

Westport School Committee
Budget Work Session
DATE: Monday, June 1, 2020
Time 6:30 p.m.
PLACE: Virtual Meeting

This meeting is being held remotely in accordance with the Governor of Massachusetts' March 12, 2020 order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. c.30A, Section 20

Join video call - meet.google.com/azy-ctxz-rtw

Join by phone +1 234-719-3621 (PIN: 568 510 493#)

MINUTES

Members Present: Michelle Orlando, Melissa Pacheco, Nancy Stanton Cross, Nancy Tavares, Antonio Viveiros

Also Present: Dr. Gary Reese, Superintendent, Thomas Aubin Assistant Superintendent, MJSHS Principal, Michelle Rapoza School Business Manager, Melissa Sousa Business Office, Kim Ouellette Supervisor of Custodians

I. Call to Order - Chair Viveiros opened the Virtual School Committee Budget Work Session at 6:35 pm.

III. FY20 Furlough Update - Custodial Staffing (*taken out of order*) -

Ms. Ouellette would like the custodians back from furlough next week at 5 days a week. If they are kept furloughed until the end of June they will be 2 weeks behind for the summer.

Dr. Reese informed everyone that the Department of Labor and Standards has guidance for essential workers when doing work on COVID19 work related tasks. This guidance is specific and limits what custodians can do. Some tasks may not have been completed in April due to these limits.

Ms. Ouellette went over the many tasks custodians will do upon return. Besides cleaning, custodians are also responsible for cutting grass and maintaining fields. Ms. Ouellette mentioned she is having problems with coverage due to employees taking vacation time.

Ms. Ouellette purchased cleaning items for example disinfectant cleaner, spray bottles with disinfectant, and electrostatic disinfectant sprayers, 13 small sprayers and 13 larger sprayers. These sprayers disinfect an entire classroom within 10 minutes. Every classroom needs to be done every day and wiped down. These sprayers are good for high use areas like OTPT, cafeteria, athletic training room, extended day area.

II. FY21 Budget Discussion -

Dr. Reese reported town officials including the BOS, FinCom, and school are meeting tomorrow to discuss the budget.

Dr. Reese shared a spreadsheet document with the members. On February 5, 2020 the committee approved a school budget of \$19,597,562 which reflected 4.35% above this year's budget. On March 6, 2020 adjustments were made to reduce the budget by \$256,940 to

\$19,340,617. Additional proposed cuts brought the budget figure down to \$18,417,481. There has been an overall decrease in the original budget by \$1,101,460.

There was a meeting last week with discussion taking place on flexibility with steps and lane increases, as well as retirement or exit incentives for employees. There are about 20 employees that have more than 20 years of service. Offering incentives to retire or exit could see a savings of \$250,000. Funds would not be paid out until next year's budget. Some districts separate it in 2 payments over 2 years.

AFCME could see a savings of \$200,000.

It was recommended instead of cutting positions, take the figure from last year's budget and level fund it at 0 with the opportunity to do retirement incentives. Town is starting at zero and the school will be doing the same thing. Both Town and school begin equally at the same starting point.

Discussion took place on the need to know whether schools will see any of the \$600,000 set aside for capital improvements. The Town wants to place these funds in a stabilization fund for the next pandemic.

It was mentioned across the state they are cutting 10%, however Westport is cutting at 20%. If more money is available in December this is too late for schools because this means they have already lost a teacher position as of September.

An option of pre-paying certain expenses for next year should be explored. Senator Rodrigues spoke about possibly pre-pay transportation services for next year.

Dr. Reese will be having a conference call with the Commissioner of Education tomorrow.

Discussion took place on what school might look like for summer and the fall. In mid-June guidance will be coming from the state. No decisions can be made at this point.

Providing Professional Development for online learning was discussed.

IV. Adjourn - The School Committee Budget Work Session ended at 7:45 pm.