

**Westport School Committee
Work Session
DATE: Thursday, May 2, 2024
TIME: 6:00 p.m.
PLACE: 2nd Floor Conference Room, Westport Middle-High School**

MINUTES

Members Present: Gloria Cabral, Evan Gendreau, Jason Pacheco, Christopher Thrasher

Members Absent: Melissa Pacheco

Others Present: Thomas Aubin Westport Community Schools Superintendent, Lori Melo Administrative Secretary, Michelle Rapoza School Business Manager

I. Call to order - Chair Evan Gendreau called the Budget Work Session to order with a quorum of the members present at 6:18 pm.

II. Discussion of FY25 School Budget - Chair Evan Gendreau gave a status on the budget numbers going into town meeting next Tuesday May 7, 2024.

Fiscal Year 2025 Article 4 Annual Town Meeting Proposed Budget

Appropriation of town funds for the schools - \$22,499,082 (42.58%)

Our school budget figure - \$23,097,568

BOS recommends - \$22,651,207 (includes \$500,000 free cash)

Chair Gendreau explained the district had \$750,000 of unexpected Special Education expenses this year and recommend the town change the % split to 67% school 33 % town. This was not done.

The school receives 42.58% and not 54%. The 42.58% is the percentage of the total town budget. Schools get 54% of new net revenue.

Chair Gendreau informed everyone the school number could be amended by the public, so it is very important for the public to attend.

Chair Gendreau asked if there were any questions on this part of the budget? There were none.

Chair Gendreau shared School Council Meetings are a good way to communicate with parents. He has attended these in the past.

Ms. Rapoza made the following budget scenarios:

Option 1 - cuts based on budget %

Option 2 - budget amounts to each school based on student enrollment/formula based

Ms. Rapoza shared there was a meeting with Department Heads, Special Education Directors, and Principals. They were looking at cuts.

For Option 2, principals gave feedback and submitted potential cuts for their schools specifying what cuts to make.

Discussion took place on Teaching Assistants. There are 5 TAs in each kindergarten classroom, all other TAs are Special Education TAs assigned to a student.

Mr. Thrasher asked how many TAs are one to one and is this from year to year? Ms. Rapoza said yes there is an annual meeting and a 3-year re-evaluation. Ms. Rapoza will get the numbers for the TA breakdowns for 1-1, 1-2, and 1-3's.

Chair Gendreau asked if any potential cuts from somewhere else can be made to offset teacher cuts? Ms. Rapoza gave a breakdown for different departments and will go through to see if any further savings can be made.

Discussion took place on closing the old high school. This would save \$150,000; however, it was noted that the district still needs the athletic fields.

Ms. Rapoza pointed out in the town warrant Article 27 there is a transfer from money turned over for Capital Improvement Planning Program CIPC funds for the gym floor in the amount of \$41,605.10 to repave Westport Elementary School. Article 5 lists Capital Improvement Planning Program CIPC funds for Westport Elementary and Macomber Schools bathroom upgrades and a maintenance truck.

III. Bill Warrant - Ms. Rapoza went over expenses from the bill warrant dated May 3, 2024 so new school committee members can get familiar with the items and have an opportunity to ask questions.

Chair Gendreau asked if there were any questions? There were none.

IV. Adjourn - A motion was made to adjourn.

Motion by Thrasher, seconded by Cabral

4/0/0

The Westport School Committee Budget Work Session ended at 7:27 pm.

