Westport School Committee
Budget Work Session
DATE: Wednesday, December 17, 2025
TIME: 5:00 p.m.
PLACE: WMHS 2nd floor Conference Room

MINUTES

Members Present: Evan Gendreau, Fred Melnyk, Jason Pacheco, Caitlin Sampers, Christopher Thrasher
Also Present: Holly Hargraves Director of Curriculum and Professional Development, Michelle Rapoza School Business Manager, Francine Roy Superintendent

I. Call to Order - Chair Christopher Thrasher opened up the Westport School Committee Budget Work Session at 5:03 pm. with a quorum of the members present in person.

II. FY27 Budget Discussion - Chair Thrasher explained this meeting is to have an overall discussion on the most recent budget.

Chair Thrasher went over the Capital Improvement Planning Committee CIPC numbers. Projects approved to be recommended are Westport Elementary School HVAC $500,000, Macomber playground $150,000, TV computer replacement $133,500, and Pickup $64,000. The only allocation that was different than requested was $125,000 for safety cameras instead of $225,000.

Projects not recommended was restrooms for Westport Elementary School and a dump truck**.**

Ms. Rapoza reported the Final Approved FY26 Budget figure - $23,734,943
FY27 Budget figure with $480,000 free cash - $24,923,543

Budget items reviewed and discussed included contractual increases, existing expenses increases in the categories of District, Technology, Athletics & Activities, Maintenance, and Special Education.

Discussion was held on student Chromebook fixes. Ms. Rapoza reported students can do fixes between 8-11 am. and they have very few loaners available. Figures reviewed in this area do not include insurance and leasing for computers.

Discussion was held on the increase for Lacrosse and how user fees are used. Ms. Rapoza will provide a breakdown that includes what revenue comes in and what are the costs.

Discussion was held on turf management and the use of outside contractors.

Discussion was held on having the School Building Committee fund turf attachments for tractors.
If approved, Mr. Poulin could do a lot of the field maintenance inhouse such as deep tine aeration, core aeration, slice seeding, top dressing and seed mix spreading. They still would need to use a contractor for fertilizing at $22,900.

Discussion was held on the warranty for the HVAC electrical. Ms. Rapoza reported that Ms. Ouellette has a good handle on this.

Ms. Rapoza explained the use of circuit breaker funds for Special Education. 70-75% for tuition and 20% for transportation.

Superintendent Fran Roy reported that she looked at class sizes for Social Studies. There is a request to add a Social Studies Teacher at the Middle High School. Salary $65,000

Adding a Career Pathways Coordinator is being requested as an administrative position. This position will support already existing Innovation Career Pathways programs, expand offerings, expand career awareness, internships, industry partnerships and industry credentials. Salary $105,000

Adding a Coordinator of Social Emotional Development this position will support teachers. Dr. Roy made a presentation to the Opioid Settlement Committee looking for funding as well as grants. Salary $45,000 plus $50,000 from the Opioid Committee.

Staff reorganization and consolidation anticipating a savings of $80,000.

Discussion was held on the Opioid Settlement Committee's timeline to disperse funding and the need of the school departments urgency of timing in the budget cycle. Dr. Roy is attending a meeting in January and will let them know about the school's budget process.

Career Pathways Coordinator and Coordinator of Social Emotional Development positions were discussed. Using a broader job title, comparable salaries, licensure and certifications were items mentioned.

Chair Thrasher requested comprehensive job descriptions. Dr. Roy will provide this.

Ms. Rapoza suggested to add the budget to the agenda for discussion and approval at the next meeting in order to give Melissa Sousa enough time to put a budget book together and send the Proposed FY27 Budget to the Finance Committee before February 2.

Chair Thrasher announced on January 7, 2026 there will be an Executive Session at 5 pm., Budget Work Session at 6 pm., and a Regular School Committee Meeting at 6:30 pm. when approval of the FY27 Budget will take place. Meetings scheduled on January 14 and 21 are cancelled.

III. Adjourn - A motion was made to adjourn.

Motion by Gendreau, seconded by Pacheco 5/0/0

The School Committee Budget Work Session ended at 6:20 pm.