

GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
FINANCE/FACILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MAY 7, 2024 @ 6:00 P.M.
CENTRAL OFFICE, ROOM 11/HYBRID

Members Present: Dean Antipas, Beverly Washington, Jennifer White

Also Present: Susan Austin, Sam Kilpatrick, Laurie LePine (remote), Clint Kennedy

Chairman Antipas called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

1. Review April 2, 2024 Meeting Minutes – Prior meeting minutes were reviewed and accepted.
2. Discussion re: the Status of the 2022-23 Audit – Susan Austin reviewed the list of emails that Dave Fleig received from the auditors regarding the FY23 audit. The emails showed repetitive requests from the auditors for information that was previously provided to them. There was a concern raised regarding the unpaid lunch balance of \$80,000; however, due to donations from the community, our Food Services Director estimated that the unpaid lunch balance is now approximately \$20,000. The auditors arrived in November and were supposed to be here for three days but were only here for one day. The Committee felt that the Board should be present when the auditors review the audit report with the Town Council.
3. Discussion re: FY24 Budget – Susan Austin reviewed the FY24 revenue estimate document. Our revenue came in \$1,628,673 over what was projected as revenue for the town in the name of education. This amount may help support the FY24 budget. The FY24 budget challenges timeline from October 2023 to April 2024 was discussed, as well as the FY24 financial update, plans to close out the year, and the FY24 object code summary. Jen White noted that overtime seems to be rather high. Laurie LePine stated that overtime and absenteeism has been closely tracked since January and has been scaled back considerably. The Committee began a discussion regarding the school nurses. Susan Austin stated that the town of Ledyard employs and pays for the nurses. The towns of New London, Waterford, and East Lyme pay for the nurses but the school districts' employ them. She was informed by Groton's town manager that if the nurses are contractual, the town can employ and pay for them. If they're not contractual, the BOE would pay for the nurses, and the money was in the town's account to cover the cost of the nurses until April 4. She stated that she was working with Hartford Healthcare to continue to provide contracts for the nurses; however, they could not do so. After the BOE adopted its budget, Susan was informed that the nurses' pay would have to be absorbed in the BOE's budget. Dean Antipas stated that during the BOE's budget development process, it was his understanding that the cost of the nurses was always a town budget item. Jen White stated that was her understanding also.
4. Discussion re: FY25 Budget – Susan Austin reviewed an FY25 budget timeline from January 2024 to May 2024.
5. Director of Finance Report – See item #3.

6. Director of Buildings & Grounds Report – Sam Kilpatrick gave the following report:

- The solar panel ribbon cutting ceremony at GMS will be held on Friday, May 10, at 3:00 p.m.
- The summer programs are as follows: City Parks & Rec @ TR, Town Parks & Rec @ MR, ESY & Camp Button @ NEA, two-week STEM & high dosage tutoring sessions @ GMS, credit recovery and high dosage tutoring sessions @ FHS, Tree House @ CK, and two-week STEM & Robotics @ CB.
- The educational specifications for the CB roof/solar panel project needs to get approved by the BOE. They'd like to install two scoreboards on the GMS artificial turf field and softball field. John Burt recommended that we ask the Town Council to pay for the scoreboards through ARPA funds.
- Per our BOE policy, non-profit groups can use our fields for free. The recommendation is to review the BOE policy for updating.
- Clint Kennedy reported on the updated security cameras and new storage facility for the cameras, the software associated with the cameras has been updated, and they're halfway through the rollout of Mutualink, which aids with response time; they're looking to test the system in June. He also reported that they're working on refurbishing the auditorium at FHS- sound, lighting, projection and seating. Some seating will be taken out of the front row to accommodate handicap wheelchairs.

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.