

Oyster River Cooperative School District

Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes

November 19, 2020

DRAFT

SCHOOL BOARD PRESENT: Brian Cisneros, Dan Klein, Tom Newkirk, Denise Day, Michael Williams, Al Howland, Yusi Turell

Student Representative:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT: James Morse, Sue Caswell

STAFF PRESENT:

GUEST PRESENT: There were 0 members in the audience.

CALL TO ORDER at 7:00 PM by Al Howland

Al Howland opened the meeting with the first agenda item that he turned over to Sue Caswell, Business Administrator to explain.

II. DISCUSSION:

Details of revenue sources and adjustments (overview of tuition, review state aid impact, current tracking for FY 2021 fund balance)

Sue walked the Board through the revenue details and any adjustments that she made for the revenues for FY21.

Dr. Morse explained for Yusi's benefit how the sheet is broken down and the distinction for the color usage for the different categories. He also explained that these are very rough estimates as they are done a year in advance.

The Board asked if the adequacy was across our district or the state. If the ADM enrollment was based on actual numbers. Sue explained that the adequacy will be adjusted two more times and that the enrollment is based on current enrollment and directed the Board to the State Web site for the process that is followed to determine Adequacy.

Dr. Morse expressed that he thought this budget would be worse, but the bond rate came in lower than anticipated.

Update on any news from ReVision Energy on whether bus canopy can be included in the PPA financing?

Sue stated that the good news is that the investor is positive about sponsoring this but requested that it be called a Solar Canopy and not a Bus Port.

Dr. Morse explained that Sue is in contact with our legal counsel as well as ReVision Energy to receive clarification for the possible inclusion of this on the Warrant Article for March of 2021. She will keep the Board informed of the status. When we installed solar on the facilities building it did not require voter approval.

There was a clarifying discussion surrounding financing for the Solar Canopy and also surrounding the options for the financing.

Any other adjustments made since October 29 workshop (i.e. updated negotiated agreements cost for warrant articles)

Dr. Morse explained that there was one adjustment that resulted from a savings of \$28K from the ORBDA/ORPASS negotiations and that this savings was moved to the legal account at the SAU.

Review likely local tax burden change for each town at 2.5%, 3%, and 3.5% without drawing on reserve funds

There was a lengthy discussion surrounding the past and present tax burden by each of the individual towns. A question was posed to other Board members whether a re-assessment was scheduled to happen in the towns of Durham and Lee, like the one that took place in Madbury last year.

Dr. Morse again explained the process that is followed for the tax impact.

Consider any proposed budget changes from the Board or Administration.

Michael Williams submitted two independent proposals. One was for an increase in funding for pandemic related expenses such as technology expenses or the addition of 3 – 5 positions proposed for \$600K . This would result in a 3.4% budget increase utilizing \$154K out of the emergency fund.

The second proposal is for communication capability. Proposes to increase SAU budget by \$50K for a part time communication specialist.

Questions asked if the situation changes can the money be moved back to emergency fund. Discussion surrounding the budget goal that was already approved in the range of 2.5% - 3.5%. Suggestion made to get the sense of the Board and how they wish to move forward before any decisions are made.

Al Howland suggested that the 2.5% option be removed completely and work with the 3.0% and 3.5% and determine how much of the emergency fund the Board is comfortable using to offset the revenues and start there at the next meeting.

Sue will take the 3.0% and the revised 3.5% option at \$450K and create 3 options for each using \$250K increments and off-sets and bring that back to the Board to use as a starting point to make a decision on the FY22 budget.

There was additional discussion surrounding the need for a part-time communication director and the amount of out-reach that the superintendent is being asked to generate is overwhelming.

Dr. Morse stated that if the budget was different, he would ask for three positions: Communication Director, Diversity Director and a 5th grade world language teacher.

Discussion of warrant article for increasing retained fund balance from 2.5% to 5%

Sue explained that she asked for legal clarification on adding this to a Warrant Article and was given the correct wording needed. The Board is fine with adding this warrant article.

Discussion of warrant article to establish capital reserve fund (or add to facilities capital reserve fund) from unassigned fund balance to prepare for purchase of service building OR middle school solar arrays.

Sue again sought legal counsel for this, and the district can create a new trust fund or it can be added to an existing fund. A discussion ensued if there was a maximum amount needed, and if this would need to occur yearly.

Closing comments: None

**III. ~~NON-PUBLIC SESSION RSA 91-A:3 {if needed}~~
NON-MEETING SESSION: RSA 91-A:2 I (b)**

- Consultation with Legal Counsel.

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting ending at 8:15 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Wendy L. DiFruscio
Executive Assistant to Superintendent of Schools