

Middletown Public Schools

Middletown, Rhode Island

BUDGET WORKSHOP

Wednesday, January 27, 2016

MICHAEL S. PINTO CONFERENCE ROOM

5:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Kellie DiPalma Simeone, Vice-Chairman

Douglas Arnold

Liana Fenton arrived

William O'Connell

Member Absent:

Theresa Spengler, Chairman

Also Present:

Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Superintendent of Schools

Linda Savastano, Assistant Superintendent

Raquel Pellerin, Business Manager

Peter Anderson, Director of Facilities/Transportation and Safety

Sarah Kraeger, Director, Regional Special Education

Gina Augustus, Finance Manager, Regional Special Education

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Administrative staff members present were Beth Hayes and Michelle Fonseca. Town Administrator Shawn Brown was in attendance.

Newport County Regional Special Education Program Director Sarah Kraeger gave an overview of the program. The program includes the Town of Middletown, Tiverton, and Little Compton. The goals of the program are to meet the needs of every student in the least restrictive environment, continue to close the achievement gaps, and maximize capacity with staffing. Known factors which need to be considered during budget preparation include personnel/contract commitments, district figures/enrollment, and State and Federal mandates which have a dollar amount attached to it when there is a new program. The out-of-district tuition cost increase is estimated to be about 1.5%.

A total of 17% of the total Middletown population (385 students) is receiving services, compared to 22% three years ago. We need to work to decrease this number to the State percentage of 15%. There are more intensive needs in schools, with an increased number of students with multi-handicap/intellectual disabilities. They are

looking to increase a current .6 speech and language pathologist by .4 to make the position full-time. The cost would be shared among the districts.

Administrative functions at the district level include serving as the school department liaison. At the State level, the program provides data to RIDE, coordinates the implementation of grant applications, and prepares for RIDE school support visits, which happens every 5 years. At the regional level, they work with the school boards on policy, maintain current and

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former student records, coordinate transportation, billing Medicaid, and act as human resource. With the withdrawal of Portsmouth from the regional program, the services have not changed and the sharing of services makes it cost effective. The program must also service students in private schools.

There is a 60 day timeline from when a student has an evaluation and if an IEP is needed, it is required by law to be completed in 15 days. Homeschooled students are eligible for special education services, but a parent cannot pick and choose which services they get.

Ms. Pellerin, Business Manager, gave an expenditure update. Projected expenditures include salaries, benefits, out-of-district cost, and payment to Newport County Regional Special Education. Some

highlights include all employees in salary benefit category have been moved up a step, 7% health and 5% dental increase based on R.I. Interlocal Trust data, retiree buyouts and unemployment, and updated OPEB Annual Required Contribution.

Some items not included in the document include anything considered non-personnel; transportation, utilities, textbooks, software and hardware, property and liability insurance, and textbooks and general supplies.

Personnel expenditures to date are \$32.6 million. Non-personnel expenditures are \$3.8 million, which includes \$2.6 million tuition for out-of-district students, a \$300,000 increase from the current year's budget. Other items include \$110,000 for Special Education bus monitors, and \$217,000 for State and charter school tuitions. There is \$3.8 million to fund additional general operational expenditures.

At the next Budget Workshop on February 3, 2016, there will be discussion about finalizing grants, and academic and technology pieces. The committee will also hear from the principals. At the February 25th meeting, discussion will be about private donations, enterprise funds, and a review facilities and operations. The March 9th meeting will revisit the revenue projections and finalize the 2016-17 budget and develop a document for the Town Council. The budget will be submitted to the Town Administrator on March 23rd.

Mr. Anderson, Director of Facilities, gave an update on Capital Improvement. The facilities budget planning is based on the RGB timing recommendation, Building Committee recommendations, and RIDE priority. All projects have been put into PPlanIT, which is used

by the Town. The CIP Special Revenue total is \$6,293,000. This includes FY 2018 boiler replacement at Forest Avenue, roof replacement and paving/sidewalk repairs at Aquidneck and Forest Avenue.

We need to discuss how to address unfunded projects. The majority are identified as 2-3 or 5 years out.

Projects funded through Federal Impact Aid prior year payments include high school and middle school STEM Labs, technology, network infrastructure, curriculum materials and support for Project Lead the way. If we do not receive prior year Impact Aid payments, the funds are not spent.

School cell tower rental income projects include floor strippers, grounds equipment, school furniture and vehicles. Also included is the replacement of whiteboards. The amount was previously \$5,000 per year, but is now \$10,000 per year to purchase a higher quality board. There is data to back up this list of projects. If there is a consensus the Town Council can move forward with the project list. A final vote will be taken on the Capital Improvement Plan in February.

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MOTION: 1) Liana Fenton, 2) William O'Connell. To adjourn from the Budget Workshop at 7:16 p.m. Unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosemarie K. Kraeger

Clerk