

Advisory Committee Meeting

Town of Foxborough

Wednesday February 3, 2021

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FOXBOROUGH, MA 02035

In Attendance: Larry Ooi, Bernard Dumont, John Mahoney, Daniel Peterson, Brad Palter, Paul Ivanovskis, Thom Freeman, Jack Martin, Dennis Keefe.

Absent: Sharon Weiskerger, Brian Guild

Minutes: Taken by Tony Colangelo

School Administration / School Committee Members: Dr. Amy Berdos; Bill Yukna, Alison Mello, Rob Canfield, Tina Belanger, Brent Ruter, Richard Pearson.

Meeting called to order by Larry O. at 7 pm:

Larry requested approval of the meeting minutes for 2/3/21, with a couple of changes that were made. Jack M. noted that street lighting referred to 2020 rather than 2016. John M. noted time of meeting had to be changed and corrected the spelling for SCADA. **After comments noted all members present voted to approve 9-0-0.**

School Committee Budget Presentation at 7:05 pm: Dr. Amy Berdos, Bill Yukna.

Dan, Brad and Larry met with Bill Yukna prior to this presentation and were provided with detailed slides of the budget. Dan forwarded this presentation to everyone for this meeting.

The Public School Committee Budget is a blueprint to focus on taking care of student priority. Provide a strong commitment on student's priorities, education, needs and achievements. This includes a very strong focus on reasonable class sizes, technical needs, special education needs, and preserving current programs. Students must be prepared for college and career, and we want equity for all.

The school budget is \$1,116,894 request, a 2.98% increase. 80% of the budget is salaries.

Larry O. asked Bill Y.: Can you please talk about the FY '21 budget deficit? State and federal grants of about 1.9 million dollars help offset the cost the rest of the budget costs. Items in the budget experience increases or decreases due to Covid. Some increase examples include computers because many students did not have laptops. Also, remote learning platforms, technology, masks/shields, lots of labor costs to keep buildings clean, and all meals for students are free. The School is looking at a current deficit of between \$130K to \$150K and hopefully the deficit will continue to go down due to other funding and cost reduction. This amount now is much lower than the last time the AdCom liaisons met with the School Administration.

Jack M. asked Amy B.: Have we learned lessons we can use moving forward making things more effective and efficient? Amy stated that teaching has changed forever and the technology world for students has expanded. Teachers are working much closer together and doing very well. Alison M. also added that we have cut down on a lot of student paper use and moved more to digital resources for students.

Larry O. asked Bill Y.: Comment on the Warrant article about ability for the school to have a revolving account to use for computer expenses? Bill stated they can have a revolving account for a maximum of \$100,000. The way they put money into this account is by collecting \$35 to \$40 dollars from student families to help repair or replace parts for computers.

Thom F. asked Bill Y.: Can you talk about Southeastern Regional, their expense has gone up 66% over 3 years? Bill stated he does not have the information on Southeastern Regional School District because Southeastern does not report to Foxborough Public Schools. Thom also asked if the School could work with 3 buses instead of 4 for CIP requests. Bill indicated that he may be able to work with that.

8:23 pm: Richard Pearson. Thanked everyone for their time and work at the meeting and asked for adjournment from the school committee members for their portion of the meeting. Tina B. made a motion to adjourn and Rob C. second the motion. All the school committee members voted aye.

8:25 pm. Larry O.: Advisory Committee Members.

Next week there will be 6 department heads coming to our meeting covering: Culture, Recreation, and Human Services.

Thom F.: Wants to know if he should reach out to Southeast Regional representative, Steve Udden. Regarding questions from Dan P. regarding increase costs. Is it per capita or per town? Also, should we ask him to attend one of our meetings?

Dan P.: Question if there anything drastic for utilities re: solar, he will reach out to Chris Gallagher about miscalculations on credits we receive for using solar – to see if there is any big impact.

Comment Larry O.: Forwarded the e-mail from Bill Keegan today to everyone regarding the YTD revenue and expenses.

Comment Bernard D.: Food for thought; useful to look at master budget. \$30 or \$40 million budget doesn't include benefits and pensions which is a lot. Point is if we are trying to be efficient, we have to look at untouchable expenses as opposed to just changing spending and buying!

Comment: Thom F.: \$100 million threshold for town budget. Question CIP portion of budget proposal and what items it covers? Maybe string out these items over 2 years? Larry stated that this is always something the CIP Committee will consider at their meeting.

Comment Dan P.: Echo on what Bernard said and what Jack brought up last year. Question- is there an effect on penny pinching- save tax payers \$1? What are we doing? Understand some families are still struggling.

8:40 pm. Thom F. made motion to adjourn the meeting. Dan P. second the motion. All Advisory Committee members present stated aye and it was approved 9-0-0.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Larry O.", is located below the meeting minutes text.