

MILLVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Finance/Budget Committee Meeting Minutes

May 2, 2023

Mrs. Holloway called the May 2, 2023 Millville Area School District Finance and Budget Committee Meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

Present were Joseph Rasmus, Edward Sanders, Whitney Holloway, Susan Myers, Brynn Clark, Greg Hemsarh, and Chelsea Rosenberger

Proposed Preliminary 2023-2024 Budget

- Mrs. Holloway began the discussion with a review of the “revenue” sources for the district. She explained that these revenues were mostly from the collection of taxes, but that she would share a few others as well. Mrs. Holloway further explained that the proposed tax increase was to the local index.
 - Mrs. Clark asked for clarification if that was what has happened in the last few school years.
 - Mrs. Holloway answered that yes, the district raised taxes to the index. She went on to explain that the teacher salary increases alone accounted for about \$200,000 at over 4 percent increase, as per the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Continuing on, Mrs. Holloway explained that this figure did not include pension or benefits, adding that the cost for that has gone down slightly.
- Mrs. Holloway then explained about some expenses in ESSER money that have not been loaded into the budget. She shared that three salaries are being covered by ESSERS.
 - Mr. Hemsarh then asked with the fact that ESSER is ending, would the district not be retaining the positions.
 - Mr. Rasmus answered that the positions in ESSER were not extra positions, but rather ones that met the parameters for use of those funds. He further explained that it is preferred to put salaries in ESSERS because the cost is not as varied as putting resources in the application. However, it is hard to use them because when the money is gone, the district must find a way to cover those costs back in the general fund. He concluded that this money is still available through 2023-2024 school year.
- Mrs. Holloway then explained more of the revenue sources information, sharing that she added a 3% increase for subsidy allotment which is probably conservative. She added that dependent on the Governor, the district may have some more wiggle room on the interest.
- Additionally, she explained that currently the district receives tuition cost from Bloomsburg for three special needs students, however, they will not be coming to Millville for school next year. So, the district will not have that revenue.
- Finally, Mrs. Holloway explained that there was a decrease on a health insurance easement from the CSIU over the holiday as compared to last year. So, that revenue would also be less for the district.
- Then, Mrs. Holloway moved into the expenditures, starting with the staff salaries. She reviewed each type of contract and the budgeted figures for each type.
 - Mrs. Clark asked for clarification as to why some paraprofessional salaries seemed so high.
 - Mrs. Holloway answered that she added the salary based on 4 paraprofessional, and those figures were if the district had a full complement of paraprofessionals.
 - Mrs. Rasmus answered that he could not imagine that the district would ever have eight paraprofessionals come on at one time.
- Mrs. Holloway explained that she added an allotment for a long-term substitute if needed based on teacher medical leave.
 - Mr. Hemsarh asked for clarification on why a teacher’s salary seemed to be as low as \$20,000.
 - Mrs. Holloway explained that it looks that way because some salaries are split over two buildings, so being that she was utilizing the payroll system, this matched how the teacher salaries were coded in the system.
- Mr. Hemsarh commented that it is hard to imagine that half of a cost per employee to the district would be insurance. Mrs. Holloway added that it is a large amount and that what the Committee was looking at were real-time figures with each employee’s election.
- Mr. Hemsarh asked if we were still looking into other insurance providers. Mr. Rasmus answered that we were looking elsewhere, but getting the data from our current Health Trust was proving difficult.
- Mrs. Clark then asked what the total cost for insurance would be. Mrs. Holloway answered that it was about 1.3 million. Mrs. Holloway explained the contribution of the employee for the year.

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- Mr. Hemsarth asked what the district will do when we can no longer sustain these increases. Mr. Rasmus added that the district's revenues do not come anywhere near the amount needed to cover expenditures. He explained that he has been looking at some classes at the high school with Mrs. Gregory because they are too small to justify running them.
- Mrs. Holloway then explained the line items for athletics, including coaches, game workers, security, etc. She also added potential funds for extended athletic seasons due to playoffs.
 - Mrs. Holloway then asked the Committee to discuss the extra-curricular spreadsheet that rolls on from year to year. She explained the spreadsheet and that there are a number of formulas on how to figure out each coach's salary, dependent on the increase. She explained that there are 3% increases included in the spreadsheet that the district is not contractually obligated to pay.
 - She explained further that there are all of the extracurricular advisors on the spreadsheet, however they do not receive the increases as coaches do, with the exception of the weight room.
 - Mrs. Myers said that she did not understand why there was an increase for the weight room.
 - The Committee discussed the idea of removing the coach increases.
 - Mrs. Clark answered that she saw the Athletic Director as a different thing. The Committee members agreed that the Athletic Director increase should remain, but the coach increases should not.
 - Mr. Rasmus asked if perhaps this discussion should be taken to the full board to have a vote recorded if there was an issue in the future.
 - Mr. Hemsarth asked if this should be placed in the policy that increases would be reconsidered every few years.
 - Mr. Rasmus answered that he believed the current language was intentionally vague and that he believed it should remain that way.
 - Mrs. Clark answered that she believed the budget should be posted the way it normally was and incorporating the removal of increases in there. The Committee agreed that this was a reasonable way to handle this change.
- Mrs. Holloway then went on to explain about extra hours and the variety of things under that category.
 - Mr. Hemsarth added that there were not a lot of ways to trim those budget items. Mrs. Holloway agreed that not much could be done there.
- In conclusion, Mrs. Holloway shared that once you add it all up, it comes to 10.8 million dollars.
- Mrs. Holloway then went through with further detail a discussion on some expenses.
 - Mrs. Holloway shared her concern about the district's electric cost. She explained that she had been working with Direct Energy to get some figures as the district's contract was up for electric.
 - Mr. Hemsarth commented that he thought we should wait a little because PPL just announced a reduction. Mrs. Holloway answered that the contract is up in June, so we could wait a little out of contract to see if that cost can go down.
- Next, Mrs. Holloway explained the tax participation figures listed in the proposed budget, saying that if she increased the projected participation to 95%, it would allow for an additional \$100,000 in the proposed budget.
 - She further explained some changes to the ESSER dollar expenditures, sharing that the changes were in teacher salaries and some proposed changes to professional staff for 2023-2024.
 - Mr. Rasmus added that the district has been undergoing the Comprehensive Planning process, and therefore, have been looking at the district's testing data from the last few years. In summarization, he explained that the district is doing well overall, and the English/Language Arts scores are coming back up from before the pandemic. However, the Math scores have not been going up.
 - Mrs. Clark answered that part of this issue is that the advanced students are not engaged and not able to move at a more appropriate pace for their skill level.
 - Mr. Rasmus answered that the administrative team has looked into this issue and determined that intervention needs to target some students in small and large group instruction. He added that the district is looking into a resource for this purpose to break up the math time in the day between large group and small group instruction.

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- Mr. Hemsarth then added that the problem seems to be the speed at which they can move through the material, adding that his children took the PSSAs and found there were things on there that they had never seen before.
- Mr. Rasmus answered that the administrative team is looking for ways to schedule time for teachers to teach on different levels through small group instruction in addition to whole group instruction. For that reason, he explained that the district is proposing a Math Interventionist position to work with students on the lowest level. This time will allow students to learn on their appropriate level, whether that be above or below grade level.
- After that discussion, Mrs. Clark asked for clarity on the \$80,000 positive figure listed.
 - Mrs. Holloway answered that the district has two professional staff out on Sabbaticals coming back this year.
 - Mr. Rasmus then explained some potential staff changes for the 2023-2024 school year.
 - Mrs. Holloway countered that with these proposed changes, if the Math Interventionist position is not added, that would be a savings of \$80,000 to the district.
- Mrs. Holloway then moved onto the Director of Technology position. If the district were to keep the Interim Director, she explained that the salary would be the figure noted in the proposed budget.
 - Mr. Rasmus added that the additional Technology stipend was factored into this to come up with a salary estimate for the next school year.
- Mrs. Holloway explained that a custodial salary would definitely be put into the ESSER funding section.
- In conclusion, Mrs. Clark said that she felt the district was now in a much better place than previously.
 - Mr. Hemsarth echoed that, adding his thought that perhaps we could cut the amount of additional paraprofessionals in the budget down to 6 from 8 paras.
 - Mr. Rasmus answered that should the district have a need for more paraprofessionals to work 1:1 with a student, we needed to keep that number at 8 as in previous years. He further explained that up until now, the ins and outs of staff members have not allowed for us to have that many paraprofessionals in actuality, but he did not want to cut the budgeted amount to be safe.
- Mrs. Holloway concluded the meeting by sharing the timeline for the budget presentation.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Chelsea Rosenberger
Assistant Board Secretary