

GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BUDGET & FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES: April 22, 2020
 Virtual Meeting *[All those present participated remotely]*

Present: Susan Eckstrom (SE), Chair; Amy Proietti (AP); Jean Wall (JW)

Absent: None

Also present: Jordana Harper, Superintendent; Carol Holzberg, Technology Director; Tom King, AEL Principal; Steve Nembirkow, Business Manager; Roxann Wedegartner, Mayor

I. Roll Call/Call to Order

With a quorum present (SE, AP, JW), SE opened the meeting at 10:38 a.m.

II. Public Comment

None.

III. Chromebook Procurement Review

Chromebooks were purchased to support implementation of the remote learning plan required by DESE.

- Purchase made utilizing emergency procurement provisions allowed by State
- May be eligible for reimbursement through future federal stimulus money
- Director Holzberg: vendor (Trinity3) chosen based on unit price, availability, cost of accident insurance, length of warranty, and delivery timeline
 - GPS has about 1100 functional Chromebooks; the lifespan is usually from five to seven years

IV. AEL Tuition

AEL tuition is currently not being collected, though educational services are still being provided as part of the district's remote learning plan.

- Operating cost of AEL remains at \$1,200/day, with salaries still being paid
- Consensus that AEL serves a critical need in Greenfield

Members weighed the options for collecting tuition at a reduced rate in order to help families in light of COVID-19's effect on some households, while still collecting enough funds to ensure AEL will be able to open in the fall. **Consensus that business office should explore ways to collect tuition electronically.**

JW moved to require a one-time tuition payment for one month of services. AP 2nd. Principal King clarified that this would amount to two and a half months of services (April, May, and first two weeks of June) for one month of tuition. Consensus to make the deadline for payment May 15th. **Yes – SE, AP, JW. Motion passed unanimously.**

V. Review of Transportation Memo

Business Manager Nembirkow: there have been no updates since memo was issued; GPS waiting on additional guidance from the State.

- There is an upcoming conference call scheduled with Travel Kuzmeskus
- There are statutes in place which prohibit payment of services if services are not rendered

VI. Budget as Consequence of COVID-19

Members reviewed FY20/FY21 Budget Memo dated April 17th from Business Manager Nembirkow.

- Funding amounts GPS used in creating FY21 budget likely to be reduced

- State programs such as Chapter 70 funds and Student Opportunity Act most likely to offer reduced funds
- Local aid most likely to be reduced

VII. FY21 Budget Re-Evaluation

Business Manager Nembirkow noted that the entire FY21 budget will need an overhaul. AP reminded members that the School Committee already voted to pay employees through the closure.

AP moved to have the business manager look at FY21 current budget for the purpose of reducing it by at least one million dollars. JW 2nd. Reducing FY21 School Committee-voted budget by one million dollars will bring the number more in alignment with the mayor's proposed budget. However, Greenfield most likely facing an economic downturn as a result of the pandemic, which could affect its overall FY21 budget as well.

Consensus to let Ways and Means Committee know that the School Department recognizes that these are unprecedented times and so unprecedented measures may need to be taken to balance the budget.

Superintendent Harper noted the regional advocacy efforts underway to try and alleviate the financial pressures which come with education being seen as a stabilizing force in the economy. **Motion withdrawn.**

AP moved to instruct the business manager and superintendent to work on modifying the FY21 budget as proposed to be at least in line with the City's budget, allowing for adjustments as new guidance and new information on funding becomes available. JW 2nd. Yes – SE, AP, JW. Motion passed unanimously.

Consensus to schedule the next meeting for Tuesday, April 28th, at 10:30 a.m., and to plan for an executive session.

VIII. Adjournment

AP moved to adjourn. JW 2nd. Yes – SE, AP, JW. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Meeting Documents

1. Internal Memo dated April 17th from Business Manager Nembirkow
2. Budget Document dated April 1st highlighting AEL tuition
3. Transportation Memo
4. FY20/FY21 Budget Memo dated April 17th from Business Manager Nembirkow