

Minutes of the Finance Committee of the Board of Education
Regional School District 14 www.ctreg14.org
Monday, February 3, 2020

In attendance were: Committee members Janet Morgen, George Bauer, Michael Devine and Jim Crocker. Also in attendance were Maryanne Van Aken, Pam Zmek, Wayne McAllister, Joseph Olzacki and BOE clerk Karen Daley.

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm.

YTD Operating Budget – Revenue is exceeding expenses by 10%. Special Education expenses are being watched closely. Ms. Marcinek will come to the next Finance Committee meeting to give an update on the Special Education expenses.

YTD High School Project – Time was short so the Building Project financials will be reviewed at the next Finance Committee meeting.

Agriscience and Technology Building Project – The initial plans to add/update three buildings began in June of 2015. Bill Davenport asked the Board for a 20% commitment to the cost of the project with the rest being subsidized by the state and the BOE approved that request at that time. The project was delayed until the 2017-2018 school year. While initial estimates expected the cost to be \$662,000.00 (the Boards committed 20% being \$132,400), the new estimates in May of 2019 came in at \$1,100,000.00. The project went out to bid 3 times but came in substantially higher than the expected estimates with the low bid being \$1,508,000.00. On 12/26/19 Mr. McAllister, Mr. Belinsky and Ms. Porciello appealed to the State to fund the project at the higher amount. Mr. Belinsky gave them an overview of the project and the incredible importance it has to the continued success and development of the Agriscience program. The State was impressed and ultimately agreed to finance the project, including the increases under the stipulation that the project be completed entirety as designed and that the BOE would be willing to finance their earlier agreed upon 20% of the total new costs. Mr. Belinsky went out to explain how crucial each of the proposed buildings are to the continued success and growth of the program. The project is made up of a Horse Arena and Annex, a Storage Garage and a Sap Building. Mr. Belinsky also explained that part of the dramatic increase in the cost of the project was that the initial plans were to use an area where the Tennis Courts were as the location for the Arena. Unfortunately, with the NHS renovations project that site was no longer available so the location for the Arena was changed and the new location requires a great deal of site work that was not planned for in the original estimates. Mr. Belinsky stressed that the application numbers are up from last year for students looking to become a part of the Vo-Ag program so growth of the program is possible if the space is available to teach the students. To date the Board has already approved \$220,942.00 to the project. They would need to authorize an additional \$99,058.00 to the project bringing the total Board contribution to \$320,000.00. With the Boards prompt approval, it is expected that the project could begin in the spring and be completed by the end of the summer. The initial \$220,942.00 has already been set aside to Capital Reserves. The districts sound financial decisions over the past several years has enabled the additional funding to come from Capital Reserves leaving a balance of \$306,250.00 in the Capital Reserves account. The Finance Committee requested that a penalty be written into the contract to recoup funds in the event that they do not complete the project according to the contract. The finance committee moved to send the request to the full Board for a vote.

Antique Horse Drawn Vehicles – A sleigh and antique wagon are being donated by a family in Ridgefield. This will be moved to the full Board for acceptance of the donation.

MTR Grant - The Minority Teacher Recruitment Grant can be used for minority teacher recruitment, staff professional development or can also be used for student's educational programs on minority acceptance and education. This grant will help support the minority teacher recruitment policy that is in effect in Region 14.

Audit Services – The contract is up with Charles Heaven & Co. our audit group. Mr. McAllister would like to continue with the same company for the next 5 years. The finance committee would like to see a shorter term contract but at least through the end of the NHS renovation project.

Public Comment – none

Other business – none

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen Daley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Regional School District 14 Board Clerk

Recorded and filed subject to Board of Education approval by: Karen Daley, Board Clerk 2/5/2020