

TOWN OF WINCHENDON



Finance Committee

Telephone (978)-297-5419

Regular Meeting/Public Hearing
Finance Committee Minutes
March 16, 2023 6:30PM
Town Hall 4th Floor Meeting Room

Members Present: Chairman Thomas J. Kane Jr., Vice-Chair Dr. Maureen Ward,
Anthony Dickson, Adrian Guerrero, James Reed

Absent: Charles C. Corts, Doug Delay

Guests: Thomas Browne- Superintendent-Director of Monty Tech
Tammy Lafalam- Administrative Assistant to the Principal

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- March 16, 2023 Meeting Agenda
- Proposed FY24 Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School Budget

6:30PM: Chairman Thomas J. Kane Jr. called the Finance Committee meeting to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Presentation of the proposed FY24 Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School Budget:

Thomas Browne, Superintendent-Director, and Tammy Lafalam- Administrative Assistant to the Principal, presented the proposed FY24 Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School Budget. T. Browne stated it was a big year for co-op, where the students work in the career field, everything was going well. One day last year, a large corporation reached out to them in regards to their Monty Tech educational foundation and wanted to learn how to set up a foundation and accept an application. They sent over a sample to them and about a month later, the company called back and stated they were going to grant them \$370,000. That allowed Monty Tech to get a few machines for carpentry and most importantly replace the original spray booth for the automotive department. A total of \$3.7 Million in grants was awarded this year. The grants are often used for new equipment and for renovations around the school. They were able to completely renovate the dental clinic space and for auto technology they redid the tool crib. The school store did not come through a grant, but was renovated for the first time since the 70's and all the work was done by the students.

T. Browne stated an important mission for this year is working on clarifying things when it comes to Monty Tech. There was a rumor going around that 80% of the kids that attend Monty Tech are now going to college and not straight into the workforce. He replied with statistics that was untrue, and it is split almost 50/50 down the middle school wide. He pointed out that some trades like health care or vet medicine, do not always require additional school, but for more advanced positions like a nurse or veterinarian, that would require additional college classes. For the trades such as electrical and construction, the majority of the students are going right into the work force after graduating.

There have been an overwhelming amount of students that apply to Monty Tech, but due to the limited space available in the building, they are not able to accept everyone's application. In order to accept more students, they leased a warehouse down the street at 270 Westminster St. The state put out a LAB organization grant for \$1.9 Million, 30% will go towards renovating the building, the students will complete the work, and it will be divided into 3 vocational programs- House carpentry and electrical, with plumbing added at a later time. It will be used at night for the CTI adult students. The Gardner, Fitchburg, and Narragansett districts had the most students applying to Monty Tech. They will be able to choose a set amount of students to attend Monty Tech, but no Chapter 70 funds will be taken from the towns for each of those students attending. If everything goes well, the goal is to expand and be able to add more students and more towns to the program, including Winchendon. Due to the timeline of the renovations, it will open in Spring of 2024 for the adults, and Fall of 2024 for the students.

Tammy Lafalam discussed the proposed FY24 Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School Budget. Every year the budget is based on the governor's numbers. Governor Healey's budget was increased by \$586 Million in FY24 and continues to fund the Student Opportunity Act. The Student Opportunity Act ensured that every student in the state experiences high-quality learning opportunity that lead to success in school and in postsecondary success. This would be the 3rd year of implementation, and they are hoping for 6, with increases every year.

T. Lafalam explained for The Monty Tech Foundation Budget, each foundation is split into different categories and each grade level has a different level of funding. Vocational gets the highest rate of funding as it is the most expensive model of education, not counting special education. Monty Tech's foundation enrollment number is 1,465. There are about 230 special education students at Monty Tech. The Special Education in district is an assumed percentage, the represents a 3.9% for K-12 and 4.9% for Vocational Education. Low income status/information comes from the state, and about 36%-41.99% of the students are considered low income. The total Foundation Budget is \$29,486,021, which is synonymous with Net School Spending. Divided by the number of students, 1,465, would equal \$20,127 per student, and does not include transportation, capital, or debt service.

FY24 Chapter 70 Summary- Foundation Enrollment went down 2 pupils this year, but the foundation budget increased \$1.6 Million (5.55% increase) as well as required district contributions increased by \$451,000 (4.2% increase). Chapter 70 is calculated by taking the foundation budget and subtracting what the state has calculated for required contributions from the districts, and they fill in the gap. Chapter 70 comes in at \$18,300,704 (6.83% increase).

Budget Summary- Net School Spending is \$29,486,021.

Transportation- \$2,399,080 is the contractual agreement with the bus company (30 busses + 3 vans)
Above net school spending is \$150,000 (.5% above)

Capital Budget- \$450,000 to \$500,000

Total Budget- \$32,535,101- increase of 5.64%

Chapter 70- the required minimum contributions for all the communities is \$11,167,317

Regional transportation reimbursement fund- \$75,000 is a conservative estimate of the excess funds they plan to receive.

Net Capital Assessment \$300,000

Total Assessments to all communities- \$11,991, 397 (5.63% increase)

Winchendon's foundation enrollment was 106 students. Winchendon has 1,488 school attending children (grades 1-12). The total of school attending children for the District was 25,346. Winchendon makes up 7.24% of the Operating Budget and 5.87% on the Capital side. The school committee approved a freshman class of 365 students and Winchendon will be approved 5.87%. Winchendon's required contribution is \$650,523.

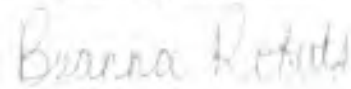
Member Comments: None.

Public Input: None.

7:40PM- Dr. M. Ward motioned to adjourn the Finance Committee, 2nd by J. Reed.

Dickson (Y) Guerrero (Y) Reed (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 5-0

Respectfully submitted:



Brianna Roberts, Finance Committee Recording Secretary

Thomas Kane, Chairman

Dr. Maureen Ward, Vice-Chair

Charles C. Corts

Douglas Delay

Anthony Dickson

Adrian Guerrero