

MINUTES: 4/3/18

BOARD REPORTS:

Mr. Collins attended the National Honor Society induction ceremony at North Franklin Educational Center and was proud of the students for being recognized for their technical skills outside of the classroom.

Ms. Kissane reported on the recent Facilities Committee meeting. There was a proposal for an additional 4 Pre-K classrooms and renovations to the Kindergarten and First Grade classrooms. The total cost of the project was close to 4 million dollars. The Smart School grant is funding 2 million dollars for the project proposal. The Facilities Committee agreed that the best approach would be to add 2 additional Pre-K classrooms and to not exceed the 2 million dollar grant allotment.

There has been recent discussion regarding BOCES interest in exploring the possibility of a lease for Malone Central School District property adjacent to the North Franklin Educational Center property owned by BOCES. The purpose of the lease would be to accommodate items included in the BOCES capital project. A playground is planned for the Early Childhood Education program. The entire playground would be on the leased parcel. In addition, a greenhouse for use by the Alternative Education Science Class and a demonstration solar panel for instructional purposes with the Electrical Trades program would be on the leased parcel. The Board was agreed to further explore a possible lease.

Mr. Lawrence gave a presentation on new deadbolt designs to the Facilities Committee. He was quoted prices on deadbolts which can cost \$200-\$700 per deadbolt. Ms. Kissane said she preferred to have mechanically solid deadbolts rather than visually appealing ones. Mr. Lawrence is going to order one before purchasing additional ones. Mr. Dupree stated there are deadbolts with push button codes that are easy to operate and can be unlocked with a key.

Security upgrades are being made with an additional 100 cameras being added to every exterior door, which includes alarms.

The demolition phase of the main office relocation at Flanders will begin over spring break. The project is expected to be completed by the third week in June.

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There was discussion about the safety of the entrance at St. Joseph's. Once a person enters the building, there is a blind spot as to where a person may be going before arriving at the office. Mr. Hans asked if any updates were done, would it be a project similar to Flanders. Mr. Griffin said any updates would be similar to the vestibule at Franklin Academy.

Mr. Hans thanked Mr. Lawrence and his staff for the vestibule updates at Davis and the Wi-Fi wiring.

BUDGET DISCUSSION:

Mr. Griffin and Ms. Reyome discussed the 2018-2019 budget the Board. The Board discussed the budget line by line which is highlighted below.

There is an increase of foundation aid but there is still not enough revenue. Ms. Reyome stated that building aid dropped significantly. Mr. Walbridge mentioned that the 2007 foundation aid went through GEA (Gap Elimination Aid) and the district was underfunded 2.9 million dollars. There is a decrease in building aid, however, the appropriation for debt service has also decreased.

At the request of Ms. Kissane, a Board of Education expenditure statement was distributed. Ms. Kissane asked for the budget line item to be reduced by \$2,058.

A general fund history and projection proposal with a revenue summary were distributed to the Board.

Mr. Hans asked if we receive an increase in state aid, then why is the district's fund balance decreasing. Ms. Reyome stated the expenses are increasing which include TRS and ERS, Workers Compensation, health insurance and contractual items. Minimum wage is also increasing. Mr. Collins asked for clarification on what the cost difference is for minimum wage increasing. Ms. Reyome stated that it will cost 6-10% of the wages or \$400,000-\$500,000 per year. Ms. Reyome also noted that the MFT contract is \$600,000-\$700,000 more per year plus benefits.

Ms. Kissane asked if it is possible that the budget overestimated the reserves. Ms. Reyome stated that social security, TRS and health insurance are not overestimated as those are actual figures. Mr. Walbridge noted that he wished the changes in these items could be more gradual.

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Mr. Hans asked for clarification on needing to use 1 million from the fund balance. Ms. Reyome stated that expenses are increasing meanwhile, there is not enough revenue coming in. Ms. Reyome also stated that the reserved fund balance cannot be altered.

Ms. Gardner asked why there is money allotted for the support staff line item for Managerial Confidential employees if substitutes are not used for these positions. Mr. Hans asked if the district can cross train for these positions. Ms. Crossman-Dumas noted that it is good practice to have money in that account and to be conservative. Ms. Reyome stated that because the money is allotted to a certain line item, it does not mean it has to be used. The money will carry over if not used. Ms. Kissane stated that sometimes when the money isn't spent for the line item, it gets used other places.

The labor relations specialist cost has increased and Mr. Walbridge stated that the cost could be higher because they are using fewer people at Capital Region BOCES to cover more jobs. He stated for example, there is one person who covers 18 school districts. Mr. Hans asked why the personnel contractual item is increased by \$10,000. Mr. Griffin stated that this item is for a labor relations specialist to organize personnel files. Ms. Reyome noted that some files were not correctly transferred from the previous Human Resource system. The specialist would organize every file and correct any discrepancies in the new Human Resource system. Ms. Gardner stated that this task could be completed by district staff by working on a few files every day.

Mr. Hans noted that there seems to be a lot of overtime granted. Mr. Lawrence said this was a tough winter which required a lot of snow removal and man hours to clear pathways. He also stated overtime is used for events held after school. Board of Education members and Mr. Griffin had discussions about overtime for plowing. It was noted that the expense was coded to transportation and not building and grounds.

Mr. Walbridge asked how long the wood pellet furnace has been not working at Middle School. Mr. Lawrence said it's been not operational since last year. Mr. Hans asked if there is a need for wood pellets since natural gas is available. Mr. Lawrence said the wood pellets are used as a backup heating system.

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Ms. Gardner stated it is important to note that the cost of substitute teachers is \$307,650. She said the district should look into a way to reduce this cost. Mr. Griffin and Ms. Reyome stated there are a lot of factors that affect this cost which includes sick, personal and conference days.

Mr. Hans and Ms. Kissane questioned the increase in pay for the homework room supervisor position. This is a contractual item.

A summer help desk line item was added to the budget for the purposes of helping with Chromebooks that students will be returning at the end of the school year.

Questions were raised about the cost of the Summer Reading Camp through BOCES. The district will receive aid as revenue for next year for this program.

The budget includes a line item for new equipment in the fitness center and Mr. Walbridge noted that Ms. Kilcullen has done a tremendous job keeping up the fitness center.

There was discussion about the current Family and Consumer Science position that was added last year. The staff member currently teaching that position is qualified to teach other areas. After discussion with administration, the Family and Consumer Science position classes could be taught by 2 staff members at Middle School. Mr. Hans asked if those people would be losing instructional time with their classes. The schedule will be worked out so that no classes will be missed.

On a similar note, the enrollment at Davis in 1st grade will be significantly less next year. This will result in the movement of some staff to accommodate class size numbers.

After the budget was discussed, Mr. Collins asked how the Board felt about the budget. Ms. Kissane stated she is uncomfortable with the fund balance and Mr. Walbridge stated the district needs to be as conservative as possible. Mr. Griffin stated the Board could consider borrowing money for the BOCES capital project instead of using the fund balance (which would lower the fund balance). Ms. Kissane said she would like to work on getting the fund balance lowered. She asked if the Board could discuss the Director of Instruction position. The salary plus fringe would cost over a \$100,000. For clarification, Mr. Griffin asked if the Board would like this

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BUDGET DISCUSSION:

position to be eliminated from the budget and the Board agreed to remove this position from the budget. After further discussion, all staffing requests were asked to be removed from the budget. These requests included an ABA Teaching Assistant, Administrative Aide, School Bus Monitors, increase in hours for a school monitor, a School Psychologist and the increase in Occupational Licensed Therapist services from 60%-100%. Mr. Hans noted that he would like to keep the ABA teaching assistant position in the budget if possible. Other suggestions from the Board included the management and approval of overtime. The current 0% tax levy was also discussed and Mr. Walbridge suggested having a blended approach. Mr. Collins asked every Board member their thoughts on the current budget including the tax levy. Generally, Board of Education members wanted to see the tax levy be below 2% along with a decrease in the appropriated fund balance. Mr. Griffin stated that he would do his best to get the appropriated fund balance as close to 1.5 million dollars and keep the tax levy increase as low as possible.

Mr. Griffin stated that the discussion of the budget was healthy and everyone worked together to do their very best. There will be difficult decisions to be made but Mr. Griffin and Ms. Reyome will do their very best to capture the needs of the district and return on April 17 with a budget. The budget proposal will be ready for the Board to review late next week.

ADOPTION OF 2018-2019 BUDGET (TABLED):

Upon motion by Philip Hans, seconded by Donna Kissane, the Board tabled the Adoption of the 2018-2019 budget until April 17, 2018.

AYES: 7 NAYES: 0, motion carried

ADJOURNMENT:

Upon motion by Wayne Walbridge, seconded by Penny Gardner; the meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

AYES: 7 NAYES: 0, motion carried

BMF:

Clerk Pro-Tem for
Executive Session

Bryn M. Fefee
District Clerk
Board of Education