

# QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

## BUDGET and FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, May 13, 2013

A meeting of the Budget and Finance Subcommittee was held on Monday, May 13, 2013 at 5:00 pm in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Conference Room at the NAGE Building. Present were Mayor Thomas Koch, Mr. Paul Bregoli, Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Mrs. Emily Lebo, Mrs. Anne Mahoney, Mr. Dave McCarthy, and Ms. Barbara Isola, Chair. Also attending were Superintendent DeCristofaro, Assistant Superintendent Colleen Roberts, Mr. Michael Draicchio, Mrs. Mary Fredrickson, Ms. Beth Hallett, Mrs. Jane Kisielius, Mrs. Joanne Morrissey, Mr. James Mullaney, Mr. Kevin Mulvey, Mrs. Maura Papile, Ms. Madeline Roy, Mr. Keith Segalla, Mr. Kevin Segalla, Ms. Judy Todd, Mrs. Ruth Witmer; Ms. Jill Gichuhi, President of the Quincy Parent Advisory Council to Special Education; Ms. Allison Cox, President of the Quincy Education Association; and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

Ms. Isola called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. Dr. DeCristofaro introduced the preliminary budget presentation, noting that it is a level-services plus budget, showing incremental improvement in a number of areas and allowing for building an experienced professional staff.

Mr. Mullaney presented the draft FY2014 Budget of \$93,668,165, an increase of \$3,650,000 from FY2013. There are two sources of funding: \$91,158,165 from the Mayor's appropriation and projected Circuit Breaker funds of \$2,500,000. The budget as funded allows for meeting contractual obligations, including step and level increases and percentage raises. It provides funding to address class size for academic programs and academic support programs. Additional funding is also allocated for elementary and middle school libraries, middle school extracurricular activities, and increased funding for text and learning materials to address the Common Core State standards. \$1,692,000 is available to fund the priorities as recommended.

To begin the budget process, Academic Classroom Teacher positions are analyzed, utilizing enrollment projections and School Committee Class Size Guidelines; positions are shifted and reconciled. For this year, an additional 10.5 teachers are needed to accommodate enrollment shifts and increases, mostly at the elementary level (9 position), with 1 teacher for Gr. 5 at Point Webster Middle School, and an 0.5 position at Quincy High School. Mrs. Lebo asked for enrollment figures at Atlantic and Central and Mr. Bregoli expressed concern about Atlantic's growing population, but the school is at a comfortable capacity. Including contractual obligations, an \$1,677,000 in additional funding is needed for this budget segment. Mrs. Mahoney asked for a breakout of the figures for step and level raises vs. the contractual raise.

For Academic Programs, the recommendation is an additional 2.5 ELL teachers to meet growing population, plus reinstating the ELL High School Department chair position shared between the two

schools. Recommendations also include increasing the Literacy team by 0.5 teachers (at Montclair); create positions for Library Teachers (2.5 positions) at the middle school level (half time at each of five schools), increase Chapter 74 programs for NQHS carpentry (0.5), plumbing (0.2), fashion technology (0.2) to meet successful program demand. Dr. DeCristofaro noted that this new investment in library services at the elementary (\$146,000) and middle school (\$122,000) levels is a total of \$268k total and will benefit over 6,000 students. For SPED, 2 additional teachers are needed at the middle school levels. These additional positions are to meet the needs of students moving up from elementary schools. The total for this section is a \$781,315 increase, including the step and level and contractual raises.

For Academic Support, the recommendation is to increase the guidance staff by 2.0 positions due to enrollment shifts – 0.5 at elementary, 0.5 at middle school, and 1.0 at high school levels. 12 long-term substitute positions for elementary library/technology support are also funded in this section. For Chapter 74, two aides that were grant funded will be absorbed. Funding was also restored for middle school extracurricular activities. Mrs. Lebo asked why the high school figures were not appropriated by population and that will be analyzed. Mr. McCarthy asked whether this restoration exceeded the former budget amount for middle schools; Dr. DeCristofaro confirmed this is an increase for the middle schools and noted that the high schools were over \$40,000 each in the past, so this is an area for future restoration. Mr. McCarthy asked about the ELL Dept. Chair position; Dr. DeCristofaro said it will be posted internally.

Mrs. Mahoney expressed concern that Grade 5 students at Point Webster and Sterling would have access to licensed Library Teachers, while Grade 5 students in elementary schools would not. Mrs. Lebo agreed about the potential for conflict and thought that more investigation of program options should happen before a final determination is made. Mr. Bregoli asked whether the half-time media specialists would qualify for medical benefits; Mrs. Roberts said the goal would be to hire two full-time and one half-time; all would be eligible for benefits. Mr. Bregoli asked whether principals had received raises and Mr. Mullaney said they had received similar percentages to those that contract staff members received.

For Non-Academic Support, there was no change to many of the accounts. Custodial staff would be increased by 1 to allow for additional staff at the new Central Middle School. Mr. McCarthy asked about the status of the bus fleet. Mr. Mullaney said that due to School Committee's ongoing investment, the age of the fleet is much lower than in previous years and he does not see a pressing need for new buses in the foreseeable future. The total increase is for this budget segment is \$163,169, including contractual obligations and an increase in the overtime line. Mrs. Lebo asked for a breakdown of the Supervision travel line.

Subsidized Services will be reviewed at the next Budget meeting on Tuesday, May 21. The proposed FY2014 Budget does not anticipate any increases in fees for rentals, user fees for athletics or transportations. Federal mandates may require an increase in meal prices.

Mayor Koch left the meeting at 6:00 pm.

For Academic Expenses, the budget requests level funding for most accounts with the exception of Textbooks; additional funding is needed for textbooks and learning materials for the Common Core State Standards. The recommendation is to increase the System Reserve for Textbooks by \$400,000 for the purchase of these new materials. A new Reading program is being purchased for Kindergarten through Grade 5 and payments will be made over the next three years. Ms. Isola complimented Mrs. Roberts for negotiating a favorable contract. Mrs. Lebo asked for clarification on the individual school textbook accounts; the money is appropriated on a per student basis for projected enrollment. Mr. Mullaney noted that this Reading textbook contract encumbers the budget two years forward, but the publisher is not charging any interest.

For non-academic expenses, contribution of funds from the Rental Revolving account will offset the additional textbook purchases in Academic Expenses. For most other accounts, there are no changes. SPED Transportation funding will increase by \$99,000 to cover anticipated increase in transporting special populations. Outside vendor rates have increased, so research will be done for alternate sources. Mrs. Lebo asked about the Work Inc line item; Ms. Todd said that may be able to be removed. Increases for uniforms are funded; this is fulfillment of contractual obligations. Restoration of funding for purchasing student furniture for new classrooms in growing elementary school populations is also requested.

In Summary, the \$1,692,000 available has proposed allocations to Academic Classroom Teachers (27.68%), Academic Programs (25.6%), Academic Support (22.62%), Non-Academic Support (5.44%), Academic Expenses (23.63%) and Non-Academic Expenses (-4.96%). An additional 24.8 positions are being added.

Mrs. Mahoney asked about the number of retirements; Mr. Mullaney said there will be 13 replacement hires for the retirees. Mr. McCarthy thanked Mr. Mullaney for the budget presentation and then asked whether Special Education programs are going to be moving between buildings. Dr. DeCristofaro said that discussion is ongoing and information would be available by the end of May.

Mr. McCarthy requested information on the unrestored amounts cut from Athletics and a cost for funding Freshman sports. Mr. McCarthy asked about the rates being paid to the outside contractors and asked for a general idea of transportation performance. Dr. DeCristofaro noted that there has been a significant increase in the transportation of homeless students. Mrs. Mahoney agreed with Mr. McCarthy's requests for information. Mr. Mullaney will work with Mr. Rendle on pulling together the information for next week's budget hearing. Mr. Bregoli asked if we have considered having all

transportation done by an outside vendor. Mr. Mullaney said it has been explored and there are cost savings; he will provide this information at the next meeting. Mr. McCarthy said that the Mayor also requested the sports issue be addressed at the next meeting.

Ms. Isola asked for an alternate proposal to have full-time Media Specialists at each middle school. Ms. Isola asked for the breakdown of students participating in athletics. Mr. Bregoli asked for clarification on the space issues at elementary school; Mrs. Roberts said that it varies between Kindergarten and the upper grades. Mr. Bregoli asked if we would consider redistricting; Dr. DeCristofaro said that elementary population is up system-wide, not in certain neighborhoods.

Mrs. Lebo thanked the Superintendent, Principals, and Leadership Team for work in developing the draft budget. Ms. Isola expressed her thanks as well and reminded everyone that the next Budget and Finance Subcommittee meeting is Tuesday, May 21 at 5:00 pm in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room of the NAGE Building.

Mrs. Hubley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 pm. Mrs. Mahoney seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.