

# QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

## BUDGET and FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, May 21, 2013

A meeting of the Budget and Finance Subcommittee was held on Tuesday, May 21, 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. Joanne Morrissey, Mr. James Mullaney, Mr. Kevin Mulvey, Mrs. Maura Papile, Ms. Madeline Roy, Mr. Keith Segalla, Mr. Kevin Segalla, Ms. Judy Todd; Ms. Allison Cox, President of the Quincy Education Association; and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

Ms. Isola called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm. Dr. DeCristofaro reviewed that the main focus of this meeting would be a review of the four areas of subsidized services: Food Services, Building Rentals, Transportation, and Athletics. To begin, Mr. Mullaney reviewed the discussion that took place at the last Subcommittee meeting and presented some revisions based on that discussion. Most categories have no changes from the previous version of the budget presented, with the exception of Travel reimbursement, which has been reduced to a \$10,800 increase. The \$5,300 savings will be added to Special Education training. In Academic Expenses, \$7,000 from the Work, Inc. line item has been moved to fund Screening and Medical and Psychological Testing.

Mr. Mullaney then reviewed the Revolving Accounts, beginning with Food Services. Lunch Attendants are the only Food Services line item carried in the Quincy Public Schools Budget. Revenue is down for FY2013 since the vending options have been limited by the new federal and state nutritional guidelines. Mr. Mullaney is anticipating that expenses will be in excess of receipts by \$60,981.72. Additional expenses this year include investments in technology for the new cash point system and new tables for several elementary schools. This deficit will be funded by the account's reserve fund. Mr. Mullaney noted that this is a healthy revolving account; Food Services is mandated to keep three months of expenses in reserve, approximately \$800,000. Mr. Mullaney also informed the Subcommittee that current lunch pricing will need to be raised for elementary and middle school lunches to meet minimum federal standards.

For School Rentals, projected revenues are \$486,500 with a projected surplus of \$54,000. There is no recommended change to the fee structure; higher rates have historically reduced rental volume.

For Transportation, user fees are charged for student transportation under 1.5 miles from school, \$200 per child with a family cap of \$400. Of the \$130,000 revenue for this account, \$30,000 is transportation user fees; the balance is for bus rentals. There is a projected deficit of \$48,454.48

which will be covered by the account's cash reserves. There is no recommended change to the fee structure for this account.

The Athletics revolving account is supplemented by the Quincy Public Schools budget in a way that other revolving accounts are not. Mr. Mullaney is projecting a net deficit of \$125,000 which will be covered by the cash reserves for this account. Mr. Mullaney warned that reserve funding has been utilized to make up deficits in previous years as well, so this reserve account is low. It is probable that additional funding may be needed for FY2015 from the Quincy Public Schools Budget. In analyzing Athletics expenses, the same type of evaluation is done as for other accounts, putting students in the center and working out to expenses.

The current high school user fee structure is \$100 per sport, with the exception of football, lacrosse, which are \$150 and hockey, which is \$300. There is a family maximum of \$750. At this time, the Leadership Team is not recommending any increase in user fees. Middle school sports also require a fee that is also part of the revolving account. Revenues are user fees, gate receipts, and donations. Expenses include dues, security, supplies, security, insurance, and transportation.

For FY2010, the Athletics budget was reduced to \$876,000, about \$140,000 less than in FY2009. Freshman sports were eliminated and there was a reduction of non-league games and the associated transportation costs. User fees were raised and it was anticipated that additional user fee revenue would stem the need to cut Junior Varsity sports and reduce varsity coaching staff. This additional user fee revenue has not been realized and Athletics is facing a systemic deficit that will need to be addressed in FY2015.

Dr. DeCristofaro then presented options addressing Ms. Isola's request to consider adding full-time (rather than half-time) Library Teachers at each Middle School, an additional \$125,000. Five options were presented, each with the result of not meeting the School Committee goals of incremental improvement and sustainability. Option 1 would defer hiring the additional Central Middle School custodian and cut the funding for text and materials purchases; Option 2 would cut the full amount from the text and learning budget; Option 3 would reduce Academic Programs and Academic Support by 2.5 positions; Option 4 would reduce Academic Classroom Teachers and Academic Programs by 2.5 positions; and Option 5 would reduce Academic Classroom Teachers by 2.5 positions. All agreed that these were not options that would be considered at this time.

Mrs. Lebo asked for consideration of an additional half-time person who would oversee all five of the Middle School library teachers. Dr. DeCristofaro agreed, saying that we are missing the system-level department heads in many areas. Mrs. Mahoney asked if this could be a stipended position. If we are planning these incremental improvements, we need to do that in a way that makes this successful. Dr. DeCristofaro agreed that this is something to explore. Mr. McCarthy asked to see a job description for the Middle School Library Teacher; Mrs. Roberts shared descriptions collected from other school systems. Mr. McCarthy asked about technology support. Ms. Isola said that during

the recent Newton Public Schools visit, they saw how the librarians collaborated with the classroom teachers to support project-based learning by setting up databases for research on specific topics and guiding students on creating multimedia projects. Ms. Isola said that classes were not scheduled for times to visit the library, but the library was really an extension of the classroom. Mrs. Mahoney said that the Library Teacher will integrate the technology required by the Common Core Skills. These positions are key elements to upgrading our curriculum to meet the new standards. Mrs. Roberts is in the process of researching library teacher job descriptions in other towns. These jobs emphasize technology. The Massachusetts School Library Association defines the Librarian as a Teacher, Leader, and Librarian, making the library an essential part of the learning community.

Mayor Koch asked about the Athletics deficit of \$125,000 and whether this has been discussed in previous Budget and Finance Subcommittee meeting. Mayor Koch would like to address this structural deficit issues now; community members are concerned about the constant fundraising to support Athletics. Mrs. Mahoney agreed that this is an area of concern and asked to see the Athletics revenues and expenses allocated by sport. Mr. McCarthy also expressed concern about the deficit. Mr. Mullaney noted that there was a smaller deficit last year and it was covered by Athletics revolving account cash reserves. Mayor Koch asked for the total amount of anticipated expenditures for Common Core: Mrs. Roberts is estimating \$1 million for elementary reading program (paid over three years); \$200,000 for middle school and high school ELA; and \$200,000 for high school mathematics for a total of \$1.4 million.

Ms. Isola asked for information about the cash balances for each of the revolving accounts. Mrs. Lebo requested the number of individual athletes served: an estimated 734 individual students participate in Athletics, some in two or three sports (1327 total). Mrs. Lebo asked if our user fees are comparable to other towns and are they really covering the costs of sports. Mrs. Mahoney asked to know the dollar amount that booster clubs and parents contribute. Every booster club is different and there are inequities between sports and between schools. Mrs. Lebo asked if the boosters pay bills directly. Mr. Mullaney said that there is a mix of ways this happens; the coaches sometimes pay the bills directly for transportation and game fees and some booster clubs pay directly.

Ms. Isola asked what the next steps will be. Dr. DeCristofaro said that we are developing a new model for Athletics and information about revolving account status will be shared at Quarterly Budget and Finance Subcommittees going forward. Mrs. Lebo requested an analysis of the information in addition to the per sport costs.

Ms. Isola noted that the next meeting of the Budget and Finance Subcommittee is Wednesday, May 29 at 5:00 pm in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Conference Room of the NAGE Building.

Mayor Koch made a motion to adjourn at 6:15 pm. Mrs. Mahoney seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.

