

Approved February 5, 2015

**Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District
Office of the Superintendent
Wenham, Massachusetts 01984**

Date: January 16, 2015
To: School Committee Members
From: Michael Harvey, Superintendent of Schools
Re: Thursday, January 22, 2015

FY16 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING @ 6:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER: Bill Wilson called the **PUBLIC MEETING TO ORDER** @ 6:35 p.m. in the Buker Elementary School Multi-Purpose Room for public comment on the FY16 budget.

- Michelle Bailey (Remington Rd., Wenham) thanked the school committee on behalf of parents and Support Our Schools related to the team teaching model. She asked how the new schedule would work and where additional teachers would go. Will it impact where special ed services are delivered?
- Jeff answered her question about the number of students accepted into the school choice program currently that 98 are enrolled. The new schedule assumes the budget will bring 11 in to the freshman class and 24 will graduate

ADJOURNMENT OF PUBLIC HEARING MEETING @ 7:03 p.m.

REGULARLY SCHEDULED SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

CALL TO ORDER: Bill Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. in the Buker Elementary School Multi-Purpose Room.

Present: Bill Wilson, Larry Swartz, Barbara Lawrence, Sheila MacDonald, Deb Evans, and Jeanise Bertrand

Absent: Roger Kuebel, Stacey Metternick

Others Present: Michael Harvey and Jeffrey Sands; Student Representative Dana Valletti arrived at 7:00

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE all rose for the Pledge of Allegiance

Citizens Comments:

- John Mulvihill (Arbor St., Wenham) expressed concerns regarding the issue of graduation being held at Gordon College asking if there have been any acts of injustice; is the concern that a small group of people don't like Christian values? Is the 1st Amendment at risk because of their religious intolerance? There is a long-standing good relationship at risk and he asks the School Committee to think about it.
- Don Mackintosh (Puritan Road, Wenham) was concerned with the inequality of class sizes in the elementary schools, especially at Buker where there is a disproportionate number of students. He said there formerly was a teaching assistant in large classes.
- Andrew Beckwith (Batchelder Park, Wenham) stated the SC would be reading the Home School policy that differs from the state policy and is more restrictive. He requests the

committee involve home school parents in the discussion and review that the policy is legally accurate.

NEW BUSINESS

A. REVIEW OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM & DEPARTMENTAL BUDGETS (Exhibit H)

Jeff took a moment to level set and review what has been talked about at the last few meetings. Jeff reviewed the steps broken down on the level-services budget with priority overlays resulting in a net increase of \$923,050 or 3.25% versus FY15 Budget.

▪ PRIORITY OVERLAYS, INCLUDING TIER 2 AND TIER 3

- Mike thanked all of the Leadership Team sitting in audience. Where do we need to improve our programs and service levels? Priority Overlay Tier 1 is the team teaching model at the middle school.
- Mike did not include the other Tier 2 & 3 priority items in budget request. Priority 2 items subtotal \$432,500.
- Six full-time Kindergarten Aides (\$195,000). Discussion on class size and teacher: student ratio.
- Technology Education Teacher at MRMS (\$72,500) Materials (\$30,000); Craig envisions a tech ed specialist to work with Science, a model that is different than what was here and eliminated in 2009. It would be a co-teaching model with larger scale interdisciplinary projects similar to the successful plan in Gloucester. Discussion on getting through all of the science curriculum, the High-Tech High model with Project Based Learning, C21 education, and internships. Craig stated there can be funding for materials found, but funding for staff can't be found and must be budgeted.
- Operations-hire third Maintenance Technician (\$62,500). The new maintenance director started in December. Staff positions being filled; haven't had time to analyze needs.
- School Resource Officer (\$72,500) previously introduced at last SC meeting. Jeff plans to invite both chiefs in to talk about programs, benefits and value added to the district. They will have a robust discussion in the future after the FY16 budget is done.
- Athletics Tier 2 priorities will be presented in greater detail at next SC meeting on 2/5/15

- **MAINTENANCE AND FACILITIES** recommended budget all included in the Superintendent's budget already presented. The budget book includes nitty-gritty detail; high-level overview provided here. Discussion on increased costs for electric and gas; the uneven heat in the buildings; does the option of solar power come up? Jeff receives many calls and it will be considered when the middle school/high school roof is replaced. The detailed list is deemed adequate and we are very well funded for the listed planned projects.
- **TECHNOLOGY** reviewed the recommended budget and special projects FY15 and FY16. Last summer over 700 devices were deployed. Special projects budgeted for FY16 total (\$175,220). Discussion on the reliability of the network; professional development for staff related to technology.
- **Review of timeline:** SC adopted tentative budget on 1/8/15; tonight was the public hearing on budget. Budget discussion on 2/5/15 with focus on Special Education, Athletics, and the HWRSD 3-year Forecast Model. On 2/12/15 (back to back SC meetings due to February school vacation), the SC will vote to adopt the FY16 budget.

B. POLICIES 1ST READING

▪ RESERVE FUNDS: EXCESS & DEFICIENCY (E&D) POLICY (Exhibit I)

- This is Jeff's recommended policy. He met for numerous hours with the FinCom Chairs Mike Lucy and Rick Sprenkle. The E&D policy creates clarity, provides a fair minimum threshold, creates structure and provides a timeline on how/when it works (see paragraph 4 specifically).
- Discussion: Larry stated if Jeff and FinCom are fine with it, then he is fine with it. Deb pointed out this is a first reading, not voting tonight. Future SC can vote to change any policy. The action is to let the towns take it to their groups; receive feedback in advance of 2nd reading at 2/5/15 meeting. Larry discussed expanding from 3 years to 5 years for the ratios of town apportion.

8:50 pm Jeff Sands left the meeting.

- **CLASS SIZE POLICY (Exhibit J)**

- Mike wants to streamline from current policy. A major difference goes away from specific number range to best interest of the children. As you vote a budget, you set a ceiling- you set a number- you go 1 child over- you must add a teacher. Deb replied we've been out of bounds on the old policy without adding.
- We've had creep as class sizes grow; over the past 10 years it has been substantial. The numbers were meaningless (17-23) on previous policy. Deb can't vote and will need more than second reading next week. Jeanise stated if we don't have confidence in our educators to recommend a number, we need new leadership. Larry said this is a huge issue for this community. Allow Mike to do a full presentation, invite people to participate.
- A citizen interrupted to request a reading of the policy out loud to public. Bill stated the SC provides details and handouts on line. Discussion on should SC provide time to read policy verbatim, sometimes they are 2-3 pages. Mike will check with counsel. Larry reiterated the need to put it on a future agenda with Mike giving a presentation, and an opportunity for public discussion.

- **HOME EDUCATION POLICY (Exhibit K)**

- Mike explained this new policy is shorter; the old policy included many procedural items such as where to send forms, etc. Most of the language is from MASC. This is more explicit: home schooled students are not eligible to receive a high school diploma or have access to educational programs during the day. They can participate in MIAA athletics and other extracurricular activities. Discussion: How can we be as accommodating as we can? Bill is interested in getting community feedback.
- A citizen who expected citizen comments to be heard at 8:30 p.m. based on the published agenda requested that home school parents be involved in the process and how can they express their comments and concerns? Barbara replied the Policy Subcommittee was meeting again on Tuesday, 2/3/15 and they can send concerns to her at b.lawrence@hwschools.net.

- **TITLE 1 SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT POLICY (Exhibit L)**

- The policy includes language that Title 1 funds are supplements, they don't supplant. The district receives money from the federal government under Title 1 for targeted reading instruction. The policy speaks to the selection of the students. Our three elementary schools are Title 1 schools.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

- Bill reviewed February meeting schedule: with a plan to adopt a final budget by 2/12/15.

- Regarding the discussion on graduation at Gordon. We should table until March 5, and have a public discussion. Mike stated Dr. Lindsay has been invited to the 3/5/15 meeting; if we have a decision by 3/5/15, we can work out graduation. Discussion: It is very important to have Dr. Lindsay speak to the SC. Do we want to have a 30 minute public meeting? The consensus was to utilize the March 5 regularly scheduled meeting; we can dedicate the entire meeting to the topic if we need to. The SC needs to vote that night. Deb discussed the structure of that meeting is important. When citizens speak, but we don't answer is hard. Dr. Lindsay will be here, will he be willing to answer questions? A decision was made to add to next agenda to discuss.
- At the FinCom meeting they reviewed level service budget with one priority overlay. Bill received very positive feedback; it's a reasonable increase. Next steps: 1). provide FY14 actuals; Jeff already sent and will forward to SC members. 2). towns assess 3 year-maybe extend to 5 years. We'll discuss after.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- Review: MARS asked state legislature to look into 9C cuts; it's still in the works

CONSENT AGENDA

A. MINUTES OF JANUARY 8, 2015 (Exhibit A)

- Larry moved to have minutes removed; all agreed. The following errors were amended: Under New Business Item C: Presentation of Proposed MRMS Schedule there was an error in staffing implications. The TA position should read .20 FTE, not .02 as typed. In Item D: Presentation of Proposed HS Schedule, Larry recalled the discussion was the current teacher contract allows for a *minimum* of 410 minutes of prep time per week.

B. EDFUND GRANT – 21ST CENTURY LEARNING SPACE PILOT (Exhibit B)

Sheila MacDonald moved that the HW Regional School Committee approve all of the remaining items on the consent agenda; approved: 6-0-0.

Sheila MacDonald moved that the HW Regional School Committee approve the amended minutes of January 8, 2015 on the consent agenda; approved: 6-0-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. AUDIT

B. COMMUNICATIONS: January SC Spotlight is posted on website. Thank you to Ann Minois. The goal is to get one out every month. Considering using social media for important dates, need to communicate there are two open three-year seats for SC. Papers are available at admin office- due by 2/28.

C. FACILITIES: Larry met on 1/15- working to finalize mission statement

D. NEGOTIATIONS: There are several open contracts; recent discussion with Mike regarding the contract

E. POLICY: All is good.

F. WARRANT

G. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE: Dana stated midterms are continuing this week.

H. OTHER: Master Planning- holding a meeting 2/11

OLD BUSINESS

A. POLICIES 2ND READING

- NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION (Exhibit C)

Sheila MacDonald moved that the HW Regional School Committee vote to approve the PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION POLICY AS PRESENTED. No discussion; approved 6-0-0

- BACKGROUND CHECKS (Exhibit D)

Sheila MacDonald moved that the HW Regional School Committee vote to accept the BACKGROUND CHECKS POLICY AS PRESENTED. Deb pointed out this is a state law. Approved 6-0-0

- MODEL CORI (Exhibit E)

Sheila MacDonald moved that the HW Regional School Committee vote to accept the MODEL CORI POLICY AS PRESENTED. Deb confirmed that this is a practice we are using; now it is policy. There are no variations from the DESE policy. Approved 6-0-0

- STUDENT FEES, FINES AND CHARGES (Exhibit F)

Sheila MacDonald moved that the HW Regional School Committee vote to accept the STUDENT FEES, FINES AND CHARGES POLICY AS PRESENTED. Barbara noted the policy has been updated to allow for a financial hardship waiver. Approved 6-0-0

- STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS (Exhibit G)

Sheila MacDonald moved that the HW Regional School Committee vote to accept the STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS POLICY AS PRESENTED. No discussion. Approved 6-0-0

Adjournment

Sheila MacDonald moved that the HW Regional School Committee move to adjourn at 9:51 pm. Approved 6-0-0

Respectfully submitted,
Janice Gauthier