

Weston Public Schools
 Board of Education Meeting – Budget Workshop #1
 Weston Middle School Library Resource Center
 January 13, 2015

Attendance:

Philip Schaefer, Chairperson	Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent
Ellen Uzenoff, Vice Chairperson	Dr. Jo-Ann Keating, Director of Finance & Ops.
Dana Levin, Secretary/Treasurer	
Nina Daniel	<i>Absent:</i> Elise Major
Denise Harvey	Lewis Brey, Director of Human Resources
Sara Spaulding	Jackson Marvin, Student Representative
Dr. Colleen Palmer, Superintendent	Jack Seigenthaler, Student Representative

CALL TO ORDER, VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

Philip Schaefer, Chairperson

Mr. Schaefer announced that there will be two televised work sessions at 6:00 p.m. next week, prior to each Board workshop, to discuss long-term planning for facilities utilization and possible use of district facilities by the Town.

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. SUPERINTENDENT’S OVERVIEW

Dr. Palmer, Superintendent of Schools, discussed the 2016 fiscal plan goals, budget drivers, cost containments, and efficiencies behind the proposed 3.17% increase over the adopted 2014-2015 budget. Approximately \$1.5 million of the budget comes from the major budget drivers of contractually-obligated salaries and benefits, software, and contracts. She explained why the budget increases with decreasing enrollment, how the district has downsized staffing, and why, historically, our budget has come in significantly lower than most of our DRG-A counterparts. Dr. Palmer stressed that this budget speaks to how technology is going to transform our district, and outlined information technology and educational technology roles. Discussion by the Board, Town officials, and administrators followed.

Arne de Keijzer, Salem Road. Mr. de Keijzer requested points of clarification within the budget book.

Dan McNeill, Steep Hill Road. Mr. McNeill asked about the threshold for enrollment and the possibility of only decreasing 1.0FTE in kindergarten. He also commented on enrollment cohorts increasing.

III. INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Dr. Craw, Assistant Superintendent, framed the current proposed curricular budget, which represents a 6.29% increase of the adopted FY 2015 budget. The increase reflects adding a Director of Digital Learning and Innovation and reallocating the technology

integrators to this cost center. Budget priorities are professional development (facilitated by curricular instructional leaders) and literacy, math, and STEM initiatives.

Dr. Craw also reviewed district accomplishments for the 2014-15 school year in professional and curriculum development, and the next level of work desired for 2015-2016. Discussion by the Board, Town officials, and administrators followed.

IV. DISTRICT-WIDE SERVICES

Dr. Keating, Director of Finance and Operations, discussed the categories of expenditures covered in this cost center – pupil transportation, the copy center, employee turnover, degree changes, negotiations, allowance for non-represented salary increases, liability insurance, employee benefits, and the internal services fund. Discussion by the Board, Town officials, and administrators followed.

Dan McNeill, Steep Hill Road. Mr. McNeill asked questioned about the model we are using for health insurance and alternatives.

V. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Keating, Director of Finance and Operations, discussed the duties, responsibilities, and staff associated with this cost center, and reviewed the proposed changes to non-salary accounts, including legal fees and materials. Discussion by the Board followed.

VI. TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Haakonsen, Director of Technology, presented the 2015-2016 budget for technology services, which includes replacing an aging mobile fleet of computers; leveraging software purchases and enhancing automation; updating infrastructure for staff, students, and the Town; and a department reorganization. The total technology budget request is an increase of \$79,487 over the FY 2015 request. Discussion by the Board, Town officials, and administrators followed.

VII. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC

There were no additional questions or comments beyond what was discussed previously.

ADJOURNMENT

*Motion: Motion to adjourn by Ms. Harvey, second by Mrs. Levin, all in favor. (6-0)
Meeting adjourned at 9:59 p.m.*

Minutes prepared by Jennifer Markov, Board of Education Clerk.

Minutes reviewed/approved by Dr. Colleen Palmer, Superintendent.