

**MARLBOROUGH BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING - BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES**

Wednesday, February 7, 2024 @ 6:00 p.m.

Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School – Library

UNOFFICIAL

1. Call to Order & Roll Call:

Kerri Barella, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

BOE Members Present: Kerri Barella, Susan Stolfi, Angela Colantonio, Chip Morris, Jean Wilson and Amy Kuhrt

Administration Present: Dr. Holly Hageman, Superintendent
Dan White, Principal
Kim Kelley, Assistant Principal
John Mercier, Director of Operations

Guest: Jason Lathrop, Finance Assistant

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Public Comments:

Deb Borbeau, N. Main St. – raised questions about the proposed budget including whether two full time administrators are necessary.

Betty O'Brien, N. Main St. – stated that she feels a 2.69% budget increase is not fiscally responsible.

Heather Little, Hickory Rd. – stated her preference to have one Principal and one full time Special Education Director instead of 2 full time principals and a part time Special Education Director.

Ann Terezakis, Jones Hollow Rd. – wants assurances that every student that has special needs receives adequate evaluations and gets an IEP or 504 plan that is well supervised and is concerned that the budget is “top heavy”.

Emails from community members read by Chairperson:

Sara Piccolo, Victoria Ln. – requests the Board consider a full time Special Education Director.

Ashley Wolf, Hickory Rd. – feels the establishment of a full time qualified Special Education Director is needed.

4. Continue Review, Discussion and Take Possible Action Re: FY2024-25 Proposed Budget and Capital Improvement Plan:

Chip Morris asked Dr. Hageman to review line item 111, Certified Personnel. Dr. Hageman explained that that line consists of the 2 full time Building Administrators and the part time Superintendent. Quite a while ago, the District made a decision to go from a full-time Superintendent to a part-time Superintendent. Building Administrators are managing and leading the day-to-day work.

The District saves a considerable financial amount with a part-time Superintendent. Building Administrators will continue to facilitate PPTs and 504 meetings and be very connected to all of the specialized programs as they currently are. Having two full time Building Administrators allows for each administrator to delve more intensively into teaching and learning, curriculum and program oversight as well as being in classrooms on a daily basis, attend data team meetings, track student progress on a daily basis, and being visible and present with students and staff.

The proposed Pupil Services Director position, which was a part time position 6 years ago, is in the special education line within the budget. The position is in the special education line as it's important for state reporting relative to Maintenance of Effort (expenses that are specific to special education). In coordination with the responsibilities of the building administrators, the Pupil Services Director will oversee the district's special education programs, 504 plans, and related services.. The person would serve as a liaison to Social Services agencies such as DCF and AHM as well as with out-of-district placement and magnet school educational agencies. They will oversee transitional PPTs, including Birth-to-Three meetings, high level/complex PPTs, prepare for legal proceedings if needed, grant management, and complete federal and state reports that the district has an obligation to prepare on an annual basis.

If the budget is passed, the Pupil Services Director position will be publicly posted. A team will review applications and interview candidates for the position. Given some of the concerns expressed about the potential constraint of posting the position at .45 FTE, that the Board could consider expanding the position posting to be up to a 0.5 FTE. Opening up the position to 0.5 FTE might yield a wider pool of people who are not retired and limited by TRB caps.

Dr. Hageman informed the Board that the transportation contract came in a little lower than expected at a decrease of \$5577.10 from what is currently in the budget. Dr. Hageman, would like to adjust the Budget accordingly, and this reduction could offset the increased cost of posting the Pupil Services Director at up to 0.5 FTE.

With the change in the transportation contract and a shift from a 0.45 FTE to an “up to” 0.5 FTE Pupil Services Director position, the budget would increase by \$2503 and bring the budget from a 2.69% increase to a 2.72% increase.

A. Colantonio made a motion that the board reduce the budget in the amount of \$5577.10 due to the lower Bus Contract figure., seconded by A. Kuhrt. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

K. Barella made a motion that the Board increase the Budget by \$8,081.05 in order to post the Pupil Services Director position at “up to” 5 FTE., seconded by C. Morris. In favor of changing the position to “up to“ 0.5 FTE, increasing the budget: K. Barella, A. Kuhrt, J. Wilson and C. Morris. Opposing “up to” 0.5 FTE: S. Stolfi and A. Colantonio 4 in favor, 2 opposed, MOTION CARRIED.

C. Morris made a motion that the Board approve of the Operating Budget in the amount of \$8,664,081.00 and the Capital Improvement Plan request of \$75,000 for FY25., seconded by A. Colantonio. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

5. Adjournment

A. Colantonio made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 pm. Seconded by J. Wilson. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carmela Monte
Board Clerk