

Winchendon Public Schools

7/18/24

JKM

**Budget Hearing**

June 6, 2024 - 5:00 PM  
2nd Floor - Town Hall Auditorium

**Attendance**

Karen Kast-McBride, Jake Catlin, David Iannaccone, Mike Barbaro, Liz Latona,  
Ruthann Petruco-Goguen, Interim Superintendent, Bill McKinney, Town Manager

1. Call to order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Audio Disclosure

**4. FY25 Budget Hearing**

Dr. Goguen - Discussed the amounts of local and state aid: Chapter 70 funds, indirect costs, bottom line total and the total of the FY25 Budget. Explained that expenses in the district are more than what was asked for and need to find 1,106,225 in other revenue sources and discussed those sources. Changes made to the FY25 Budget: Superintendent Salary and the Executive Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent Salary and Business Manager Salary and the MMS Dean salary decreased, Director of pupil Services, Assistant Director of Pupil Services, Director of IT, MMS Principal, MHS Salaries increased due to new contracts. High school Guidance Secretary's longevity is now included in the budget. Putting a certified elementary teacher for the two elementary schools. Discussed the amounts of all increases/ decreases of the new FY25 budget. Discussion on the grant and non-grant salaries, longevity payments, pay increases for all. Explained the Curriculum line and programs and materials for students. ESSER funds leaving and discussed the plan on how to use the remainder of the funds. Discussed the SPED line. Clarified what would happen as a result in the FY25 not passing, Chapter 78 funds and a special education funding and other grants as risk and could forfeit funding. School will close July 1. ALL employees will be laid off and unemployment would fall on the town. Employee benefits would be in jeopardy. Summer Special Education services will be on hold.

**5. Public Comment**

Town Resident - Had questions regarding local aid. Is this a general all-around line item and emergency fund? Is this okay to use? Where is this coming from, what department of the town?

Dr. Goguen - It comes from the town with indirect cost deducted from the total amount.

Mr. Barbaro - Local aid comes from tax dollars. That is the towns contribution to the school district.

Town Resident - Are we going to be short if a town emergency happens?

Mr. McKinney - Explains the local aid funding and how the funding is spread out over the town including the school.

Town Resident – explains her concerns of the budget and if there was a way to have the school committees' budget be reflective of receipts and expenditures? What the actuals for the FY24 and FY25.

Dr. Goguen – Explained the FY24 budget was based off of a reorganization that did not happen and the issues that the district faced while trying to plan FY25 Budget.

L. Latoria – Explain how the school is apart of the towns budget as a line item and explains how money is moved around within the school's budget.

Town Resident – How the administrations salaries are chosen? How does it work? Does the school committee approve these?

K. Kast – Clarified the process of salaries and what the superintendent vs who/what the school committee can approve. Clarifies contracts.

L. Latoria – explains we regularly do salary surveys. So, we can make sure we are assigning salaries that is comparable to other districts in the area. With experience and education being a factor as well.

Student: expresses her concerns on the budget not passing. Concerned about busses and the lack of teachers in the district and notes how many subs and different teachers she has had for class. Also, a lack of substitutes.

Student: We need teachers. Shares her concerns on the current situation on teachers. Notes that she has a para as a science teacher and a track coach for a music teacher. A teacher not able to control her class.

M. Barbaro – Explains why we may have a shortage of teachers. What things may cause use to let go a teacher.

K. Kast – explains some positions are harder to fill than others.

Resident/ Potential new teacher: Before she could sign a letter for employment at WPS, the budget didn't pass. She voiced that she would like to come to work for WPS to help build the quality of the education back up in the town.

Resident: Please with the alumni banquet and that we keep the traditions going. Voiced her concerns on passing the budget, concerns for providing emotional and behavioral support for students.

Resident – Had a question about sports and concerned about their uniforms. Different teams wearing other teams' shirts.

Resident – Questions regarding the budget. Asked about the cut teacher positions

Dr. Goguen – Explain the positions that have been cut.

Resident – What are the specials going to consist of and how that's going to help the school and fill the gaps?

B. French - Explains about the decision for the specials and the schedule of what the specials will look like for FY25.

Parent: Voices her concerns about the budget not passing. Also, to clarify the numbers on the budget handout.

M. Barbaro – Discuss the \$1.8 billion that state has not spent and some voted for this money to be spent on the MA Schools. Told people to contact legislature and ask why is the money not being spent?

J. Catlin: understands that not everyone agrees with the budget, but with everything said, he

thinks that we are on the right track to where we need to be.

D. Iannacone: Agrees, this is not a great budget. Wishes there was more to be able to address all of needs we need to. Everyone is doing what they can with limited resources. Urges everyone to pass the budget on June 18<sup>th</sup>

K. Kast: Considering a later time for budget hearing going forward. Repeated what M. Barbaro said and have people call your legislators.

**6. Adjournment:**

M. Barbaro motions to close the hearing. Second by J. Catlin. Vote Unanimous.

## **School Committee Meeting**

**1. Call to order**

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

**3. Audio Disclosure**

**4. Old Business:**

**a. Updated FY25 School Department Budget – Vote**

M. Barbaro motioned to separate teacher salaries out as a separate for vote. Second by J. Caitlin. Vote is Unanimous.

M. Barbaro removed himself from the till the budget is done.

J. Caitlin motioned to approve the updated fiscal year 2025 budget as presented. Second by D. Iannacone. Vote is unanimous.

**5. Consent Agenda:**

**a. Minuets – Vote**

D. Iannacone motioned to approve the school committee minutes of November 2<sup>nd</sup>, November 16<sup>th</sup>, November 30<sup>th</sup> of 2023 and the May 27, 2024 as presented. Second by J. Caitlin. Vote unanimous.

**6. Superintendent's Report:**

**a. Interim Superintendent's Update – Dr. Goguen, Interim Superintendent**

Let's the community know that if that have any additional questions after tonight from now till June 18<sup>th</sup> to contact her office.

All positions have been posted with a statement that these positions are contingent upon the FY25 budget passing. Interviews will take place but the official hiring will wait until after June 18<sup>th</sup>.

Summer appointment letters have gone out contingent upon the FY25 budget passing.

Appointment Mrs. Joanne Forsythe as the Interim Principal of TTE for 2024-2025. Contingent of the FY25 budget passing.

We opted not to go directly to pink slips. We will be providing appointment letters to our staff with the statement of "contingent of FY25 budget passing"

Graduations was wonderful, and attended the scholar's dinner. Congratulates the senior class on graduating and the future adventures.

The district leadership team and superintendent met with teachers on June 3<sup>rd</sup> after school. Held two forums so questions could be answered they may have been about the budget for anyone that can not make it to the school committee meetings. There was a lot of great questions that were answered. Thanks all the teachers that came to that meeting.

Continue the planning for next year and end of the year activities. Also working with the statewide system of support. They have been working with us with Toy Town around their data. Had a meeting June 4<sup>th</sup> talked about the district math prioritization plan for grades K to five.

The tired focus monitoring site visit went well. Thank Mrs., King and Mrs., Garcia for organizing the site visits and all of the work they put into it beforehand.

Exit interview with the state. The report will become public after its reviewed and shared on the school's website.

## **7. Public Comment:**

Resident: few comments and questions. Community is finally paying attention. If the district needs volunteers this is the time to ask. If parents could volunteer at least once, it can help reduce some expenses in the school. Where do we find the items being voted on by the school committee tonight so we can come prepared to ask questions. Notices the food services contract is being voted on tonight and his son constantly complains about the lunches. Concerned on the type of food that is being served, "kids need actual nutrition" Also notes that he wishes these meetings had text to speech that the town meetings have. Many residents cannot hear properly when the committee is speaking.

K. Kast: Can't speak about the food. Can look into the text to speech. Will work on getting information out to the community before the meetings so they are aware of the information being voted on.

Dr. Goguen – Would like to contact you later to discuss the concerns with your son regarding the food. The children do have choices and are regulated by the state and federal to produce well rounded meals.

## **8. New Business**

### **a. School Choice for 2024-2025 School Year – Vote**

Dr. Goguen gives the numbers of open seats for each grade. She does recommend that we do not have any open seats available for schools' choice from K to Grade 8. Recommends that school choice be open at the high school with a cap enrollment of hitting 85 students.

J. Caitlin: Why do not have school choice for elementary and middle school?

Dr. Goguen: We want to make sure our class sizes stay reasonable, some enrollment deductions. Making sure we have room for potential new residents. The high school has room for school choice.

J. Caitlin: How did you get to the school choice numbers for the high school?

Dr. Goguen: Explains the reason how the came to these numbers.

L. Latoria: Noted that kids who have already been approved for school choice for K-8, they can continue to attend Winchendon Public Schools.

D. Iannacone motions to approve the school choice seats for 2024 -2025 year as presented. Second by J. Caitlin. Vote is unanimous.

**b. Food Services Management Company Contract Extension – Vote**

D. Iannacone motions to approve the one-year extension of the agreement as presented. Second by J. Caitlin. Vote is unanimous.

**c. School Business Manager Contract – Vote**

Three-year extension to the contract contingent upon the FY25 budget.

M. Barbaro motions to appoint the school business manager a recommended by the superintendent contingent upon the FY25 budget. Second by D. Iannacone. Vote is Unanimous.

**d. Fy25 Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation Fund Update – Vote**

M. Barbaro motions to accept the funds donated by Robinson-Broadhurst foundation as presented. Second by J. Caitlin. Vote is unanimous.

**9. Future Agenda Items:**

**a. Handbook Updates/Bullying Intervention**

**10. Closing Member Comments**

M. Barbaro: Apologizes to students for not being able to attend graduations and the dinners. Had prior commitments before he was elect to the committee. Says thanks to all the speakers tonight.

D. Iannacone: was also unable to attend the graduation this year to prior commitments.

J. Caitlin: Help spread the word for June 18<sup>th</sup>.

K. Kast: Please to take part of the graduation ceremonies. Disappointed she was not able to attend the alumni Banquet. Thanks everyone that came and who spoke at the meeting.

**11. Adjournment**

M. Barbaro motions to adjourn. Second by D. Iannacone. Vote is unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted:



Darcie Morin, Payroll & Data Specialist