

Town of Lincoln

Budget Board Meeting

March 1, 2012

Present:

**Linda Noble Mike Babbitt Carl Brunetti Claudette Lussier Paul
DiDomenico**

**Maria Marcello William DiBiasio Bob Turner Domenic Ricci Richard
Foster**

Absent:

Hagop Jawharjian

Call To Order

The meeting began at 7:34 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Carl Brunetti made a motion, seconded by William DiBiasio to change the order of the meeting in order to defer the review and approval of the minutes of February 29th and correspondence until later in the meeting.

Proposed School Technology Project

The School Department, School Committee and Technology Consultant Mike Kerwin were present to discuss the Proposed School Technology Plan.

In response to the question of the difference between the 3 different

plans at 3 different costs that have been submitted by the consultant, Mike Kerwin noted that the original plan for \$1.9 million was given after taking an inventory of current equipment and would take care of the initial work before the physical equipment was purchased.

The revised plan for \$2.2 million included a Language Lab and technology renovations and computers for the elementary schools.

The second revised plan for \$3.2 million would include all loose equipment and computers at all levels.

In response to the question of the consultant recommendation for implementation, Mike Kerwin noted that ideally the new technology would be implemented in one phase and at all levels.

In response to questions about Professional Development for the new technology, Mike Kerwin noted that it would be an ongoing task and that typically educators within the system would become the trainers for the others.

The beginning of Professional Development implementation possibilities were discussed, including some early training requirements such as using a service day towards the end of installation and before implementation.

Additionally, at the beginning of the school year there are 2 days before the students attend school when the teachers are already in service that could be used.

Discussion ensued about the consideration of bringing in Professional Development from outside sources, and the need to look

at specifically what kind of Professional Development would be needed.

Mike Kerwin noted that Professional Development does not appear in the project budget.

Also questioned was how the schools would incorporate the new technology into their curriculum.

Georgia Fortunato noted that the first step would be learning about the equipment and how it works, and that the incorporation into the actual curriculum would be ongoing using things like video training, online training and workshops.

In response to the question about the proposed 1,140 computers and where they would be distributed, it was noted that the elementary schools would have a lesser ratio of computers than the higher grades, and it was also noted that in the future, the middle school and high school may take advantage of student's using their personal portable devices.

This is one reason that the Schools don't foresee requests for more computers in the coming years,

In discussion, it was noted that there would be close supervision of the technology in order to prevent things like cyber-bullying and other potential hazards.

In response to the cost of replacement and repairs of equipment on a yearly basis, Mike Kerwin discussed insurance which he believed

would fit in the plan and would be obtained separately from the proposal.

In response to the question about the \$800 cost per computer, it was noted that the units that cost \$800 would be for the media center, and that individual units would include software and insurance and would come in closer to a cost of \$600 for an effective unit.

Selected units may cost more in areas where things like video editing software would be additionally required.

There are currently 3 employees in the schools' IT Department.

It would cost approximately \$30-\$45 per computer for Microsoft and other licensing to be installed by them.

In response to the question of whether the request included technology for every room at the high school, it was noted that it did include every room, which was 60 rooms, 10 labs and 1 conference room.

It would also include the old middle school portion of the school but not the modular classrooms.

Occupancy of the rooms was discussed and Georgia Fortunato noted that she would analyze the need for technology and how many rooms would be using it.

In response to the question about why Grades 1 and 2 would be receiving more new technology than the higher grades, it was noted

that there had been a grant which had provided some previous upgrades to the higher grades that had not provided that for Grades 1 and 2, so there were more upgrades needed for those grades than the others.

In response to the question about when the elementary schools' technology would be implemented, Georgia Fortunato noted that it would be during the summer recess to be ready for the new school year.

In response to questions about the fiber optics system that will be available through the state, it was noted that there will be a new system occurring which will allow for faster speed and consistency and consolidation between schools, and that the proposed technology upgrades would still be able to function once the new fiber optics system is in place.

It was also noted that there are currently 300 computers with portable units that can also still be used with the new system.

In response to questions about the installation of a new Language Lab, it was noted by Georgia Fortunato that there is not currently a language lab and that not having one does impede effectiveness.

In response to questions about whether individual computers would be sent home with students, Georgia Fortunato noted that they are not planning to send any home unless the students have an IEP that

requires one, in which case it would be returned at the end of the school year.

In response to questions about what other communities the technology consultant has implemented similar systems to the proposal in, it was noted that most that install such projects are brand new buildings and that most were not in Rhode Island.

In response to questions about what would happen if teachers choose not to use the new technology, Georgia Fortunato noted that the use of it will be part of their evaluations and will be incorporated in the curriculum.

In response to a question about the time frame of the project, Mike Kerwin noted that once they have the word to proceed with the project they will prepare bid documents with the goal to be all of the initial work and equipment to be installed in all schools over the 8-week summer recess, and they did feel confident that it could be done.

In response to a question about which areas would be done first, it was noted that while the plan is to begin with the elementary schools, it may be better to begin with the higher grades to keep consistency as the students move up.

The whole reason for all communities needing technology upgrades,

which is 2014 state-wide testing, was discussed and it was noted that there may be a bond to help communities meet that requirement.

In response to a question about items in the later proposals, particularly furniture, that were not initially considered necessary but were later added, it was noted that items like carts would make the technology portable since there would not be a 1-1 ratio yet.

The carts would cost approximately \$2,000-\$3,000 based upon charging needs and they would request 36 of them.

In response to a question of the consultant as to which of the proposed 3 plans they would advocate, Mike Kerwin noted that the initial work and the Language Lab were crucial, therefore he recommended the \$2.2 million plan as an initial project start.

Also in response to a question, Mike Kerwin noted that by doing it all as one big project the schools could save as much as 5% on overhead alone and that the short time frame to get it done may even attract a different caliber of bidder.

In response to a question about the impact of the new system on the operating budget for upgrades and repairs, it was noted that there would be very little increase in the first few years because the new system would be under warranty.

Additionally, more technology may decrease future need and costs for textbooks.

The Budget Board questioned the need for further technological

upgrades in the future, and it was noted that it was possible that the system could be upgraded in the future, and that they may want to assess things like tablets instead of laptops which seem to be more durable.

Georgia Fortunato noted that she will meet with her team about coming up with a Professional Development plan and implementing it for the coming school year.

Also, they will be looking at the needs of the schools to see if all of the rooms in the proposal actually need the technology, with the 60 classrooms at the high school as an example.

If the technology project does get the support of the Budget Board, there would be discussion before the Financial Town Meeting about where the funding would come from, and it would go before the Meeting as a resolution.

Public Comment

There was no public comment or questions at the time.

Recess

The Budget Board took a brief recess and then reconvened.

Proposed School Technology Project Resumed

The Budget Board discussed occupancy of the old middle school, and the fact that not all rooms at the high school are used every

period and how that relates to whether each room needs technology upgrades.

Also discussed was the information from the Technology Consultant that seemed as though not everything that was proposed was necessary.

His recommendation was the \$2.2 million plan, which included the Language Lab.

The Budget Board discussed and will review inventory of how many educational computers the system will have in total after the project is complete as opposed to how many there are now.

Since in the coming years they'll be getting away from individual computers and go towards the personal devices, except for those who don't have them because they can't afford them, the Budget Board discussed this theory and the retooling of the technology required at the high school for the occupancy of the rooms that exists.

Minutes

The minutes of February 29th were distributed for review.

William DiBiasio made a motion, seconded by Richard Foster, to accept the minutes.

The minutes were accepted by a vote of 8-0 with Claudette Lussier and Maria Marcello abstaining because they were not present on February 29th.

Correspondence

There was no new correspondence at the time.

A copy of the audit as approved by the Town Council has not yet been received.

Old Business

2012-2013 School Committee Approved Budget

School Technology Project

2012-2013 Town Administrator Recommended Budget

The Budget Board discussed the Tour of the Municipal Facilities and changing it from March 17th to the 31st.

Budget Board Subcommittee – Work Session

Consolidation and Capital Subcommittees

There was a motion by Mike Babbitt, seconded by Richard Foster, to dispense of the Subcommittee Work Sessions.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Public Comment

There was no public comment or questions at the time.

Adjourn

Domenic Ricci made a motion, seconded by William DiBiasio, to adjourn,

The meeting adjourned at 9:32 pm.