



# Weymouth

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## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### Weymouth School Committee

#### BUDGET SUB COMMITTEE

111 Middle St

JANUARY 29, 2020

Meeting Minutes

Approved 2/6/20

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**Members In Attendance:** John Sullivan (Chair), Lisa Belmarsh, Kathy Curran, Carrie Palazzo, Rebecca Sherlock-Shangraw, Tracey Nardone (arrived at 6:11pm)

**Members Absent:** Mayor Hedlund

**Also Present:** Superintendent Curtis-Whipple, Assistant Superintendent Smith, Principal Perez

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**The Meeting Came to Order At 6:06pm.**

#### **Review of Budget Proposals for FY21**

##### **-Johnson Early Childhood Center**

Assistant Superintendent Smith gave an overview of the proposal. Reminding that the first page are of expense lines not payroll lines and that the following pages are proposed lines. Mr. Smith stated the operating budget is low, however this is because tuition does absorb some costs.

Mrs. Curran inquired about the status of the wheelchair lift and was informed that it is designed and being built and will hopefully be installed in February.

##### **-WHS**

Assistant Superintendent Smith and Dr. Curtis-Whipple went over the high school proposed budget. The high school has an expense line of \$234,590. Some lines were reallocated ie) memberships, supplies, technology and AP (trying to grow the program), instruction supplies, and robotics for the elective component. With 8th graders moving up

to the high school there will need to be more extra curricular support. Additional para security was discussed. Ms. Belmarsh stated that she supports an increase in security paras to hopefully decrease vaping, smoking and the use of cell phones at the high school. Mrs. Curran also stated that there should be a uniform cell phone use policy.

Community member Gus Perez interjected that it may take more than security paras to help with the vaping/smoking situation. Dr. Curtis-Whipple said that in addition to paras for enforcement, attention needs to be paid to educating students of vaping dangers in earlier grades.

#### -CTE

Mr. Smith gave an overview of the proposed CTE budget. He thanked Julianne Gamache and Karen Monahan for their help in setting up this budget. A metal fab teacher is needed and it is recommended that there be 2 teachers in metal fab, to help with ratios. The current second staff member currently in that shop is grant funded and the grant is running out.

Community member Mr. Perez asked what the student numbers for the CTE program were and if there was a decline. Superintendent Curtis-Whipple informed that nearly all programs are full and there is a waitlist for most CTE programs. The possibility of renovating Cosmetology was discussed, it's not on the capital list and is estimated to cost between \$125-\$150K.

Mr. Perez asked why more students weren't completing a course of studies the state calls "Mass Core." Dr. Curtis-Whipple explained that CTE students often don't have space in their schedules, and that there might be more opportunity for other academies to do Mass Core with the additional faculty in World Languages and the Arts that would be coming up from the Chapman School.

#### -IT

The Assistant Superintendent gave an overview of the proposed budget. Administration is proposing an increase of \$100 for infrastructure and networks largely due to the changes happening as Chapman comes off-line. A full time ed tech secretary with a work year of the school year plus 20 days was also mentioned. Members commented that the student interns and integration specialists have been great assets.

Mrs. Curran inquired where the money would be coming from to accommodate the increases. The Superintendent stated that nothing has been funded yet. At this stage we are focusing on what is needed, with decisions about what to fund to follow..

Mrs. Nardone questioned where Chard Street and the Evening High School budgets come from. Assistant Superintendent Smith and Dr. Curtis-Whipple explained that Chard Street falls under the Middle and High School Curriculum budgets, and that the evening high

school program is supported by its revolving budget. Mrs. Curran questioned the \$800K Chard Street budget and was informed the cost is mostly for testing and staff. Creating space for student needs was also discussed.

#### **-Middle Schools**

The increase to \$100K is in preparation for a World Language Teacher for when grades 6-8 are together. The Superintendent Stated that Allyson Bell is looking into Special Education Staffing to determine if the listed 2 new positions are a true need. Reassigning Paras from the Chapman pool was discussed. The decrease in grant funding and the need for specialists was discussed.

#### **JECC-Review Pre-K Tuition Rates (Fee Review)**

Principal Perez, Assistant Superintendent Smith and Superintendent Curtis-Whipple gave an outline of cost comparison between JECC and surrounding schools, and showed some possible tuition increases for full and half day programs. Students may attend for full or half days, and for as many as five days per week. For some scheduling scenarios, Weymouth was charging significantly less than comparable schools, and for some, Weymouth was above the median tuition. Scenarios, current tuitions and possible increases are attached to these minutes.

The Chair inquired if fees are covering the cost of the program and the Assistant Superintendent explained the program was slightly in the black. Principal Perez reiterated that there are substantially separate and inclusion programs. No classes are solely general education. She also commented that since the census went out registrations indicate that full day programs are full for 2020-2021

Superintendent Curtis Whipple commented that the tuition shouldn't be burdensome on families but need a competitive increase to have a full set of specialists.

Dr. Sullivan inquired if there is a full and ½ day rate, if there is a formula by which all of the different tuition levels were calculated. Principal Perez advised that the rate is \$48 for full day and 24 for ½ and is what they report to the state. Dr. Sullivan stated that 3% in a conservative increase.

Principal Perez stated there is an open house in March and would like messaging to go out to families. Maybe have April 1 vote. This topic will appear again at the next budget sub meeting, so Principal Perez could inform the committee as to whether changing some tuition scenarios without changing them all would be possible given her DESE reporting requirements.

Mrs. Nardone shared that she would recommend a 3% increase.

#### **Non-Union Salary Review**

An overview was given of 59 non-union positions that were identified for review. The Superintendent advised that to attract staff pay has to be competitive. Assistant Superintendent Smith added that there are 150 positions in the group and that the 59 positions designated total \$2.5 million. These 59 are positions that did not receive raises as part of the principal review or the increase given to WeyCare employees.

Principal Perez added that the secretary positions are greatly underpaid for the amount of great work that they do and are the backbone of the school. Community Member Gus Perez wanted clarification that the 2.5 million was for the 59 positions only and not the total of 150 in the group. Mr. Smith said it was, and Dr. Sullivan noted that this represented about \$33,000 per person.

Rebecca Sherlock-Shangraw commented that pay is not close to market value. These possible adjustments will go before the committee in the spring for vote.

#### **Chapter 70-Spending plan requirements, SOA (Student Opportunity Act)**

Assistant Superintendent Smith gave an overview of the Governor's FY21 Educational Budget & Student Opportunity Act. His presentation is attached to these notes. Hopefully Weymouth will see \$28.6 million due to Chapter 70. Also Charter School reimbursement was increased. The overview compared Weymouth with other 'DART' Schools such as Medfield, Peabody and Attleboro. The minimum each district receives is \$30/pupil which works out to be 0.6%. A reason some receive greater percentage were given to some of our neighboring districts may be due to large numbers of ELL students. Some Gateway communities could receive as much as \$1200 more per pupil. Weymouth will use the for 'short form' provided by the state as part of the SOA reporting requirement as we are not receiving as large a funding increase.

Dr. Sherlock-Shangraw commented that even though Weymouth's per pupil rate is higher than Hingham, Weymouth is paying for more types of services for a larger percentage of our students.

Mr. Smith reiterated money is to be used for the school children and not the town. Community Member Gus Perez commented that an increase in funding to one source from the state would be decreased elsewhere. The Assistant Superintendent went over the timeline for the School Committee vote and subsequent submission of the form to DESE. Ms. Palazzo raised the question of if the town's population is being represented accurately. The definition of low income, out of district students, and town valuation was discussed.

#### **Adams Renovation and Timeline**

The renovation of Abigail Adams from a middle school to an elementary school was discussed at great length. The renovation is substantial and the scope of work could take more than 2 summers. HMFH originally gave an estimate of around \$2 million however

the study by McKinnell McKinnell & Taylor, Inc comes in at \$5.5 million. Staff on the town side of government feel the best solution would be to close Adams for one year when Chapman comes online to finish the work properly before bringing students in. This would delay redistricting by a year and the impact on families and staff was discussed. Dr. Curtis-Whipple shared that there are a lot of moving pieces with this project and we want to do what is best in the long term for the children. She also advised that at the February 6, 2002 School Committee meeting, John Macleod would speak. Ms. Belmarsh advised that the overflow of the budget would be paid by the town and that it is the responsibility of the School Committee to vote on anything building related. She also stated that she sees pros and cons to both the 2 and 3 year plan and that the town is asking school committee to vote on this project that was inaccurately assessed, over budget and over the time frame.

Dr. Sullivan mentioned that the School Committee could vote to approve and then Town Council could elect not to bond it out, so it would bear watching what happened on the town side.

Ms. Palazzo shared that there is anxiety for families regarding the redistricting and its impacts, so maybe putting it off another year would be good.

The size of Abigail Adams and its use was talked about, Mrs. Curran asked about what the rest of the building would be used for since it currently holds 900 students and we would not put that many primary students in that building.

Dr. Sullivan added that he's concerned about the process but believes the town is committed to the building being a school and not for town offices, and that they are not balking at paying for it - all of which is good..

Gus Perez inquired about the disparity in price and noted that the feasibility study didn't have a timeline. Clarification was given that Abigail Adams and Chapman would not be closed at the same time. Ms. Sherlock-Shangraw asked that there be clarification on what exactly the school committee is voting on and what they are authorizing.

Ms. Belmarsh added that there is a public forum at Chapman on February 11 and hopes that community members bring their questions and that possibly the vote could happen at the February 27, 2020 meeting.

Community Member Gus Perez shared that the extra year from the educational perspective is the correct and right thing to do that the sooner the community is notified about Chapter 70 funding and Abigail Adams the better.

#### **MOU-DCF Foster Care Transportation Reimbursement**

Ms. Belmarsh advised that the School Committee and Town Council will vote in March on this.

**The Meeting Adjourned at 8:39** on the motion of Ms. Belmarsh, seconded by Mrs. Curran. Passed unanimously.

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**Documents Attached to These Minutes:**

- Budget Proposals for JECC, WHS, CTE, IT, Middle Schools
- JECC-Review Pre-K Tuition Rates, Comparison and Schedule
- Non-Union Employees Salary Review Positions
- Governor's FY21 Educational Budget & Student Opportunity Act
- Feasibility Study-Middle School to Elementary School-Abigail Adams

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Joel P. Gile". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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[NAME]