

West Bath School Administrative Unit

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

February 24, 2016 at 6:30 PM at the West Bath School

Members Present: Dennis Crews, Meagan Hennessey, Keith Hinds, Robert McDaniel, and Jordi St. John

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Patrick Bowdish, David Hennessey, Emily Thompson

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Mr. Hinds. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mr. St. John arrived at 6:31 PM.

Mr. Crews arrived at 6:32 PM.

Comments from the Chair:

Mr. Hinds stated that purpose of the meeting was to receive and review the new budget. He said that Mrs. Thompson would complete an overview of the budget and then would walk the board through the budget. He stated that no action would be taken tonight and that the board should refrain from debate until there is a chance to read the budget and review it. Mr. Hinds said that there will be plenty of time to discuss the budget throughout the season, include numerous workshops with Budget Advisory Committee and Board of Selectmen.

Adjustments to the Agenda:

None

Public Comments:

None

School Board of Directors Workshop – First Reading of the School Budget

Prior to walking through the school budget, Mrs. Thompson provided an overview of the parameters she was working with to develop the budget, as well as challenges with the timeframe of the budget process and the opportunities within the budget.

Regarding the parameters that the budget needed to be developed around, Mrs. Thompson said:

- WBSAU currently contracts for staff for nursing, library, and physical education from RSU 1. RSU 1 is increasing their nursing and library services, which means that in this budget a new positions need to be accounted for. Mrs. Thompson stated that schools are required to have a master librarian overseeing the library.
- During the current year, WBSAU had a waiver for gifted and talented to enable the school system to develop a program. This allowed for Mrs. Jarvis, one of West Bath's educational technicians to complete this work. However, next year the school will legally need to have a GT teacher.
- In relation to technology, the School Board of Directors decided through the last budget cycle to work through the first year with technology contracted services for a few hours a month. Quickly the school found that technology support even at a minimal amount is a full-time position. Mrs. Thompson commented that the school has been fortunate to have had a parent volunteer donate much of his time to support the school, but there is a great need to create a full-time position to manage the wide scope of technology needs.

Mrs. Thompson also spoke about some challenges for developing this budget in regards to the timing of the process:

- As the school is just half-way through the first academic year, there still may be unanticipated expenses that the district is not aware of for this year, and are therefore they are not accounted for in the next fiscal year.
- As of the meeting date, the SAU still did not have local entitlement figures, which are generated from special education expenses. Currently two educational technicians are paid through Local Entitlement. Because the staff will be needed next year, one of those ed techs has been placed in the regular budget with the hope that there will be enough Local Entitlement resources to pay for the other.
- West Bath's state subsidy has been reduced by \$22,000. This is partly because the school has reduced our special education expenses in this fiscal year, and also because the state's resources were thin. Through conversations with the Department of Education it was mentioned that more funds may be added to support subsidy when the legislature votes on the 279, but that won't happen until the end of March. Therefore, we will need to create this budget with the figures we currently have.
- The transportation contract ends in August. For this budget, we had to estimate what that contract might look like.
- With many months of our school year still ahead of us, and no historical data to work with, it's challenging to estimate appropriately what our carryover may be.

Mrs. Thompson commented that despite the parameters that needed to be worked around, and the timeframe that needed to be worked within, there were opportunities within this budget. She mentioned:

- The budget has continued support with Expeditionary Learning as the school gets closer to the goal of reaching credentialed status.
- Within the budget is a 50% Gifted and Talented teacher and a 50% intervention teacher to support all students with social/emotional and/or academic enrichment or intervention. To support this position, it is proposed that we eliminate a 50% special education ed tech and the 50% Gifted and Talented ed tech.
- The budget contains a full time technology support specialist to support the technology systems in the building and to move forward with 21st century learning for staff and students.
- The budget increases both nursing and library services from 0.1 FTE to 0.2 FTEs per position.
- The budget has continued Pre-K services for 12 students 5 mornings a week.

Mrs. Thompson shared the overall proposed budget figures with the Board of Directors, sharing that the proposed budget is \$3,209,263.70, which is an increase of \$53,421.02 or 1.69% from the current year. With state subsidy of \$112,558.95, a tuition credit of \$189,175.00, and carryover of \$169,717.76 the local contribution is \$2,737,811.99, or a decrease of 4.87% from the current year.

The Board of Directors then entered a workshop where Mrs. Thompson walked members through each line of the budget.

Public Comments:

Mr. Hennessey said that he hoped that the school would build a capital account for a buffer zone. He asked if the School Board of Directors should consider increasing the repairs/maintenance line?

Mrs. Thompson responded that the auditor had felt that capital improvements should be funded outside of the school budget.

Mr. Hinds asked the board if they had any further questions regarding the budget. Mrs. Thompson reminded the board members that they may email her individually with questions prior to next week's meeting, if they have any. Mr. Hinds said that he felt the budget was an incredible starting point, but reminded the board that there would be a few line items that would need to be negotiated through an executive session at the next meeting.

Mr. Hennessey said that in lieu of having prior budgets, this budget was not bad. Mr. Hinds said the he felt there was creative problem solving within the budget.

Next Meeting Dates and Locations:

Wednesday March 2nd at 6:30 PM at the West Bath School.

Adjourn:

Mr. McDaniel made a motion to adjourn at 7:20. Mr. St. John seconded the motion. Vote (5-0).

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emily Thompson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Emily Thompson