

Weston Public Schools
 Board of Education Meeting – Budget Workshop #2
 Weston Middle School Library Resource Center
 January 21, 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 & Operations
Jacqueline Blechinger	Lewis Brey, Director of Human Resources
Denise Harvey	
Daniel McNeill	
Sara Spaulding	

CALL TO ORDER, VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

Ellen Uzenoff, Chairperson

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. DISTRICT WIDE SERVICES

Mr. Richard Rudl, 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 followed on transportation.

III. HURLBUTT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The proposed Hurlbutt Elementary School budget represents a 1.63% decrease over the FY 2016 adopted budget, primarily due to decreased enrollment. Mrs. Laura Kaddis, Hurlbutt Elementary School Principal, explained the budget drivers as enrollment, staffing, and books and materials. Cost containment measures include a decrease of 2.0 FTE in teachers, a minimal increase for books and materials, and philanthropy donations from the PTO. Discussion by the Board followed on team leader reduction and substitutes.

IV. WESTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Ms. Pattie Falber, Weston Intermediate School Principal, presented the intermediate school’s proposed budget, which represents a 1.64% increase over FY 2016 due to salaries and benefits. Priorities that drive budget decisions include academic, social/emotional, and behavioral programs; staffing; opportunities for students to receive support and enrichment; technology integration to support teaching and learning; high-quality professional development; and safety and security of students and staff. To contain costs, there will be a 1.0 FTE certified staff reduction in fourth grade and .29 FTE reduction in special subjects classroom teachers, a minimal decrease for non-salary accounts, CIL and administration-led professional development will be utilized, and PTO philanthropy grants will offer support. Discussion by the Board followed on enrollment and Board of Education class size guidelines.

V. WESTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mr. Dan Doak, Weston Middle School Principal, explained accomplishments for FY 2016, anticipated enrollment for FY 2017, proposed staffing changes, and the next level of work at the middle school. Discussion by the Board followed on the Mock Trial program and 3D printers for technology and engineering courses.

VI. WESTON HIGH SCHOOL

Weston High School Principal Mrs. Lisa Deorio presented the high school proposed budget. Mrs. Deorio discussed district initiatives, accomplishments for FY 2016, anticipated enrollment for FY 2017, proposed staffing changes, and the next level of work, including new courses. Discussion by the Board followed on staffing changes, world languages, the writing lab, the senior internship, and class sizes for the Introduction to Coding Course.

VII. ATHLETICS

For FY 2017, a total of 884 student athletes, 41 more than FY 2016, are expected. The proposed athletic budget is \$792,872, which represents a 3.9% increase over the FY 2016 budget request. Mr. Mark Berkowitz, Athletic Director, explained that fixed expenses such as officials, coaching stipends, transportation, and insurance are the major budget drivers. Cost efficiencies include outside financial support, participation fees, gate receipts, no equipment costs, and no increase in supplies. Discussion by the Board and Town officials followed on insurance costs, the Unified Sports coach, and changes in anticipated participation in various sports.

VIII. FACILITIES

Mr. Joe Olenik, Director of School Facilities, presented the FY 2017 budget request of \$4,352,251, which is a 0.8% increase over FY 2016. Mr. Olenik, along with Dr. Craig Tunks, Director of Digital Learning and Innovation, discussed the scope of work of the Facilities Department; FY 2016 accomplishments; major budget drivers; the proposed capital budget, including the breakdown of anticipated costs for the library learning commons project; and proposed maintenance projects. Discussion by the Board and Town officials followed on the property services line item, air conditioning, the shift in allocation for an administrative assistant from technology to facilities, the electrical services line item under Maintenance of Facilities, the library learning commons project, and energy education.

IX. SECURITY

Dr. Craig Tunks, Director of Digital Learning and Innovation, discussed the FY 2017 security initiatives and progress made in the areas of response time, visitor management, knowing what to do, and hardening the exterior. Dr. Tunks also covered district wide safety and security staff, including security guards and the School Resource Officer. Questions by the Board followed on security guards and police/fire line items on the school budgets.

X. SPECIAL EDUCATION

Ms. Lois Pernice, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, presented the key budget drivers of the \$7,345,696 proposed special education budget as staffing, outplacements,

contracted services, mediation requests, increased student needs, and Effective School Solutions (ESS). The proposed budget for FY 2017 is a 4.37% increase over the FY 2016 adopted budget, and is 15% of the total proposed operating budget. Ms. Pernice highlighted key accomplishments for FY 2016, budget changes, and the cost containment strategy in this budget, which is the proposed ESS program to help keep potential outplaced students in-district. Discussion by the Board and Town officials followed on ESS, the Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) position, and grants.

XI. PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES

The pupil personnel services cost center, with a proposed budget of \$2,609,715 for FY 2017, includes services for student counseling, psychologists, nursing, English language learner support, tutors, and occupational and physical therapy for regular and special needs students. The budget reflects a 1.9% increase over the FY 2016 adopted budget. Ms. Pernice discussed budget drivers, which are contracted wage increases, a decreased need for staff training in the area of drug and alcohol concerns, a reduction in occupational therapy services, increased costs for additional SAT and PSAT testing, clarification of psychologist/counselor FTE, and decreased printing and binding costs. Discussion by the Board followed on potential future sharing of psychologists and counselors between buildings and college on-site visits.

XII. SUPERINTENDENT CONCLUDING REMARKS

Dr. Colleen Palmer, Superintendent of Schools, expressed that we have presented a fiscally responsible budget at 1.48% that provides for the educational program in place, hold the gains, and provide an investment for the future.

XIII. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC

There were no additional questions or comments from the public. Mr. Philip Schaefer, Board Vice Chair, requested the consideration of allocating additional funds in this budget for one teacher with benefits for a grade approaching guidelines and for a Finalsite website upgrade.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Jennifer Markov, Board of Education Clerk.