

Date Approved/Released: 5-19-16

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School Committee Chair: D LaPointe

SCHOOL COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING  
FY'17 BUDGET  
THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2016  
TOWN HALL AUDITORIUM

1. Call to order: 6:00 P M.

Present: Dawn Harris, Greg Vine, Danielle LaPointe, Janet Corbosiero, Larry Murphy  
Steve Haddad-Superintendent, Mark Chapulis-Business Office, TMS

2. Pledge of Allegiance

S. Haddad stated the proposed FY17 budget is as close to level service as possible. The budget total is \$15,177,656, which includes state and local aide and grants. Challenges this budget season included resolving a projected deficit of \$450,000. School Choice-In tuitions dropped from \$305,721 to \$216,487. School Choice-Out tuitions increased \$702,304 to \$785,601. Other changes in FY15 Circuit Breaker was \$389,280; in FY16 it was down to \$311,324. Indirect Costs decreased from \$3,812,608 to \$3,688,556. The budget was put together to keep every teacher in their classroom. A principal is retiring; the district is going to a 2 principal model. The Middle School and High School will have one principal, as will the elementary schools-Memorial and Toy Town. There will be assistant principals in each school building. S. Haddad feels it will be sufficient for the district due to strong leadership in all departments. The administration anticipates some salary increases; negotiations are ongoing with 4 unions so those numbers are not finalized. The current salaries are in the budget now. School trends depict a steady decline in student population. He reiterated his belief that the WPS is a great system. Grant revenue is down by \$100,000, largely from the lost 21<sup>st</sup> Century grant. It is being vigorously pursued for FY18 and beyond.

**Budget:**

S. Haddad noted the health care costs down while retaining the same number of employees due to the new health insurance program. He thanked Mr. Hickey and the Interim Town Manager Bernie Lynch for their help and support; recognition was extended to the whole town hall staff.

The most significant change is the elimination of 2 secretarial positions to fund a Superintendent's Assistant, one of his requirements. This is the Governor's budget proposal; the House and Senate usually allocate more money for education. Final figures will be provided when available.

The Athletic Department increase depicts coach stipends and to restore cuts made last year. Athletic transportation was not sufficiently funded last year. Gate fee accounting has improved. S. Haddad advised against increasing user fees, stating sport (and all extra-curricular) participation helps students be successful. The 'Athletic Director' salary will be identified as 60% for teacher salary and 40% for Athletic Director salary in the budget.

**Citizen Questions:**

Tom Kane, resident and member of the FinCom, asked questions about the structure of the budget and individual line items to help him prepare for the school budget presentation to the FinCom. Sped education tuition line items were explained. He noted that the year-to-dates are always way in deficit.

M. Chapulis explained the proposed budget to be more representative of the funding and funding sources, to be more easily identified. The committee needs to schedule a presentation to the FinCom. Monty Tech representatives are presenting that schools' budget to the FinCom on Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>.

S. Haddad noted a comment made during a conversation between Jim Murphy and Burt Gould, Monty Tech representative. Mr. Gould is said to have stated 'don't expect any help from the students of Monty

Tech because of the way you are questioning the quotas'. D. LaPointe wanted it on the record that this was a threat. Mr. Kane noted that the FinCom wants to understand how the enrollment system works and the original enrollment agreement. The school committee offered to forward its' list of questions and answers regarding Monty Tech.

6:28 PM D. Harris asked for more questions; there were none.

Comments- J. Corbosiero thanked S. Haddad, Marc Chapulis and all of the administrators for working so hard on the budget. She appreciates how hard it has been and how much work was put into it. She noted the committee has looked at it repeatedly and asked questions prior to this meeting, and will continue to do so.

L. Murphy noted it is not easy to get a level based budget, that some hard decisions about education issues had to be made to make this budget work.

G. Vine stated he is disappointed that more residents and taxpayers are not here to examine the budget and ask questions. He feels they should have more interest regarding the money spent on the communities' children.

The per-pupil expenditure is \$11,756.51.

The Net School Spending minimum is \$16,220,012.

Per pupil expenditure comparison over past years was discussed.

Chris Ricard, WTA President asked for per pupil past figures so the trend can be determined.

Adjournment: 6:34 PM J. Corbosiero moved to adjourn. Second by L. Murphy. Approved 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Barrie E. Martins, School Committee Recording Secretary