

**GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BUDGET & FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES: April 3, 2019**

Greenfield Public Schools Central Office, 195 Federal Street, Greenfield, MA 01301

Present: Cameron Ward (CW), Chair; Susan Hollins (SH)

Absent: William Martin

Also present: Susan Eckstrom, School Committee Member; Jordana Harper, Superintendent; Steve Nembirkow, Business Manager

I. Call to Order

With a quorum present (CW, SH), CW opened the meeting at 12:34 p.m.

II. Public Comment

Member Eckstrom asked clarifying questions on the budget process. She expressed concern with the fact that the mayor's recommended school budget to City Council (at \$18,625,000) is lower than the recommended budget submitted by the School Committee to the mayor's office (at \$19,970,000). Members explained the process this subcommittee went through, with CW noting that the Budget and Finance subcommittee did not end up making a budget recommendation to the full School Committee.

III. Review of any votes or consensus the budget subcommittee has made in regards to the 2020 budget

SH read aloud a document she prepared titled: "Review of Votes or Consensus of the Budget Subcommittee Regarding the 2020 Budget"

- Document summarized votes taken and consensus reached based on SH's review
- SH concluded that subcommittee followed a progression which made sense to the budget process
- Superintendent Harper would like to review the document, and is not yet prepared to comment, having just received it
- Superintendent Harper noted that though votes taken are on the record, some comments in prepared report are selective
- Business Manager Nembirkow expressed his concern with some of the interpretations and summarizations of what transpired (for example, he would like to see answers reflected on some items, as such answers were available)

Members and attendees attempted to clarify the differences between "posted" and "available" meeting minutes.

IV. Review cost centers, revolving accounts and grants

Superintendent Harper explained that as she and Business Manager Nembirkow had just received the mayor's budget number (and not the full budget), they will need time to put together a potential response.

SH moved that the subcommittee again requests from the city clarification on education costs from the city's budget. CW 2nd. Business Manager Nembirkow noted that there is a law which requires the School Committee and the city to agree on all city-side educational expenses. Superintendent Harper explained that this is a routine request, handled between business officers. **SH amended the motion to include requesting that this information be received by Monday, April 8, 2019. Motion passed unanimously.** Consensus to have SH contact the mayor regarding this motion/request.

Member Eckstrom requested a conversation on ideas to increase revenue streams. **Consensus to move this topic to an upcoming budget meeting.**

Revolving Accounts

Consensus to move topic to a future meeting, giving time to review minutes from past meeting, during which revolving accounts were discussed.

Cost Centers

SH expressed interest in learning more about the Athletic Cost Center and conveyed her concern regarding the past combining of GMS and GHS under one cost center.

- Business Manager Nembirkow touched on the history of the athletic account
- Superintendent Harper expressed concern with statements being made at public meetings which are inaccurate; athletics are continuing to be funded despite budget cuts

SH requested to reinstate the Elective Program Cost Center as a way to ensure the preservation of electives in the event of any future turnover in administration or school committee membership. Members and attendees debated the purpose of “cost centers” in a budget.

- Superintendent Harper explained possible implications of making changes such as these in the accounting process, when the ultimate result is the same

Grants

CW moved to request that the subcommittee receive copies of the Title I and Early Childhood Education grants. SH 2nd. Discussion on how long it would take to receive a copy of these grants. No action taken on the motion; SH will request through State.

Superintendent Harper noted any requests made by the subcommittee will be supplied.

SH moved to disband the Budget and Finance Subcommittee. Motion not seconded.

SH moved to receive a dated copy of the superintendent’s budget that is titled, “Superintendent’s Draft Budget.” Motion not seconded.

V. Discuss elementary libraries and staffing

Passed over due to time.

VI. Contracted Legal Services, in compliance with our policy that says services will be reviewed at the time of budget review.

Passed over due to time.

VII. Adjournment

CW adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:15 p.m.

Meeting Documents

1. Report prepared by SH titled, “Review of Votes or Consensus of the Budget Subcommittee Regarding the 2020 Budget”