

**Lehigh Area School District
Finance Committee Virtual Meeting
April 29, 2021
6:00 p.m.**



Finance Committee Minutes

The Meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

The following Board Members were present:

Mrs. Rita Spinelli, Mr. Nathan Foeller, Mr. Richard Beltz (absent), Larry Stern (audience), Gail Maholick (audience)

The following Administration Members were present:

Jonathan Cleaver, Edward Rarick, and Rebecca Karpowicz

Budget Discussions

Mr. Rarick goes over the 2021-2022 School proposed budget page by page

Mr. Cleaver thanks Mr. Rarick for his breakdown and explanation of the budget

Mr. Cleaver talks about how transportation is brought back into the budget

Mr. Cleaver thanks the business office and the admin building for their teamwork on the budget and he thanks Mr. Rarick for his hard work

Mr. Rarick states that this was a lot of information at once but it is important to note that everything that gets purchased gets analyzed, to ensure we are getting the best services and we are going to continue to do so. Currently where we stand we do have some deficit still but he has some ideas on how to eliminate this.

Mrs. Spinelli thanks Mr. Rarick for doing a tremendous job and getting the district back on track in the short time that he has been with us.

Mr. Foeller echoes the same sentiment thank you for the breakdown and detailed explanation

Mr. Foeller asks about the total for transportation and is that our net expense after the state reimbursement?

Mr. Rarick explains that this does not include that reimbursement

Mr. Cleaver states that Mr. George worked with us this year and dropped his costs and we are going back the 19/20 costs as opposed to the 20/21 costs.

Mr. Rarick explains that with this COVID year Mr. George will complete an affidavit that will help the district with the reimbursement. PDE set up so that districts don't see a significant drop in reimbursements

Mr. Foeller asks about the Charter School budget line, is that based on where we currently at or in anticipation on kids coming back

Mr. Rarick stated that this is where we are currently

Mr. Rarick talks about the district plan to get students back into brick and mortar of Lehigh

Mr. Foeller asks about sports for the district and how are we budgeted for all of our extra-curricular band, clubs, etc.

Mr. Rarick states that all these various activities are back in the budget for the 2021-2022 school year.

Mr. Foeller thanks Mr. Rarick again for his hard work to get us to this point

Melissa Hawk states that she is the Library Director and noticed that the allocation for the Leighton Memorial Library has been left out of the 2021-2022 budget. She shared a snapshot of the day to day at the library, explains some of the activities that they do there.

Ms. Hawk then explains the value that the library has to the community and all of the online services they offer to students of the community.

Ms. Hawk requests that the district restores the allocation (20,000.00) to the library which is about 1/5th of the library budget and continue the partnership with the school district. Has there been any thought to restoring this allocation?

Mr. Rarick stated when the next budget meeting is and that this will be a topic for discussion, the board will make the final decisions on this and that she is correct that the library does bring some value and was happy to hear of a few of the things that they do throughout the day for our community and students. However, he does not feel that 1/5th of that budget should fall on the school district. Falls on the town and boroughs as well.

Mr. Rarick stated the truthfully he has an issue with not buying books for our students and supplies for our libraries and giving to the public library at the amount that you are asking.

Ms. Hawk talks about the support from the community in regards to their budget and that she can get more statistics and if you have more questions she would like to answer them.

Ms. Haydt – not there

Autumn stated that she is a board member of the Leighton library and how she has had to use the public library for various items for school work. In times when the school district could not provide books the public library did help them.

Autumn has a budget question on page 10, this is where the community services budget (library) was held. There is a page that was intentionally left blank and what is the line item 2900 and the allocation of 25,000.00 was left blank for?

Mr. Rarick states that this 2900 is a pass through from the IU related for Special Education and cannot be used for anything else. Originally when this document was prepared we were not sure we would be receiving those funds so it was left blank, this can be updated now.

Ms. Bowman asks about the ESSER funding of 2.4 million but calculated 1.5 was that just a leeway in case we do not get those funds.

Mr. Rarick stated that he does anticipate receiving those funds but is not sure if we will be receiving it all, or if the state will do any holding back funds. ESSER 3 will have a hold back for Basic Ed Funding

Ms. Bowman asks about the decrease- is that because we have several staff members at the higher end but you will be replacing them?

Mr. Rarick stated yes, it is a combination of a that plus a few positions vacated that will not be replaced. Also an accounting of split salaries twice that was corrected.

Ms. Bowman then states that she thinks the public library is a vital part of our community and really supports us providing some funding

Mr. Rarick apologizes for having this meeting in conflict with a district event but felt this was equally as important.

Mrs. Maholick asks about the VisionQuest line item on the budget and what is that 80,000.00 is being used for.

Mr. Cleaver explains that this is the name of an educational institution that we are responsible for the educating those students there, now we can bill the districts those students came from as well.

Mrs. Maholick asks what kind of services

Mr. Cleaver explains that the services are the educational component

Mrs. Maholick states that this is then not for vision

Mr. Cleaver clarifies

Ms. Bowes thanks Mr. Rarick for getting the monies in the correct functions and correct areas and realizes that it was a lot of work and appreciates him for being so forthcoming.

Next Meeting Date: June 14, 2021, 6:00 p.m.