

WELLFLEET SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Tuesday, January 10, 2017

Present for the School Committee: Betsy Pontius Jill Putnam, Martha Gordon, Mort Inger and Jan Plaue

Present for the Administration: Thomas Conrad, Superintendent, Giovanna Venditti, Director of Finance and Operations, Mary Beth Rodman, Principal

CALL TO ORDER/AGENDA CHANGES – Chair Jan Plaue called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

CHAIR’S REPORT –

Chair Plaue indicated that the Town’s Long Range Plan Committee was seeking a representative from the School. After discussion, it was decided that Jan would be the representative and Principal Rodman will inform the Town Administrator.

CITIZENS SPEAKS – None

PRIORITY BUSINESS

Administrators’ Reports

Principal Rodman’s Report

Principal Rodman’s report was included in the packet. She highlighted the Access and ELL testing dates and let the Committee know that testing time for Grades 3 and 4 is 165 minutes and for Kindergarten it is 45 minutes.

She also reported an increase in enrollment due to a new Grade 2 student. Wellfleet Elementary School enrollment is 103 students.

Assistant Superintendent’s Report:

Assistant Superintendent Keith Gauley’s report was included in the packet. Superintendent Conrad highlighted the professional development participation and course offerings. He also reminded committee members to fill out the School Calendar Survey with results being reported at the Joint School Committee meeting. He commented that the Holiday concert was excellent. He reported he is attending faculty meetings this month and has finished up the forums. He remarked that the poise of Wellfleet students when speaking publicly is impressive.

Superintendent’s Report:

Superintendent Conrad reported that he attended the New England School Development Council and presented about later start times that has been studied by many districts across the country. Nauset was able to get it done while others still are struggling to make it happen. He thanked the School Committee for their support. He is working on six budgets and it is going well.

FY17 Budget

Giovanna Venditti reviewed the monthly expenditure report with the Committee highlighting reductions and/or increases in several accounts. Presently the balance is \$36,011. It was noted in account 4070, Special Needs Salaries, Education Assistants, the account was increased due to reclassification to Circuit Breaker funds (\$427,000), FY16 Tuition (\$24,869) and FY17 Tuition (\$24,869). Account 4058, Contracted Services, Extraordinary Maintenance is in a deficit due to the water damage to the Boys' and Girls' bathrooms. There was also a replacement of two windows that cost \$1,608. Account 4088 – Special Needs Preschool Tuition, correction was made as the actual amount that should have been budgeted was \$219,713 and not \$170,588. They will need to encumber an additional \$48,584. Additional funding through grants of \$20,000 have been used to cover the cost and the remainder within the operating budget. Ms. Venditti is anticipating savings in utility and oil lines. Wellfleet has not spent any of that money to date.

Chair Plaue asked about the oil as previously the committee had asked that that line not be increased. She reflected on the fact that it is level funded with the price of oil increasing. Ms. Venditti indicated that she will receive the Barnstable County bid next month.

Principal Rodman reminded the committee that WES is in a spending freeze. Unanticipated aging systems in the building could cost some money. The underground tank need to be cleaned - \$15,000. Betsy Pontius suggested looking at the long range Capital Plan.

Appoint Single Member to Approve Bill Warrants –

Superintendent Conrad indicated the Municipal Modernization bill was approved that indicated that the committee may designate any 1 member to approve all bills, drafts, orders and payrolls; provided, however that the member shall report to the board at the next meeting. The Superintendent indicated the reason for the change is to streamline the process. Chair Plaue stated she trusts the personnel who are preparing the warrants and the committee could just do what they are presently doing. Betsy Pontius indicated that it is the responsibility of the committee to review the bills. She stated she would be willing to take a cursory look and would like to get some practice relative to the process at the Central Office. The Committee will wait until next month to decide after Betsy Pontius looks at this process. A vote will be taken next month.

Public Hearing on the FY18 Budget –

Chair Plaue called the Public Hearing on the FY18 budget to order at 5:00 p.m.

Chair Plaue thanked the Superintendent for the budget book and hoped the Finance Committee and Selectmen will get a copy. The Superintendent recognized Giovanna Venditti and Ann Tefft for producing the documents.

Principal Rodman presented the budget indicating the FY18 Wellfleet Elementary School budget cannot remain within the parameters of a 2.5% increase. For FY17 they had 7 other one-time funding sources that were utilized to offset the budget by \$208,865. Without the seven other funding sources, the FY17 budget

increase would have been 11%. In FY18 they have 4 other funding sources totaling \$71,723 to offset the FY18 budget. Wellfleet Elementary School will go from 10 teachers to 9 teachers. One teacher is retiring. There are no out-of-district placements.

“Reductions in the FY18 draft budget include \$68,571 in Account #4014 Salaries Teacher; \$8,558 total in Salaries Guidance & Counseling Accounts #4037 and 4081; \$2,515 in Contracted Services Instructional Technology; and \$4,000 in Account \$055 Contract Services Building. The FY18 draft budget also reflects reductions in staffing including three full-time special needs educational assistants; two of whom are currently funded by FY16 and FY17 EES tuition. As a result of the cut in the state’s Kindergarten grant, we will eliminate the 37% Kindergarten Educational Assistant position that was funded by the REAP grant in FY17.

Increases are primarily in the special needs portion of the FY18 budget; an increase of \$89,658 (14.9% increase). In FY17, WES utilized FY15 Circuit Breaker funds to pay \$49,124 of the SN Preschool Tuition, FY16 Circuit Breaker funds to pay \$53,754 of a new intensive special needs teacher salary, FY17 Circuit Breaker funds to pay \$27,000 towards a special needs educational assistant, the Cafeteria Revolving Account to pay \$21,249 towards the cafeteria manager’s salary, the Purchase of Sales system, and the cafeteria clothing allowance thus offsetting the FY17 Budget by \$208,865.”

Principal Rodman indicated the special needs population was 12%, and this year it is 19% and next year it will rise to 23%. In two years, the SN population in Wellfleet has nearly doubled. The regular day portion of the FY18 Budget has an increase of 1.41%, whereas, the SN portion of the FY18 budget has an increase of 14.9%. In total the FY18 Budget for Wellfleet Elementary School has an increase of 4.62%.

Jill Putnam commented that special education is mandated and that it would cost much more for out-of-district placements. It is the right thing to do to keep young children in their own neighborhood school. She went on to comment that the regular school budget has increased by 1.41% and stated the budget increase is out of the committee’s control. Principal Rodman indicated that she anticipates 7 special needs students next year and if they went to out-of-district placement, each student would cost \$100,000+ dollars.

Chair Plauve inquired as to whether or not there would be more Circuit Breaker funding available. Principal Rodman indicated that it is a four year formula with reimbursement up to 75%. If a DCF student goes out-of-district it goes as high as 100%. Principal Rodman stated that the Cape Cod Collaborative is a two hour ride for students, which is unconscionable. She further stated we want to service these students in their neighborhood school. Eastham Elementary and Wellfleet Elementary are creating these programs because there is no Collaborative on the Lower Cape. Truro and Provincetown could benefit from this in the future.

The Superintendent indicated that this is also positive for the parents. He wants to have a top notch program for all students. Principal Rodman reminded the Committee that they remain a Level 1 school.

Chair Plaue and the Committee were very complimentary of Principal Rodman indicating what a great job she did with the budget. Principal Rodman spoke to the 40% Librarian and the reduction of 40% for the Reading Interventionist. She felt certain that services will not be impacted. Martha Gordon asked if a volunteer could help staff the Library. Principal Rodman thought having Martha Gordon volunteer would be great anytime.

Town Administrator, Dan Hoort, addressed the committee relative to special needs students noting the sensitivity of the issue. He would like to limit the costs and take care of our kids. He would like other schools to bring their children to Wellfleet.

The Public Hearing on the FY18 budget was closed at 5:25 p.m.

Motion:

On a motion by Mort Inger, seconded by Betsy Pontius, it was voted unanimously to approve the budget of \$2,652,879 which is an increase of \$117,032 or 4.6%.

It was noted that the Regular Day budget had an increase of \$27,000 or an increase of 1.4%.

Members discussed Town Meeting and that Principal Rodman will make the presentation. Superintendent Conrad will be available for the Region. Dan Hoort, Town Administrator, indicated that they do not need an override for the operating budget. Jill Putnam indicated that this school and school committee have done an extraordinary job keeping things under 2.5% for at least the past five years. She also mentioned that the building is a community building that is also used by the Recreation Department.

Reports and Information

Cape Cod Collaborative – Jill Putnam reported that they had a hard time getting a quorum at the last meeting. They reviewed Paul Hilton's evaluation and in February they will discuss their findings for his evaluation. The new auditor, Rick Sullivan of Powers & Sullivan, gave a presentation regarding the Annual Audit and all was good. Presently they are analyzing Nauset, DY, Bourne and Monomoy for bus transportation. There should be some substantial savings for districts. She also reported that people who have a BA can get their SN certification through Bridgewater. It is an on line class and she will learn more about it. It is for people who already have a license. She also reported that there will be a Legislator's Breakfast on February 3rd at the Cape Cod Collaborative in Osterville. She further reported that Upper Cape Tech appears to be the location that is being considered for Way Point, the alternative High School.

PTA – Betsy Pontius reported that the PTA board reviewed their budget and have \$10,300 in the bank. They are trying to think of ways the community can come together. Perhaps a theatre day or ice skating.

School Council – Principal Rodman indicated they are meeting and hoping to complete academic portion of School Improvement Plan. The arts fundraiser was explained to them and they were excited. At the next

meeting they will talk about staff appreciation. Principal Rodman will email committee members the Spaghetti Supper date.

School Council – Martha Gordon reported that the School Council met on December 19th and talked about the academic section of the five year school improvement plan. They discussed the different kinds of assessments being used. She also reported that the school is about to go through a Coordinated Program Review which takes place every six years, evaluating special needs, civil rights and ELL. They reviewed the special needs regulations to make sure the District is compliant. Martha Gordon indicated that the School Council discussed the special needs budget increasing and the funding sources going from 11 to 4. Emmett Collins and Meghan Richard, from the School To Career Program at the High School are helping in the morning at WES.

Nauset Preschool – Enrollment in packet. Superintendent Conrad indicated that six community friends are attending at this point, totaling 10.

Negotiations Subcommittee – Mort Inger indicated that negotiations are going really well. He is very optimistic that both sides will be pleased with the outcome.

Policy Subcommittee – Betsy Pontius reported that the Subcommittee will be meeting to wordsmith the Wellness Policy. She is emailing the Chair.

Transportation Subcommittee – Martha Gordon indicated they met on January 3rd. A presentation was made by the Cape Cod Collaborative relative to bussing. They hope to have a presentation for a Joint School Committee meeting in August or September. They are moving forward with the plan and hope that they can offer different size buses. It was noted that the Collaborative is a non-profit organization.

Chair Plaue indicated she would mention this effort at the Selectmen's meeting so that they know how much work goes into trying to find ways to economize on transportation.

Substance Abuse Task Force – Martha Gordon reported that they will meet on January 23rd.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Mort Inger, seconded by Martha Gordon, it was voted unanimously, to approve the minutes of December 13, 2016 as amended.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Betsy Pontius, seconded by Mort Inger, it was voted unanimously, to adjourn the meeting at 5:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann M. Tefft

Included in packet: Administrative Reports, Expense Reports, FY18 budget, Public Hearing Handout, Preschool Enrollment