Sherborn selectmen aim for resolution of this issue by the end of December.

Questions, if any, on Ms. Spriggs's entry plan

Proposal from Paul McGowan

Policy committee update

Technology manager update

Communications—RSC goal

Other items

The issue of administration building repairs was discussed. It was noted the buildings belong to the region, though it may be possible to find a method to share repair costs nonetheless.

The question was raised whether the RSC can use excess building project money. This may require both towns to authorize a reallocation of the money.

Mr. Robinson suggested putting a discussion of the athletic fee structure on the agenda for an upcoming meeting. No action was taken.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Clare Graham, Secretary and Richard Robinson