

March 8, 2017

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Michael S. Pinto Conference Room

Members Present: Kellie DiPalma Simeone, Chairman
Theresa Spengler, Vice-Chairman
Douglas Arnold
Liana Fenton
William O'Connell

Also Present: Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Superintendent of Schools
Linda Savastano, Assistant Superintendent
Raquel Pellerin, Business Manager
David Fontes, Director of Facilities/Safety and Transportation

The School Committee Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by School Committee Chair Kellie DiPalma Simeone. All members were present.

ACTION ITEMS

RFP BID AWARD - FOREST AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SITE WORK

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *That the School Committee award the Forest Avenue School Site Work bid to Crossman Engineering.* Unanimous vote.

This will include paving, storm water mitigation, and exterior site work at Forest Avenue School. This is the design aspect only.

RFP BID AWARD - FOREST AVENUE SCHOOL HVAC DESIGN SERVICES

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *That the School Committee award the Forest Avenue School HVAC Design Services Bid to RGB Architects.* Unanimous vote.

This will include replacing the steam boiler, air handler unit in the cafeteria and Learning Center, as well as baseboard radiation. RGB Architects was the low bidder. This is for the design phase only. Mr. Fontes has recently negotiated with RGB and the amount will be reduced by \$20,000. The \$7,500 fee for the independent cost estimator will be eliminated. The goal is to get firms going by Friday. Sitework could be involved because of DEM regulations and storm water mitigation. This could take a month, then it will go out to bid.

RFP BID AWARD - FOREST AVENUE SCHOOL HVAC COMMISSIONING SERVICES

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *That the School Committee award the Forest Avenue School HVAC Commissioning Services Bids to Fitzmeyer and Tocci Associates.* Unanimous vote.

RIDE requires an independent commissioning services agent.

CHANGE ORDER - ROOF AREA REPLACEMENTS AT MIDDLETOWN HIGH SCHOOL AND AQUIDNECK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *That the School Committee award the Middletown High School and Aquidneck Elementary School Roof Design Services Change Order/Bid to RGB Architects. Unanimous vote.*

In discussion with the Town, they have agreed to the change order. The design cost is less than 7%, which is in line with previous projects. The School Department will be self-performing some construction administration, which will save \$4,000.

HOLD HARMLESS RESOLUTION

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *That the School Committee approve the Hold Harmless Resolution. Unanimous vote.*

Middletown is asking the General Assembly to consider holding districts overfunded to hold harmless for this current year. Districts will reach a target level of State Aid. While dealing with reductions, districts still have to implement mandated programs. This will give districts the ability to stabilize their budget.

CREDIT FLEXIBILITY RESOLUTION

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *That the School Committee approve the Credit Flexibility Resolution. Unanimous vote.*

This was discussed at the pre-budget conference. The concern is that we do not want to compromise any frameworks and standards that are already in place. Two full seasons is equivalent to a year credit. Middletown will use this as a pilot.

R.I. PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM RESOLUTION

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *That the School Committee approve the R.I. Promise Scholarship Program Resolution. Motion Passed 3 to 2.*

YAY

Kellie DiPalma Simeone
Theresa Spengler
Douglas Arnold

NAY

Liana Fenton
William O'Connell

Governor Raimando has proposed the R.I. Promise Scholarship Program. At a Superintendent's meeting, her Chief of Staff spoke about the program. This is open to everyone, with no threshold. Students must be a R.I. resident, qualify for in-state tuition, have attended 3 years at an approved R.I. high school, will be enrolled in the fall after high school graduation with no gap year, and complete a FAFSA. The student must have received their high school diploma or GED prior to their 19th year.

Mrs. Fenton likes the concept, but does not see it as sustainable. There are not enough funds to do everything. What happens when there is no money left? Mrs. Spengler said that as a district, we need to show support for the Governor. It does not mean we are locked into it. Mr. O'Connell agrees that it needs to be sustainable and would like to put it on hold. Approving the resolution shows that we are supporting the concept of what the Governor is doing. Mrs.

Simeone said that in response to the question of needing more professors and more dorms, if the school cannot support any more student, they will stop taking them. If a student has already qualified for free tuition, this will not cost the state anything. This is a 4-year phase in.

SUN SAFETY RESOLUTION

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *That the School Committee approve the Sun Safety Resolution.* Unanimous vote.

Current legislation says that sunscreen cannot be applied to a student.

The **Budget Workshop** was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Director of Facilities David Fontes and Business Manager Raquel Peller presented. Middletown has over \$100 million in building infrastructure on 82 acres of grounds. We need to maximize customer value, eliminate waste, and maximize potential opportunities. Potential opportunities include collaborating with the Town to plow school lots instead of contracting out, self-performing work on Forest Avenue School boiler demolition, energy procurement can be done in-house, having our present insurer completing playground inspections instead of paying a firm, and consolidating trash pickups at schools. Mrs. Simeone would like the savings tracked so we can determine what to do with the funds. Mr. Fontes would like to maintain the current level of staffing. The school department will see a reduction in energy consumption with the bond projects.

In regards to transportation, we currently have a 5-year contract with Ocean State Transit. There are currently 15 regular busses and 5 local special education busses. Would like to keep the 18 bus monitors and special education monitors. Bus monitors are all at-will employees with no contract.

Ms. Pellerin reported that other contract services include annual operation services, legal and auditing (provided by the Town for auditing), property/liability (about 4.5% increase), and food services, which are looking at about a 3% increase. The Department of Education dictates the increase in lunch prices. This will be voted on at the March 23rd meeting. Other items that fall under General Operations are general supplies/materials and dues/fees/memberships.

The budget will be presented at the March 21st Budget Workshop.

Issues that are upcoming include reviewing the proposals of the capital improvement preliminary projects and purchases with school and town administration, reviewing the preliminary figures of the facilities and general operations section. We will go line-by-line and vendor-by-vendor.

We do not have enough revenue to support current expenditures. Increased staffing is not included. All contractual increases have been applied. Going to the 4% cap will require reductions.

The next steps are to review all proposed expenditures that have come in internally. Asking for any ideas from the School Committee for reductions. Will also review projected revenue. Waiting for data pull in March. There are a lot of unknowns.

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. Motion to adjourn from the Budget Workshop at 7:20 p.m. Unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosemarie K. Kraeger, Clerk