

Weston Public Schools
 Board of Education Meeting – Budget Workshop #1
 Weston Middle School Library Resource Center
 January 19, 2016

Attendance:

Ellen Uzenoff, Chairperson	Dr. Colleen Palmer, Superintendent
Philip Schaefer, Vice Chairperson	Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent
Elise Major, Secretary/Treasurer	Richard Rudl, Director of Finance & Ops.
Jacqueline Blechinger	Lewis Brey, Director of Human Resources
Denise Harvey	
Daniel McNeill	
Sara Spaulding	

II. RESUME REGULAR SESSION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mrs. Ellen Uzenoff, Board Chairperson, announced that the second and third budget workshops may be combined into one workshop due to the possibility of a snowstorm. A decision will be forthcoming tomorrow.

1. APPOINTMENT OF SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH COMMITTEE

It is the Board of Education’s responsibility to hire the district’s chief executive, although the community will be involved in the process.

Motion: Moved that the Weston Board of Education hereby appoints the members of the Board to serve as a Personnel Search Committee for the purpose of conducting a search, and recommending to the Board a candidate for Superintendent. Motion by Elise, second by Mr. Schaefer, all in favor. (7-0)

2. SUPERINTENDENT’S OVERVIEW

Dr. Colleen Palmer, Superintendent of Schools, discussed the 2017 budget assumptions; focus areas; enrollment trends and FY 2017 enrollment projections; and a summary of expenses, budget drivers, cost containments, and efficiencies behind the proposed 1.48% increase over the adopted 2015-2016 budget. Approximately 80% of the budget, and 74% of the increase, comes from salaries and benefits for district employees. Dr. Palmer stressed that this budget invests in the future of WPS to actualize the vision of the Board of Education, preserves and strengthens existing opportunities, and cultivates innovative pathways to cutting-edge world-class educational practice and school cultures that sustain the position of enduring excellence for Weston Public Schools.

3. INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Dr. Kenneth Craw, Assistant Superintendent, framed the current proposed curricular budget, which represents a 1.41% decrease from the adopted FY 2016 budget. The

priorities within teaching and learning are K-12 writing, STEM, K-12 mathematics, academic innovation and measurement, and digital learning. Dr. Craw also highlighted district accomplishments for the 2015-16 school year in the priority areas, the next level of work desired for 2016-2017, and essential resources for learning for FY 2017. Discussion by the Board followed on curriculum development work, dues and fees, testing and evaluation, multi-year costs associated with maker spaces and learning commons, readers and writers workshop, and consulting fees.

4. TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL LEARNING

Dr. Craig Tunks, Director of Digital Learning and Innovation, discussed the current and future impact of digital learning on curriculum and instruction in the areas of learning commons, Makerspaces, technology integration, a hybrid Bring Your Own Device model, and virtual education. Budget increase drivers for FY 2017 include staffing, hardware purchases, and software licenses, which allows for growing on past purchases, library learning commons, Makerspace, and online learning. Discussion by the Board and Town officials followed on Bring Your Own Device, technology hardware, projector replacements, staffing changes, the district's technology vision, licensing, e-rate, and virtual learning. The Board requested a breakdown of software between school and administrative use.

5. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Richard Rudl, Director of Finance and Operations, discussed the duties, responsibilities, and staff associated with this cost center, including a business office reorganization. Mr. Rudl also reviewed the proposed changes to non-salary accounts, including legal fees, professional and technical services, and dues/memberships. Discussion by the Board followed.

6. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC

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

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 10:13 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jennifer Markov, Board of Education Clerk.