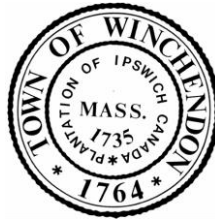


TOWN OF WINCHENDON



Finance Committee

Telephone (978)-297-5419

Regular Meeting/Public Hearing

Finance Committee Minutes

March 10, 2020

2nd Floor Auditorium

Present: Vice-Chair Dr. Maureen Ward, David Alexander, Charles C. Corts, Douglas Delay, Keith Kent, Phillip Levine

Absent: Chairman Thomas J. Kane Jr.,

Guests: Dr. Sheila Harrity- Superintendent-Director of Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School District; Tammy Crockett- District Directory Administrator

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- Monty Tech 2021 Budget
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6:30PM: Vice-Chair Dr. Ward called the Finance Committee meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dr. Harrity started the presentation by listing a few highlights from the past year which included; 97.2% graduation rate and 0.1% drop out rate. The school has been writing grants to supplement the equipment needed in the vocational programs. They received \$495,000 from the Skills Capital Grant. They created an ARM(automation robotic megatronic) lab. The school was selected to be profiled in the state STEM week. They also received \$384,000 from the skills grant for health occupation and auto tech programs. The veterinary program is now open for significantly reduced animal care. The VCA is paying for the veterinary Dr. to run the clinic and the students assist. The January they started the dental and surgery procedures. The school is committed to the Co-Op programs where students are sent out on internships and qualify for a second semester for Junior and Senior year. Every year the school has a motivational speaker and this year Erin Gruwell from Freedom Writers came and did an outstanding job. The school is open after hours for adult training programs and currently there are 1,700 adults enrolled. They received \$80,000 to get new doors and a gate for safety access in the back. Last year they asked the school committee for a faculty assessment which was contracted with DRA and completed in the Spring-Fall. Monty Tech is over 50 years old, and while it is well taken care of, an assessment was needed for the

upkeep on maintenance and repairs. The high priority repairs would cost \$3,689,000 within the next 1-3 years, the medium priority repairs would cost \$7,500,000 within 3-8 years, and the low priority repairs would cost \$4,500,000 ongoing. The total cost of repairs in the existing facility would cost \$113,000,000 and \$160,000,000 if they were to build a new facility of 320,000 sq. ft.

Mr. Kent asked what were the top 2-3 programs that attract students to Monty Tech. Dr. Harrity replied that Veterinary Science is huge right now, also the health program, Cosmetology, Culinary, and Electrical are all very popular programs.

Ms. Crockett began her presentation. FY2021 is the first year of implementation of the student opportunity act, which is where the government committed to make a large investment in education and are phasing it in over a 7 year period. They are asking school districts to write a 3 year evidence based plan on how they plan to address achievement gaps and increase opportunities amongst all student sub groups. They determined that ELL (english language learners) needed help as only 22% made progress towards English proficiency. The increase in Chapter 70 is \$230,320 which is what the state considers as SOA funds. The current ESL instructor is at a .5 level, with the other .5 in English Language, and the plan is to increase it to 1.0 to spend more time with the students and devote his entire teaching to ESL. They will also be added an ESL paraprofessional to help with an additional teacher in the shops. There is an MCAS program over the summer for the students who need additional help, and they will be adding and ESL teach to that. Several ESL students are also Special Ed students, so they will be reviewing the co-teachers for special ed as well.

Dr. Ward asked to review what has already been implemented for professional development regarding ESL and their current staff. Dr. Harrity explained that prior to the new regulations, only the academic instructors were required to go through SEI (Sheltered English Immersion) training and was necessary to renew their license, but it was never required for vocational instructors. The regulations were recently changed that required the training to be completed if the teachers had a ELL student in their class, the next year the teacher needed to complete the state approved course. They set aside funding and asked all the instructors to complete the course in 2 years, half have gone through it and the other half are completing it now.

Ms. Crockett continued her presentation to explain some of the components that were under funded in the past and will receive an increase of funds. Employee benefits and fixed charges was one area that was under funded regarding health care for the faculty. Guidance, psychological services, special education, EL (english learners), are also lacking funding. Since Monty Tech is independent, they pay their own benefits, plowing/sanding, repairs, etc. versus a city/town school- they typically fund most of those costs.

Monty Tech's foundation budget for 2021 is projected to be \$25,602,266, which is also known as the net school spending requirement. It is the minimum required amount the school must spend to educate the pupils, not counting capital, bonding, and pupil transportation. Divided out by the pupil, the spending amount is \$17,632 per pupil. The net school spending requirement went up \$572,009 from 2020, and they are only receiving \$230,320. The state is putting the shared burden on the communities to come up with \$341,689.

The total proposed budget is \$28,814,865 which is a .19% (\$54,663) increase from last year. \$1,500,000 is proposed for transportation aid. Additional reimbursement will be coming in 2 payments of \$25,00 from FY19.

Ms. Crockett explained a few necessary repairs including replacement of the leaking glass to the restaurant, air conditioning for the electronics/engineering/graphics rooms, replacement of busses, etc. Mr. Corts motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Kent. The board unanimously voted aye.
Alexander (Y) Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Kent (Y) Levine (Y) Ward (Y) 6-0

The meeting adjourned at 7:42PM.

Respectfully submitted:



Brianna Roberts, Finance Committee Recording Secretary

Tom Kane, Chairman

Maureen Ward, Vice-Chair

David Alexander

Charles C. Corts

Douglas Delay

Keith Kent

Phillip Levine