



**BERLIN-BOYLSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**Budget, Facilities, and Safety Subcommittee**  
**Berlin-Boylston Regional School District Offices | 215 Main Street, Boylston, MA**  
**Friday February 9th, 2024 | 10:30AM**

Present: Ms. Carol Costello; Ms. Nicole Bilotta; Mr. Howard Drobner; Ms. Meagan Grill; Ms. Jannel Fitzpatrick; Ms. Cameron Kay; Ms. Nancy Konisky; Ms. Kristen Rubin

**I. Call to Order**

Mrs. Meagan Grill called the meeting to order at 10:42am

**II. Continuing Business**

A. FY 25 Budget Update- Review presentation for School Committee

Ms. Nancy Konisky reviewed the budget with the group. She noted a \$2,177,667 district wide increase and out of district tuition movement will cost less going forward. She highlighted special education transportation costs \$171 a run and new bids are coming up at a higher cost. BBRSD will be going out to bid again, but the budget is estimated with \$400 a run based on bids received so far. There is a 70% increase for the transportation from last year. Ms. Konisky reviewed positions in the budget district wide. The preschool program is being evaluated this year and funds are in the budget to be used to implement recommendations going forward.

Mr. Howard Drobner explained to the group that there are DLTA funds (district level technical assistance funds), which are funds to help write grants. Central Massachusetts just got around \$240K to use for grants at the federal level. He suggested that BBRSD reach out to them to see what they can do for the district. Ms. Kristin Rubin can put BBRSD in touch with the Executive Director.

Ms. Carol Costello explained that in the future Athletic Directors are going to be mandated in the state, for each district. It is a managerial position with lots of duties. BBRSD would like to get one before all of the directors are unavailable. It was also noted that a Rural EMS training grant is coming through.

There is 215K for out of district tuition loaded in, but Ms. Konisky allocated it within 240 Circuit breaker. There is a 3% increase for the overall budget that will be presented to the school committee to vote. Ms. Konisky let the group review the packet she provided and ask questions if necessary. She explained that benefit costs vary year to year based on what employees choose. BES may have a lower cost in FY25 based on projections. Circuit breaker funds are applied for yearly. Districts need to reach a certain amount and then will receive the funds in the following year. Ms. Konisky took

percentages of out of district special education amounts and took percentage of circuit breaker we are to receive and distributed the funds that way. 77% of the budget is for salaries district wide and includes proposed positions, which is comparable to other districts.

BBRSD is working on a Berlin lease agreement and then will work on one with Boylston. The Boylston Elementary School roof should be a project done by the town per the select board after reviewing the regional agreement. Concerns were raised on how does BBRSD convey the needs of the district to the town. The School Committee has to sign off on applying for grant funding. A SOI has been created for the BES roof. Attorneys would need to look into how the MSBA funds would work with the town. Mrs. Grill discussed how BBRSD is looking at several options for how the roof could be funded. They are starting conversations to help determine if BBRSD invests money in the repairs or what is the best way to proceed forward. Solar would need to be installed after a potential new roof is put on, otherwise BBRSD would have to pay to take them off the old roof and put back on new roof.

Ms. Rubin explained that the Berlin capital available is not enough to cover what BBRSD is requesting. All other surrounding towns offer retiree health insurance, but Berlin does not. If a debt exclusion is needed there would be an extensive process Kristen would need to be involved in and it would require a vote on general election ballot.

#### B. BES Facility, Tahanto Fields and the Capital Plan

There is a backup plan for the boilers. The one in the worst shape is replaced and renovate the other as backup. BES will need new boilers in two years. Mrs. Grill spoke about the condition of the school fields and how BBRSD is working on them and trying to determine where the responsibility lies. The hope is that once maintenance is done it will be a big help with the fields. BBRSD is hoping to create a revolving maintenance plan. Mrs. Grill wants to make sure there is open dialog between the district and the towns to figure out how things can get done.

Ms. Rubin suggested that the roof HVAC, track and field roll into a debt exclusion (anything needed for next 3-5 years to be included). Debt exclusions for the elementary schools falls on the towns, but Tahanto because its regional sits with the school district. There may not be time now for a debt exclusion.

Mrs. Grill would like include the towns in future budget subcommittee meetings. Ms. Costello asked if the towns have priorities for BBRSD. Ms. Rubin asked that BBRSD prioritize items being requested and that getting quotes from vendors would also be helpful to the towns. She also suggested looking into previous contractors as they may be more apt to give a quote.

There is \$1.33 million in free cash that is shared with the town needs, as well. \$2.5 million is for just the Boylston fire, police, and senior buildings. The town secured a grant and is looking at using the building next to BBRSD Central Office. There will be an article for town meeting for the senior center. \$3.9 million is the starting number for Berlin. They are working with the Marlborough mayor on Solomon Pond Mall. Within the next few years major cuts will be coming from the state.

**III. Comments / Future Agenda Items**

A. Future subcommittee meeting date

**IV. Adjournment - Mrs. Grill adjourned meeting at 12:03pm**

*The listing of items are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may, in fact, be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.*

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