

GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION  
FINANCE/FACILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 6, 2022 @ 6:00 P.M.  
CENTRAL OFFICE, ROOM 11

**Members Present:** Jay Weitlauf, Dean Antipas, Beverly Washington (remote)

**Also Present:** Susan Austin, Sam Kilpatrick, Ken Knight

Chairman Weitlauf called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

1. Review August 2, 2022 Meeting Minutes - The minutes were accepted as presented.
2. Cost of Small Buses - Mr. Knight reviewed the cost of an additional bus per the contract at \$366.71 per day or \$66,374 annually based on 181 days. It is the same cost for small buses (also called vans by STA), as well as the larger buses. Mr. Kilpatrick confirmed that there is a need for two additional small buses for special education. The cost for two buses is \$132,750. The cost to fund these additional buses is anticipated to come from a reduction of 1.0 FTE at one of the elementary schools, as well as additional savings due to late resignations/retirements. If those sources are not sufficient, some of the cost may be funded by ARP ESSER.
3. Review Budget Timeline - Mr. Knight reviewed the FY2023/2024 budget timeline. Seven budget work sessions are built into the timeline. It is anticipated the board will vote on the budget at its regular meeting on February 27<sup>th</sup>.
4. Fuel Cost - Diesel, Heating Oil and Natural Gas - Mr. Knight reviewed the impact of anticipated increased cost of heating oil and diesel. The district is part of a consortium sponsored by LEARN, called the RESC Alliance Oil & Fuel Consortium, which includes boards of education, as well as town municipal offices. The consortium has not yet locked in a price, due to the high prices that are result of low inventories, demand, and external factors such as inflation and the war in Ukraine. The committee also discussed natural gas, which is supplied through contracts that last from one to three years.
5. Food Nutrition Program - Pricing and Future Access - Ms. Austin discussed the request from the board to help cover some of the cost of school meals. Mr. Knight reviewed the attached schedule that calculated the expected cost to students that qualify for reduced price meals, at a maximum cost of \$15,612 for this year. This could be funded either from the allocation made to offset unpaid school meal balances or ARP ESSER. Also discussed was a request to increase the breakfast/lunch prices. The attached schedule shows a proposed average increase of 24%, which is the same increase in the USDA reimbursement rate since the last time prices were adjusted in FY2019/2020. This issue will be brought forward to a COW meeting with the food service director invited to give additional insights.
6. Update re: Solar Panels - Mr. Kilpatrick gave an overview of the status of the solar panel purchase price agreement (PPA). He and Mr. Norris met with the attorneys last week, and the agreement is close to completion. It is anticipated that the material could be here twelve weeks after the agreement is finalized. It was speculated that the installation may not begin until after the winter months.

7. Update re: the Field House Study - Mr. Kilpatrick discussed the field house study. The plans include changing rooms for all students, as well as facilities for the visiting teams and updated concession stand. The architect is requesting input into one of two options; renovate existing structure or building new. This issue was suggested to be brought to a COW meeting, so the entire board can weigh in on the next steps.
8. Update re: the Food Service Classrooms Study - Mr. Kilpatrick discussed the culinary arts classrooms at Fitch High School. The architect is waiting on confirmation from school personnel on the specs for the project, but is prepared to begin the design work approximately four weeks after this confirmation. It is anticipated that this project will be included in the CIP request for the next budget cycle.

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Groton Public Schools  
Proposed Meal Prices - FY2023

Meal	School	Current prices*	Proposed prices	% Incr proposed over current
Breakfast	Elementary	\$ 1.50	\$ 2.00	33%
Breakfast	Secondary	\$ 1.75	\$ 2.25	29%
Lunch	Elementary	\$ 2.80	\$ 3.25	16%
Lunch	Secondary	\$ 3.00	\$ 3.75	25%

Average	24.6%
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USDA reimb	Proposed as % of USDA
\$ 2.67	75%
\$ 2.67	84%
\$ 4.33	75%
\$ 4.33	87%

Average	81.1%
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\* Most recently adjusted in the 2019/2020 school year

Cost to Cover meals for Reduced Cost Students					
Meal	School	Reduced Price	Anticipated # of reduced price students	Cost assuming 100% participation 181 days	Cost assuming 100% participation 75% of days
Breakfast	Elementary	\$ 0.30	72	\$ 3,909.60	\$ 2,937.60
Breakfast	Secondary	\$ 0.30	92	\$ 4,995.60	\$ 3,753.60
Lunch	Elementary	\$ 0.40	72	\$ 5,212.80	\$ 3,916.80
Lunch	Secondary	\$ 0.40	92	\$ 6,660.80	\$ 5,004.80

\$ 20,778.80	\$ 15,612.80
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