

**HOMEWOOD-FLOSSMOOR COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL  
FINANCE COMMITTEE AGENDA  
Thursday, AUGUST 8, 2024, 7:30 a.m.**

**The Viking Room**

**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order
2. [Approval of the May 16, 2024 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes](#)
3. Comments
4. Topics:
  - A. Capital Projects Updates
  - B. Tentative 2024-2025 Budget
    - i. [2024-2025 Tentative Budget Highlights](#)
    - ii. [2024-2025 Budget Calendar](#)
5. Adjournment

# **Approval of the May 16, 2024 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

## MINUTES OF FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Homewood-Flossmoor High School, 999 Kedzie Ave., Flossmoor

May 16, 2024

In attendance for all or part of the meeting were Ms. Jackson, Mr. Anderson, Dr. Wakeley, Dr. Cook, Mr. Richardson and Mrs. Erdey. Mr. Pauling was absent due to a work commitment. Mr. Patterson, Mr. Dvorkin and Mr. Perozzi were also in attendance.

Ms. Marilyn Thomas, HF Chronicle, was in attendance.

The meeting was called to order at 7:36 a.m.

Approval of Minutes. The April 9, 2024, Finance Committee minutes stand approved as presented.

Comments. No comments from the public were received.

### O&M Capitalized Equipment Purchase

Dr. Cook stated that Mr. Patterson is scheduled to purchase a new tractor equipped with a front bucket and a bat-wing mower that would replace the district's current 1989 Ford 345C tractor and mower, which has been undergoing frequent repairs and overhauls. Over the past 10 months alone, nearly \$27,000 was spent on repairs and a recent rebuild of the current mower. The projected budgetary cost for a new tractor with a bat-wing mower is approximately \$85,000. However, Mr. Patterson has found a 2020 Kubota L3901 tractor, priced at \$45,000 and is available for immediate purchase. It has only 76 hours of usage and includes a bat-wing mower, front loader, snow pusher, and 3 position controls. By acquiring this tractor, the district stands to save a projected \$40,000 in upfront cost and anticipated savings in yearly repair costs. Dr. Cook noted this purchase presents a conscientious and cost-effective solution to address the district's need for a tractor, while maximizing the available budgetary resources for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Because is a used piece of equipment, the district is not required to go through a bidding process for its purchase. Also, the district has available funds in the 2023-2024 O&M capitalized equipment budget to make this purchase. The committee concurred with Dr. Cook's and Mr. Patterson's recommendation to purchase the 2020 Kubota L3901 tractor and this item will be on the May 21, 2024 agenda for board approval.

### Technology Budget Presentation

Mr. Richardson delivered an informative presentation of the proposed technology budget that the committee had an opportunity to review in advance of this morning's meeting. He identified technological needs that include the replacement of faculty laptops that are on cycle for replacement and the replacement of core switches at both campuses. The switches have reached their end of support after more than a decade in production. In addition, he spoke on the inflationary pressures that continue on technology prices. The technology budget was projected to be nearly \$1.3 million, however funding through the Digital Equity Grant and the E-Rate Emergency

Connectivity Fund, has reduced this figure to approximately \$920,000. This reduction was achieved by the purchase of 746 student Chromebooks, accounting for 87.8% of the total requirement that resulted in a cost savings of \$291,000. Mr. Richardson noted that they continue to face challenges due to inflation with student Chromebook prices rising from \$311 in 2023 to \$354 in 2024; staff laptops have increased from \$1074 in 2020 to \$1300 in 2024; and computers for Fine Arts students have increased from \$1600 in 2020 to \$1820 in 2024. Mr. Richardson introduced Mr. Perozzi and Mr. Dvorkin, members of his technology team, who were critical in the budget planning. He expressed his appreciation to them for their efforts and added that he could not have done this project without them. Mr. Richardson noted the planning for the proposed technology budget was a full stakeholder process and took place over the entire year meeting with departments, teachers and students. In addition, pilot programs were developed and tested. He added that due diligence in vetting technology is done before the technology is implemented. He also pointed out that repairs to technology equipment is done inhouse and they are Dell certified and Dell reimburses for repairs. Microsoft and Apple products are warrantied and those products are sent out. Mr. Richardson noted that anything that was slashed on the budget means that those requests could be taken care of in house and those requests were given a Priority 2. In terms of comparison of the technology budget year over year he stated in 2022-23 - \$714,000 and \$867,000 in 2023-24. This year's proposed budget is \$52,000 more than last year's budget and next year he is projecting the budget will be under \$900,000. It is noted that the technology that is required for the science addition is part of the construction budget and not included in Mr. Richardson's technology budget. Mr. Anderson proposed periodically communicating to the community some technology discount opportunities that may be available to them through Dell or other resources so families can be made aware of possible savings that exist. Mr. Richardson responded that they will look into the possibility of providing this opportunity for families. This item will be on the May 21, 2024 board agenda for approval

#### Communications Department Presentation - Proposed Website Redesign

Mrs. Erdey provided an in-depth overview of the proposed website redesign. A strategic approach was taken that included research planning, implementation and design. Through a communication audit with surveys to families, staff and students the website as a preferred information resource was consistent in the top three for families, staff and students. Current use of the HF website on a daily or weekly basis is 53% by families, 73% by staff and 45% by students. The website was an area that came up in comments through the communications survey, as an area that needs improvement, as well as, through feedback received from focus group participation. Mrs. Erdey also spoke on the frustrations experienced by the current website content editors. An RFP was put out and three vendors responded and they were interviewed by the team that included, communications staff, the Director of Technology, the Director of Student Supports and the school counselor who updates the site. Evaluation criteria included: functionality and features; design and user experience, support, training and maintenance; compliance and security and cost. The committee ranked the vendors as Finalsite, ParentSquare and Apptegy with the unanimous top pick Finalsite. Finalsite has enhanced translations built-in standard Weglot and has ADA compliance checks before posting content. The

HF website would be customized to meet the district's need. Mrs. Erdey stated their recommendation is Package 2 Custom site that is one step up from a template design but not at the cost of a Package 3 or 4 design. Mrs. Erdey provided a list of schools currently using Finalsite that highly recommend their service. Mrs. Erdey noted the cost for the new site (\$13,000 for Package 2 custom set up) will be budget neutral as they found savings to off-set the new site costs. As a result of canceling SchoolMessenger subscription and reducing spending in Mrs. Erdey's communications budget line items (i.e., advertising, printing, event supplies and materials, and equipment), all start-up costs for Finalsite are covered resulting in a budget neutral cost. Ms. Jackson expressed that she sees the value in moving to Finalsite and she stated that the cost is nominal in her opinion. Mr. Anderson would like to see an effort in reducing the multiple updates that are currently on the website and a way to centralize them to make it less cumbersome to the user. The committee suggested that other departments take the same approach as Mrs. Erdey's and Mr. Richardson's inclusive presentations for any type of request that will cost the district money. This item will be on the May 21, 2024 board agenda for approval.

#### FY2025 Budget Process Update

Dr. Cook reported that budget meetings with departments and administrators have almost been completed. Once this informational phase is completed, Dr. Cook will prepare information to present to Dr. Wakeley for his review in July.

#### Service Agreements

- Regular and Special Transportation Service Bids – Dr. Cook contacted 10 companies. He noted with the help of Ms. Candice Hall, companies were provided a lot of information that included the transportation contract from last year and three years of invoices so they could make a good informed decision. Three companies, Safeway, First Student and Cook IL, attended a mandatory pre-bid meeting. Four attended the opening bid meeting with one as an observer only. Two, Safeway and Kickert, placed a bid.
  - Special Ed - Safeway - 0% (\$1,903,954) rate increase in year one; 2.80% (\$1,957,227) increase in year two and Kickert - 8.7% (\$1,753,175) annual decrease in year one; 3.00% (\$1,806,189) annual increase in year two.
  - Regular Education Transportation - Safeway - 0% (\$1,420,228) annual increase in year one; 3.9% (\$1,475,438) annual increase in year two and Kickert - 11.6% (\$1,255,268) annual decrease in year one; 3.0% (\$1,292,960) annual increase in year two.

Kickert was the lowest responsible bidder. Dr. Cook is hoping that the improved service that has been seen this year from Kickert will continue next year. He noted this is a two-year contract. Both Mr. Anderson and Ms. Jackson expressed their appreciation to Dr. Cook for the extra effort he took with going out to bid for student transportation services. Mr. Anderson added that he looks forward to continuing the partnership with Kickert. This item will be on the May 21, 2024 board agenda for approval.

- Athletico Management, LLC – Dr. Cook stated that Athletico athletic trainers provide service to the district. Currently there are two full-time trainers on

campus. Dr. Wakeley added that our athletes like and trust the care they receive from those trainers. Dr. Cook noted that Athletico is requesting a contract renewal rate of 6.2%. Their current annual rate is \$84,708.40 with \$24.06 an hour for any services provided beyond contractual athletic trainer obligations. Over the last four years Athletico has requested increases at or below prior year CPI increases. Dr. Cook recommended the agreement contract renewal increase of \$90,000 or 6.2%. The committee concurred with Dr. Cook's recommendation and this item will be on the May 21, 2024 board agenda for approval.

Executive Session. The committee moved into Executive Session at 8:30 a.m. to discuss Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees.

Return to Open Session. The committee returned to open session at 9:00 a.m.

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

# FY2025 Tentative Budget Highlights

## **FY2025 Tentative Budget Highlights**

### **Property Taxes**

- Recapture levy is included in this number
- Projecting fewer tax appeals (in FY19 we collected \$35.4M, but paid out \$1.8M in tax appeals; in FY24 we collected \$37M and paid out \$251k in tax appeals)

### **Evidence Based Funding**

- An additional property tax relief grant

### **Other Local Taxes**

- Investments - \$2.5M up from \$2.1M
- Textbooks - \$550K, down from \$602K
- CPPRT - \$1.2 M down by 10%

### **Federal Grants**

Expired ESSER Grant

Expired Community Partnership Grant

### **Purchased Services**

- Regular Ed and Special Ed transportation rates are down significantly
- Contractual with Food services (5% subsidy for meal cost)
- O&M Repairs and contractual (painting, stadium track, security athletic fields)
- Professional Travel up \$598k from \$363K
- Contractual up from \$2.2M to \$3.4M: O&M carryover from last year, and activity and athletics contractals up slightly
- Online subscriptions up slightly

### **Capitalized Purchases**

- Food Services as a result of the new food service contract
- Auditorium/PAC (lighting, sound, projectors)

### **Other Objects**

- Special Ed facility tuition cost (up from 2.8M to 3.6M due to increased rate cost of the facilities themselves as well as the increased number of students who are outplaced from 44ish to 57)

### **Small Equipment**

- Chromebooks
- Laptops
- Other technology needs as presented by the Director of Informational services in May 2024
- Security needs (radios, safety equipment)

### **Capital Projects**

- Completion of the Science Addition and Culinary Renovations
- Pool Boilers - \$1,3M
- A-Building Roof - \$1.1M
- South Building Asphalt Project - \$535
- Auditorium Lift - \$435K

# Memo 2024-2025 Budget Calendar

To: Dr. Scott Wakeley, Superintendent  
From: Dr. Lawrence Cook, Chief School Business Official  
Date: August 2, 2024  
Re: Budget Calendar 2024-2025

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**In preparation for the required Illinois School Code specific events listed below, the following steps will take place by Business Office personnel:**

1. Mid-April: send department chairs, administrators, and their assistants up-to-date budget and spending information related to their department
2. Mid-April/May: meet with department chairs and administrators to review their 2023-2024 budget, and plan for their 2024-2025 budget based on their needs
3. Late June: meet with the superintendent to review the district's budgetary needs

**The Illinois School Code requires that specific events occur within prescribed timelines as detailed below:**

1. The tentative budget must be on display at least 30 calendar days prior to its approval by the Board of Education.

**Budget Calendar: August 9 to September 17 = 40 days**

2. A public hearing must be held prior to the adoption of the budget.

**Budget Calendar: September 17 Board Meeting**

3. A posting of the public hearing must be made in a local newspaper at least 10 calendar days prior to the public hearing.

**Budget Calendar: August 9 to September 17 = 40 days**

4. The annual budget must be adopted by the Board of Education no later than September 30 of each year.

**Budget Calendar: September 17 Board Meeting**

5. The District must file with the Cook County Clerk within 30 days of the adopted budget, and send a certified copy of its appropriation and budget resolutions.

**Budget Calendar: September 17 to September 20 = 3 days**

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.