



BERLIN-BOYLSTON REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Budget, Facilities, and Safety Subcommittee

Berlin-Boylston Regional School District Offices | 215 Main Street, Boylston, MA

Wednesday March 6th, 2024 | 12:30PM

Present: Ms. Carol Costello, Mr. Dan Ayala, Ms. Nicole Bilotta, Ms. Meagan Grill, Ms. Nancy Ms. Chris Keefe, Konisky, Mrs. Julie Lee, and Ms. April Steward

I. Call to Order – Mrs. Meagan Grill called the meeting to order at 12:49pm

II. Continuing Business

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

Mrs. Meagan Grill explained she wants to accomplish determining guidance from Berlin. Ms. Chris Keefe confirmed Berlin was 2.5% for the operating budget. Mrs. Nancy Konisky talked about the operating budget. For Berlin, BMS has to cut \$733k to stay within line. Tahanto would have to cut \$508k for Berlin to stay within line. Berlin capital BBRSD would need to cut \$1.1million. The budget amount given from Boylston is \$500k. BBRSD is would need to cut \$652k for BES and \$435k for TAH.

Ms. Konisky discussed above level items in yellow are recommendations to keep in per the superintendent in consultation with the principals. Another \$75k of additional costs came in yesterday. The current budget is almost \$25 million as of February 27th. It is a 6% increase district wide if they presented just a level budget right now. Ms. Keefe mentioned some of the budget given last year could be used this year. Last year free cash went towards operating budget. Ms. Keefe explained the \$382k of free cash was only to address special education, not to be used for something else. She voiced it was communicated many times. Ms. Konisky used the number tied to the assessment that was voted on at the town meeting and the warrant. The free cash amount was included in the assessment and was not a separate article. Berlin started their budget at lower number, so the percentages are different.

Mrs. Grill explained a number like Boylston provided would be helpful instead of a percentage in this case. Ms. Keefe noted BBRSD should be able to do the math that anything over 2.5% will not work. Mrs. Grill also asked for the levy limit for Berlin and what would determine an override for them. She explained she is trying to avoid any further confusion with a wrong number. \$382k additionally needs to be cut. Mrs. Grill will reach out to council. She would like in future that Berlin doesn't include additional money in their assessment. Berlin was thinking the school board was coming to their meeting later on.

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.

The Berlin-Boylston Regional Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, disability, veteran status, genetic information, homelessness or any other class protected by state or federal law.



The final budget will be presented on March 19th. Berlin has always been conservative with their levy capacity. Ms. Keefe said to spread the items we are asking for over five years. She said BBRSD added and then is taking it out. The Cares Act money went into the formula and created issues. Berlin capital planning is waiting to see final BBRSD numbers. The school was consulted to wait because the budget is always changing, but the towns would like the process done earlier. Mrs. Grill agrees they have to work with the towns. Boylston will be up against their levy limit going forward. BBRSD wants to be fiscally responsible and also meet the needs of the students. Boylston has not had much growth in the way of building projects. Mrs. Grill expressed concerns that on the school side of things without adding some of the requests (teacher, para, etc.) it could take a toll on the students.

Mrs. Grill noted she would look into areas where BBRSD can trim up. Boylston is partnering with Clear Gov to see what was budgeted and what is actually spent. Mrs. Lee asked what could be cut. Ms. April Steward has a balanced budget with school in at 2.5%. they know they have. The committee will vote on the number on March 19th and is doing the best they can. Berlin said they asked BBRSD to attend one of their upcoming meetings for later that night. Mrs. Grill explained she never got an invitation.

BMS cut all above level and additional \$521k. Mrs. Lee thinks it's a big ask to hold the district to 2.5%. Tahanto will cause BBRSD to not come close to 2.5% Ms. Keefe explained that because of what happened last year, this year they only want 2.5%. Ms. Costello noted for years BBRSD has been sliding backwards to meet the towns needs. Last year they went for more to advocate for what they really need. BBRSD is looking again into numbers to see where they can cut further. The population of the students within the district changes the needs. Unfunded mandates have continued to happen that the school has to comply with and come up with the money. They need a math teacher to deal with the financial literacy mandate. Ms. Keefe said to explain on town floor why the math teacher is needed. Additionally, a Boylston classroom teacher is needed or the class size will be too big and an OT needed.

They may need another budget subcommittee meeting next week. BBRSD has numbers need they will try meet from the towns. Mrs. Grill explained it is Ms. Costello's decision how BBRSD is going to allocate the money and not a decision from the towns. For BMS if the HVAC and roof are taken off, then the rest can be funded. Mr. Dan Ayala explained to the group how the HVAC system works. With changes in the weather it is getting hotter during the school year. Ms. Keefe suggested publicizing the reasons it is needed so that people understand. Potentially it is something that could also help with energy costs.

Berlin capital planning is to vote on the amount next week. Mrs. Grill mentioned getting questions from the town ahead of time so they can come to the meetings prepared and being productive.

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.

The Berlin-Boylston Regional Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, disability, veteran status, genetic information, homelessness or any other class protected by state or federal law.



B. BES Facility, Tahanto Fields and the Capital Plan

III. Comments / Future Agenda Items

A. Future subcommittee meeting date

IV. Adjournment 1:48pm

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.

The Berlin-Boylston Regional Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, disability, veteran status, genetic information, homelessness or any other class protected by state or federal law.