

ROSEBURG PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Board Work Session & Executive Session
Administrative Office Board Room
1419 NW Valley View Drive, Roseburg, Oregon 97471
Available via Zoom

Vol 4 No. 14

April 12, 2023

Board Members:

Dr. Brandon Bishop
Rodney Cotton
Rev. Howard Johnson, Chair
Ann Krimetz
Rebecca Larson, Vice Chair
Charles F. Lee
Andrew Shirtcliff



Administration:

Jared P. Cordon, Superintendent
Robert Freeman, Director of Human Resources
Michelle Knee, Assistant Superintendent
Cheryl Northam, Director of Finance and Operations
Melissa Roberts, Director of Student Services



SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION

TIME/PLACE: A Board Work Session of the Douglas County School District No. 4 Board of Directors was convened on Wednesday, April 12, 2023, in the administrative office Board Room located at 1419 NW Valley View Drive, Roseburg, Oregon, in person with an electronic link available. A nearly community-wide wi-fi interruption impacted the meeting until approximately 6:17 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Board Chair Howard Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE: Board members attended in person, and Superintendent Cordon and Cabinet members were present. No media representatives were in attendance.

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD / REVIEW OF AGENDA

Superintendent Cordon welcomed everyone present in person, as well as those who were joining the meeting remotely. Jared reminded everyone that typically the first board meeting of the month is a business meeting, followed by a work session later in the month. This month we switched the two to prepare for the upcoming budget meetings. This does not supplant the budget process that officially begins with the first budget meeting April 19th but gives the board an overview of where we are budgetarily at the current time. The April 26th regular board meeting will be held at Melrose Elementary School and will serve as our regular business meeting for the month of April.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF 2023-24 BUDGET PROCESS AND PRIORITIES

Budget Schedule

Superintendent Cordon shared that the district's Director of Finance and Operations, Cheryl Northam would review the budget process with us in preparation for the April 19 Budget Committee Meeting where the members will receive and discuss the proposed budget document. Mrs. Northam pointed out that the Budget

Committee has the responsibility for receiving the budget and ultimately recommend approval of the proposed budget and permanent tax rate to be presented to the full board for consideration of adoption at the June 7th annual Budget Hearing and Regular Board Meeting. At the Budget Hearing, the Board will adopt a budget, levy taxes and appropriate funds for the 2023-24 school year.

The New Biennium (2023-24 and 2024-25 / Funding)

Next year, districts will enter a new biennium, with monies allocated at 49% in the first year, with the remaining 51% allocation to be received the second year. During our current biennium, schools were funded at \$9.3B. Our proposed budget was based on current estimates of a funding level of \$9.9B for the biennium.

Mr. Cordon explained that the Oregon legislature is currently just past the half-way point in their long session. He acknowledged that the Governor's budget could shift and change either upward or downward and we have no guaranteed numbers at this time. Director Charles Lee noted that our district historically has received approximately 1% of SSF. Jared concurred that we could see about a \$1M bump in SSF allocation.

In addition, HB 3198, the early literacy bill, is currently in the House in the Ways and Means Committee and we are told it could be in addition to SSF monies. Associated changes could require additional programs and he is working closely with members of the legislature. He pointed out that we are currently tracking 1,600 education bills out of nearly 3,000 bills. Director Lee added that any additional funding would also result in associated reporting requirements by districts.

General Fund Budget Increases

Finance and Operations Director Northam provided a brief summary of General Fund spending. The largest sources of funding come from local property taxes and the State School Fund (SSF), with a current year revenue budget of \$64.2M compared to a projected 2023-24 budget of \$67M. Our District's General Fund includes the majority of services being provided to the district and students. Projected General Fund budget increases are anticipated to include the following:

- Employee contractual increases: 2% COLA; \$1M for insurance
- Emerging K Classroom: \$300,000
- Utility Cost increases: \$200,000
- Budget for new required athletic field: \$500,000
- Turf replacement fund: \$200,000
- Technology funds: \$213,00 to support 1:1 computers
- Increases in maintenance, instructional support, and building supply funds: \$240,000

Director Rod Cotton invited clarification of the necessity for the new field at RHS. Superintendent Cordon shared that after partnering with the City of Roseburg for many years to host athletic events at Legion Field, Legion donors upgraded the field to turf two years ago. This resulted in a Title IX complaint to ODE due to boys having access to the new turf field, while girls did not, even though RPS does not own that property. Jared complimented both Robert Freeman and Cheryl Northam for working to have a field installed, considering options that included a field at Stewart Park. Had the previous bond measure passed and had the City been successful in being awarded a development grant they had pursued, we could have proceeded earlier. We have worked with the complainant and feel that this is positive for our kids and community. We have set aside \$500,000 to be able to utilize that field in 2024, with some processes going forward this year. Again, this is a mandated requirement resulting from that Title IX complaint.

(Disrupted Wi-Fi service was restored at 6:17 p.m.)

The turf replacement fund is needed to plan for replacement of the current turf already in place. Mr. Cordon responded to Director Bishop that typical replacement occurs when turf reaches 8-13 years, depending on usage. We hope to get another eight years out of the current field. Cheryl pointed out that we were fortunate to get 13 years out of the original field at RHS. Chair Johnson added that we have taken excellent care of the field and the previous grass field was not usable during football season. Superintendent Cordon reminded everyone that we continue to have a scarcity issue with fields. Director Cotton pointed out that the field is our largest classroom in the district, and we appreciate the community members who worked to make it possible. Director Bishop shared that current use includes football, soccer, lacrosse, track, P.E., etc.

Director Lee considered that if revenue increases from the current to proposed levels, it would still be insufficient to allow for inflation. Mrs. Northam agreed, noting that we have spent monies where it is needed most. She observed that some districts may find themselves in RIF situations if the SSF budget doesn't reach \$10.3B with \$9.3B being the current number being discussed. RPS would be making some investments at the \$9.9B level but we don't expect to be considering reductions that may be impacting other districts. Director Andrew Shirtcliff received clarification of the ending fund balance and interest on investment numbers.

The district has moved to a 1:1 computer/student ratio that was initially funded through grant monies. Over time, computers become broken, or replacement Chromebooks and iPads are needed. This has necessitated an increase in the technology fund for instructional supplies. Additional funding is also recommended for the maintenance fund to allow for inflation and daily maintenance tasks.

PERS Outlook – Rates for 2023-24

The proposed budget for next year will include over \$43M in salaries and wages. If half of this is Tier I/II and half is OPSRP, after the expense of the pension obligation bonded debt, the district is saving over \$4.4M each year that would have gone to PERS for our unfunded actuarial liability (UAL). Cheryl will review the three side accounts at the Budget Committee Meeting.

- **Roseburg School District Rate –**
 - Tier I/II Employer Rate: 1.38%
 - OPSRP Rate: 0%
 - Charged to payroll for the Pension Obligation Bonds: \$15.35%
- **Schools Rate** (the rate we would be paying if we had not invested in PERS side accounts)
 - Tier I/II Employer Rate: 27.87%
 - OPSRP Employer Rate: 25.03%

Superintendent Cordon pointed out that had our Board not made the decision to sell PERS Obligation Bonds, which would have been the difference between RIF and no RIF. This has a huge impact when you think about board governance and fiscal responsibility, and we will continue to look for ways in which to be good stewards of our revenues as it directly impacts our budget and programs.

UPCOMING CONSIDERATIONS

In the middle of the upcoming biennium, both employee bargaining units will be entering year three of their contracts. We continue to experience a difficult time in both recruiting and retaining employees, particularly classified staff as we are under market value. Some positions have remained unfilled all year.

ESSER Funding

ESSER funding has done great things for children and families, funding 600,000 meals, technology equipment replacement, Wi-Fi and hot spot connectivity, computers, etc. Maintenance supplies for additional cleaning requirements were funded through ESSER as well. Efforts were made not to fund positions with grant funds as

the funding runs out this coming year. The exception has been the Roseburg Virtual School.

Director Cotton questioned how many positions have remained unfilled. Mr. Freeman shared some preliminary data, and Mr. Cotton suggested finding ways to find employees and keep them. After being present for the recent lock-down drill at the high school, Director Cotton shared his perception that our teachers become our first responders in an emergency situation. He was amazed at the skill demonstrated during the drill, with administrators understanding their responsibilities and students doing their part. He encouraged patrons who are critical of education to get out and volunteer and see what is going on in our schools.

Chair Johnson expressed sincere appreciation to Mrs. Northam and her staff for their preliminary work on the budget. Budget committee members will be notified once the budget document is available. He also encouraged committee members to reach out ahead of time with any questions so that staff can come fully prepared to discuss and move forward with the proposed budget.

ADJOURNMENT of WORK SESSION: With work session discussion topics concluded, Chair Johnson adjourned the Board Work Session at 6:40 p.m. and asked for a brief recess prior to convening a scheduled Executive Session. The next Board meeting will be held on April 26, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

Executive Session

Pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(i)

Chairman Johnson convened an Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(i) at 6:52 p.m. to continue the annual process of evaluating the superintendent's performance and board expectations. Superintendent Cordon and all members of the Board of Education were present. Directors reviewed Superintendent Cordon's performance and provided input on his employment contract.

With the annual review concluded, and with no objections, the Executive Session was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Jared P. Cordon, Superintendent

JPC/jlk

Next Meeting: School Board Business Meeting, April 26, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in the Melrose Elementary Multi-purpose Room located at 2960 Melrose Road, Roseburg, Oregon and available via Zoom.