

Middletown Public Schools
Middletown, Rhode Island

BUDGET WORKSHOP

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

MICHAEL S. PINTO CONFERENCE ROOM

5:30 p.m.

Members Present: Theresa Spengler, Chairman
Kellie DiPalma Simeone, 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 meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by School Committee Chair Kellie Simeone. All members were present. Administrative staff members present were Beth Hayes, Dennis Soares, and Michelle Fonseca.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Approval of Vendors/Purchases over \$5,000

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *To approve the Consent Agenda.*
Unanimous vote.

BUDGET WORKSHOP

Director of Facilities David Fontes reported on facilities and transportation.

- Transportation -The School Department employs 14 bus monitors and Ocean State Transportation employs the bus drivers. The fleet consists of 15 regular busses, 5 local special education busses, athletic transportation, and private schools. Mr. Fontes complimented Ocean State employees Margie Rigo and Terry Deveau for their hard work.
- Facilities - The Middletown School Department consists of 380,400 square feet of buildings and 82 acres of grounds. A goal in this budget is to maintain the level of staffing. Last year one full-time position was reduced. The department continues to decrease the use of contracted services due to competencies of staff.
- Safety program - The School Department works closely with the Police and Fire departments. The new alarm system has been completed, which decreased annual costs and improved functionality. Intruder locks have been installed at the high

school. A camera system is included in the CIP and would be accessible by the Middletown Police.

Energy Management - The electric contract expires at the end of June. The new boiler at Forest Avenue has reduced the consumption of natural gas by approximately 22%. The LED project at Aquidneck School has begun. National Grid is paying for fixtures.

- General Operations - Business Manager Raquel Pellerin and the Superintendent met with Karen Massaro, Athletic Director. She will review participation rates. Wrestling did not have enough athletes to field all the weight classes. The Athletic Director is looking at a co-op similar to hockey where one community pays for the coach, another community pays for transportation, while the other pays for ice time. Enterprise funds must be self-sustaining and self-supporting. This includes the school lunch program, summer and after school programs, and athletic gate receipts. The next steps are to review revenue projects, prioritize expenditures, then finalize grant projections. Ms. Pellerin is working with the Town Finance Director and OpenGov. They hope to have a document at the next Budget Workshop on March 15, 2018. Another meeting will have to be scheduled after that.
- Budget Priorities - Mr. Kirk Scully, Owner of Shining Star Preschool, spoke about his concerns over the discussion of the Town paying for PreK when there are so many quality PreK's in the area. He suggested using assets that we have and use vouchers to get children enrolled in the private preschools.

The Committee next discussed what percentage members would like to present to the Town Council. Mrs. Simeone said that we need to identify what would be cut to get to 3%, then 2% and asked for data about average per pupil expenditures across the State. What does it look like to other districts receiving the same amount of aid? Mrs. Fenton wants to tell a story by clusters, (social emotional, STEM), and would like to identify our high-level initiatives. Mr. Arnold would like to send a letter to Town Council members identifying what will be lost at each percentage. He recommended we request 4% from the Town Council.

It was decided to use the March 15th meeting as a workshop, then schedule an additional meeting and vote for March 22nd. The budget will be prepared at 4% and see what that looks like. The committee would like to sustain the programs and staffing that we have. Scheduling will be reviewed. We also need to internally prepare for what would be cut if the school department receives level funding.

MOTION: 1) Theresa Spengler, 2) Liana Fenton. *To go into Executive Session 42-46-5 (a) 2 at 7:12p.m.* Unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rosemarie K. Kraeger
Clerk