

Finance, Facilities, Technology Committee

Agenda

January 16, 2020

Board Members:

Thair Joshua

Anthony Mazzocchi – Finance Chair

Johanna Wright

Administration

Dr. Ronald Taylor, Superintendent

Paul Roth, Business Administrator

Keith Bonds, Technology Director

Discussion Items:

- Budget
- Capital plan update (code review)
- Audit (results)
- Legal Costs

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Minutes

January 16, 2020

Members Present: Anthony Mazzocchi, Johanna Wright, Thair Joshua, Dr. Ronald Taylor, Paul Roth, Keith Bonds

Audit

The auditor is scheduled to present the audit during the January 27th, 2020 public board meeting. A copy of the audit will be placed in the board packet. As of June 30th 2019 the district has \$3,845,184 in capital reserve, \$2,453,759 in maintenance reserve and \$3,453,594 remaining as excess surplus. Excess surplus will be used as revenue for the 20-21 budget. The major drivers contributing to the budget surplus was the state holding health care costs flat, additional state aid, and award of the pre-school grant.

Budget

The committee reviewed anticipated revenue and the budget calendar. During the January 27th board meeting projected revenue for the 20-21 school year and the budget calendar will be presented and on February 24th expenditures and planned changes will be presented. The Governor's Address is scheduled on February 25 and state aid notices for the 20-21 is expected to be available by February 27th or 28th. The board will be asked to approved the 20-21 preliminary budgets on 3/16/20. April 20th is the last day for the county to approve submitted budgets and the hearing to set tax levy is tentatively scheduled for May 4, 2020.

Legal Costs

School districts with legal costs that exceed 130 percent of the state wide average per pupil amount should establish the following procedures and, if not established, provide evidence the procedures would not result in a reduction of costs:

- i. A limitation on the number of contact persons with the authority to request services or advice from contracted legal counsel;
- ii. Criteria or guidance to prevent the use of legal counsel unnecessarily for management decisions or readily available information contained in school district materials such as policies, administrative regulations, or guidance available through professional source materials;
- iii. A provision that requests for legal advice shall be made in writing and shall be maintained on file in the school district offices and a process to determine whether the request warrants legal advice or if legal advice is necessary; and
- iv. A provision to maintain a log of all legal counsel contact, including name of legal counsel contacted, date of contact, issue discussed, and length of contact. Legal bills shall be compared to the contact log and any variances shall be investigated and resolved;

Administration will be making recommendations on implementing required procedures.

Capital plan update (code review)

Geothermal site surveys and core samples were completed during the winter break. Engineers are reviewing the data and compiling a report. The report will be used to determine viability of purchasing geothermal systems for the schools.

Environmental testing is still underway. Bulk material samples are being collected from many locations across the district to determine the extent of abatement required for construction. Sampling is expected to complete at the end of the month. Report will follow.

Additional design review meetings will be scheduled once these reports are received and the plans are updated based upon this information. Additionally, feedback received from the last round of meetings will be addressed.

Local municipalities have the first right of refusal on code review. Typically there is a charge for code review and permits and inspections are free for schools. It is in the best interest of the community that the local code officials perform code review. The fees charged for code review help offset costs for building inspections. A letter will be sent to the DCA to verify the projects that can be reviewed by local municipalities. Projects that cannot be reviewed locally will be sent to the DCA for review.

Code review can be a lengthy process. Code officials must review the plans within 20 days; however, during that time if questions or concerns raised requires the plans to be updated, the 20 day clock resets when the updated plans are submitted.

Advertising construction projects for bid requires potential vendors to submit paperwork to ensure they are qualified to perform the requested work. The legal specifications, not the technical building specification, have been sent to legal for review.

After all documentation is assembled, the district is required to have the specifications review by the state comptroller's office to ensure all legal requirements are met.

Fields

In the fall the Underhill baseball field and Ritzer field were re-seeded and turf blankets installed to rebuild the grass turf. The turf blankets help heat the soil which in turn help germinate the grass. Unfortunately there were a few instances where fencing was knocked down and the newly seeded areas were trampled. These areas had to be re-graded and the turf blankets put back in place. The areas damaged may not have grass as a result of this activity and may create issues with scheduling practice and games in the spring. The Athletic department was notified.

Transportation Supervisor

This was discussed in the personnel committee. FFT was alerted that administration made a recommendation for a new transportation supervisor.

Seth Boyden Wi-Fi

Maplewood Township has been working on a plan to provide free internet services to students on free and reduced lunch. The plan calls for an antenna to be install on the roof of Seth Boyden School. The outside equipment will be mounted on a high flat section of roof, using a non-penetrating mount base held in place by up to 12 concrete blocks. A mast will rise from the sled. All of the outdoor equipment will be attached to the mast. The sled will sit on a protective mat to protect the roof.

The proposal is to route Internet traffic through the schools Verizon connected Ethernet switch or router. The Wireless traffic will be routed around the SOMSD network back to the provider's data center in Newark.

Our current WAN and IP circuits are up for renewal July 2020. We are going through the competitive bid process now using E-Rate. If our current provider is not low bid and therefore not awarded the contract, the proposed plan will not work unless additional funds are allocated to purchase connectivity from the school to the data center. This was communicated to Maplewood Township.