



Town of Medway
FINANCE COMMITTEE

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Thursday, December 1, 2022 – 6:00 PM
Presentation Room, Medway Middle School
45 Holliston Street

Joint Meeting of the School Committee with the Select Board and Finance Committee

Finance Committee Members Present: Brian Cowan, Vice Chair; Ellen Hillery, Clerk; Bruce Carbone; Will Lane; and Sue Segarra.

Finance Committee Members Absent: Jim Sullivan, Chair; Chris Lagan, Jeff O'Neill, and Michael Schrader.

Select Board Members Present: Todd Alessandri; Maryjane White; Frank Rossi; Glenn Trindade (remote)

School Committee Members Present: Susan Dietrich, Chair; Melissa Greenfield, Lauren Nassiff, Kailene Simon, and Cindy Sullivan.

Others Present from Medway Public Schools: Superintendent Armand Pires, Director of Finance Pat Leonhardt, Assistant Business Manager Kristyn DeDonato, Assistant Superintendent Gabrielle Abrams, and Ellen Quinn, Secretary to the School Committee.

Others Present: Michael Boynton, Town Manager; Carol Pratt, Finance Director.

Call to Order

At 6:02 PM Ms. Dietrich called the meeting of the School Committee to order.

At 6:03 PM Mr. Rossi called the meeting of the Select Board to order with three members present in the meeting room and one participating remotely.

At 6:03 PM Mr. Cowan called the meeting of the Finance Committee to order with five members present.

At this time, Ms. Dietrich identified all people present from Medway Public Schools and the School Committee.

Discussion – FY23 School Budget Reconfiguration

The following information was reviewed: (1) Memorandum, dated November 30, 2022, from Patricia Leonhardt, Director of Finance and Operations, Reconfigured FY23 Budget Status Report; (2) List of Revolving and Other Accounts; and (3) Chart of Accounts – Criteria for Financial Reporting.

Dr. Pires explained that this revised budget represents the kickoff for FY24 budget planning. This realigns the budget to reflect all sources of funding that were not available in the spring. He announced that there is presently a deficit, adding that it should be decreased going forward.

Ms. Patricia Leonhardt, Director of Finance and Operations, noted she was the author of the memorandum that had been distributed. She briefly reviewed a number of categories that were impacted by changes to the budget. The purpose of the Business Office is fiscal management, and all changes are noted within the process, no matter how small. There is no reflection on her predecessor, adding that she is learning Medway's processes as the school year unfolds.

Turning attention to the section titled Improved Alignment with DESE Chart of Accounts, Ms. Leonhardt reviewed how various expenses were reported, moving some from one category to another to more accurately reflect that expense. This included several salaries, athletic equipment to athletic supplies, technology expenses to their more specific account, contracted special education services, and account lines moved to more approximately align with DESE functions.

Under Changes Needed to Reflect New Special Education Department Structure, Dr. Pires noted that salary was moved to a function line to reflect the salary for the Assistant Director of Special Education position, and similarly, changes to partially support SPED team chairs related to the application of ACCEPT facility usage fees to the Custodial Revolving Account.

Changes needed due to receipt of ACCEPT payments revealed that facilities usage will now be paid by ACCEPT as necessary rather than a credit against tuition fees. Ms. Leonhardt explained why this is necessary relative to accounting procedures, i.e., revenue must be deposited into a revolving account from which the expenses are paid.

Changes needed due to Projected Expenditures in Excess of Budgeted Amounts focused on a number of areas involving Out of District Tuition (OOD), and OOD Transportation. Regarding Teacher Substitutes, Dr. Pires emphasized that overall there is not a significant impact on education other than the uncertainty of whether substitute teachers will be available when needed, pointing out that the salary for subs is less than surrounding communities and therefore fewer individuals are available. Other areas included Paraprofessional Salaries, and Centralization of Special Education Supplies and Other Expenses Monies. It was noted that the FY23 budget reconfiguration process is occurring prior to the settlement of the MFT contracts for teachers, paraprofessionals and secretaries; therefore, the changes proposed now are predicated on projections and subject to potentially even more change than normal.

Mr. Alessandri asked about the \$140,000 allotted for the purchase of MacBook computers. Ms. Abrams responded that the schools were able to secure a state grant which covered this purchase. Regarding the substitute teachers, he suggested getting a year's report on usage and costs rather than a month-to-month. Dr. Pires noted that it is being done this way as projected costs, and apply the month-to-month figures as they occur. Over time, administration will continue to refine projected needs based on the short- and long-term substitute teacher needs.

Responding to another question from Mr. Alessandri, Dr. Pires noted that there are more paraprofessionals this year as necessitated by student education plans. It has been difficult to fill positions.

Ms. Leonhardt reviewed the Mid-Year FY23 Budget Status Update, noting that the General Fund budget is projected to have an approximately \$625,000 deficit. There is a plan for the management of this deficit.

Discussion followed on the largest contributing factors including Out of District Tuition, Transportation which also included the Out of District placements and increased costs of routes, and Salaries.

Budget shortfalls for those categories are:

Out of District Tuition	-\$428,601
Transportation	-\$342,115
Payroll	-\$375,592

The total for these is over \$1.1 million, some of which is offset by revenues or available balances in other areas of the budget.

Discussion followed on seeking out candidates with the best credentials (experience, education, etc.) who are often the most expensive based on these factors. The COVID-19 pandemic affected the availability of personnel as many teachers nearing retirement made that decision, and the resulting shortage of teachers made hiring difficult and costly.

Ms. Leon explained that there are District Options for End-of-Year Account Overages at the end of Fiscal Year 2023 (June 30, 2023) which will be reviewed and utilized as needed:

Available account balances within the General Fund
Circuit Breaker FY23 Revenue
School Choice Revolving Fund
Available ESSER III monies

Discussion followed.

Revolving Account Update

Dr. Pires noted that these balances are as of September 30, 2022. The accounts are in good shape, especially as compared to the same accounts during the pandemic. The School Lunch account is continuing to supply breakfast and lunch as needed, and it is anticipated that this account will continue to grow as the need increases.

Adjourn

At 6:53 PM Ms. Sullivan made a motion to adjourn the School Committee meeting; Ms. Nassiff seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 5-0-0.

At 6:53 PM Mr. Alessandri made a motion to adjourn the Select Board meeting; Ms. White seconded. No discussion. ROLL CALL VOTE: 4-0-0 (Alessandri, aye; Rossi, aye; Trindade, aye; White, aye). It is noted that, because a member participated remotely, a roll call vote was required in accordance with the Town's Remote Participation Policy.

At 6:64 PM Mr. Cowan made a motion to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting; Mr. Lane seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 5-0-0.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette Galliardt
Night Board Secretary*