

MARPLE NEWTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Tuesday, April 12, 2023

Budget and Finance Committee Meeting – 6:30 p.m.

Facilities and Transportation Committee Meeting – Immediately following Budget and Finance

Curriculum, Instruction and Technology Committee Meeting – Immediately following Facilities and Transportation

Administration Building – Board Room

MINUTES

Present

Board: Mr. Bilker, Mr. Dezzi, Mrs. Harvey, Mr. McKenzie, Mr. Reynolds, Mr. Siano, Mrs. Tomasco

Administration: Dr. Tina Kane, Mr. Joe Driscoll, Mr. Jake Gallagher
Mr. Jim Orwig, Dr. Gina Ross

Solicitor: Mr. Mark Sereni

Press: 0

Audience: 3

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mr. Bilker called the meeting to order at 7:39 PM

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. McKenzie led the Pledge of Allegiance

3. BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

3.01 Committee Report – Tracy A. Alberti, Chairperson

3.02 Additions to the Agenda

There was none

3.03 Approval of Section 3 of the agenda relating to Budget and Finance ~
Approved

3.04 Approval of Minutes

With no discussion minutes were approved.

3.05 Bills for Payment

MOTION: To approve and authorize payment of General Fund bills in the amount of \$230,688.95.

Mr. Driscoll explained bills for payment. Remember this is the first check run of the month, so you know we don't have everything on here. This is just to give the board a head start on evaluating the monthly bills. The rest of the bills coming at the end of the month.

3.06 Financial Reports

MOTION: To approve the monthly financial reports for February 2023, informational for March 2023, Budget Transfers for March 2023.

Mr. Driscoll explained we have the financial reports listed for the month of February, informational March with and budget transfers for March.

3.07 2023-2024 Proposed Final Budget Timeline

Mr. Driscoll explained it's a light month for his agenda except for I wanted to talk about the budget timeline. Usually, this time of the year we start gearing up and talking about this depending on the year. We usually present and act on a budget at the end of April so we don't have to move the June board meeting. This year there are 30 plus days between the May and June Board meeting, and a lot of the time it's beneficial to do it in May because we have final data and we have the homestead, we'll have the bids back for the buildings things you know other things that we can tighten up so it's up to the Board. I wanted to know what your thoughts were if you wanted to present at the public meeting and vote in May or do something different, I just wanted the board's input and get kind of a direction.

Mr. Bilker ~ I think May sounds like it makes sense because we present in May right and then we would have to do a final in June.

Mr. Driscoll ~ Yes, basically what we would present at the board meeting and voted that night then it gets released for public inspection and then the public can take a look at it before the work session in June and ask questions there and also ask questions, you know, before the board votes on June 27th so it's a little condensed, but it normally works out well. But it's up to guys. Maybe that way we can get things a little bit tighter before we finish.

Mr. Bilker ~ I am okay with that, and the other Board members agreed.

Mr. Driscoll ~ Well then that's what I'll shoot for.

Mr. Bilker ~ Outside of that can you, are you able to talk about options about like using some of the fund balance that we've been talking about over the past couple months.

Mr. Driscoll ~ Yes, I can include something in there and give some what-if scenarios because I know that that's been a topic so we can go over that too because there

will be some discussion about using some of the fund balance we have set aside for Capital reasons that aren't Capital reserved for some of the projects you guys have and use for technology and stuff, so, it'll fit right in with that. All right then, that's all I had for this evening like I said light month.

3.08 Public Comment

Nick Kwoczak ~ I live at Sussex Boulevard in Broomall I have two children in the District, sixth grade and second grade and just looking for the board to give any sort of update possible on the ongoing teacher negotiations

Mr. Bilker ~ don't have an update for you tonight I mean we are all just coming back from spring break last week, too so, we are ready to get back into it and I'm sure we will in the near future.

Mr. Kwoczak ~ Has anything been scheduled yet?

Mr. Bilker ~ Not yet, there's been discussions but not a date that people have agreed.

Mr. Kwoczak ~ Thank you very much and then just to summarize myself as well as many of the other parents in the district support teachers in the ongoing negotiations we've talked about a lot of numbers and facts that we've seen. We've talked about overages so I'm excited to see what happens with the budget discussions in the coming weeks. A few items of note that weren't discussed at the last meeting, if you look at Delaware County the percent of overall Revenue spent on Education Services that's going to include teacher salaries classroom expenses classroom technology and technical Services Marple Newtown is sitting at about 47.4 percent. That's the lowest in the 13 Delaware County districts and as far as percent of overall revenue spent on non-instructional services, this does not include construction. Marple Newtown sits at the top at 33.4 percent and that range is below it as you know 32 to 24 percent. So, as we look to continue ongoing negotiations, I would hope that the board would look to pivot those numbers and spend more on educational services including the teacher salaries. We are excited to see that moving forward and just another note I am a little concerned there was a lot of talk about tax raises and I understand that it is a factor in the discussions however I did go back through the auditor's reports for the past several years and every year I believe going back to 2017 to 2018 there's not only been an increase every year in in school taxes from property but also we kind of just skated the line of the eight percent budget for over 19 million dollars. So, from an outside observer and I'd love more so what I'm referring to is the percentage of budget that you can have overage without fund balance being required so there's about an eight percent if you make maybe Mr. Driscoll could you help me with that. but what you're the eight percent is what you're referring to is what the board can keep in in

Mr. Driscoll ~ Well I'm going to call it on designated on reserve, but I think it's unrestricted now I'm looking at my assistant unrestricted fund balance which I s about 29 days of cash flow for the district so that's what we're

allowed to keep in unreserved but that's not the only equity you can have you can have it reserved or you can have it you can set it aside for capital improvements.

Mr. Kwoczak ~ Yes, that's very insightful love all the transparency and the communication there. I think just what we're getting at is there is, there have been tax increases every year since 2017 with lots of Capital Improvements and things like that have been great for the district. I've been here since 2019, I've been watching the meetings virtually this is really the first year where I've seen hesitation and a lot of reference to tax increases. I hadn't seen that sort of attention and that sort of apprehension spoken too candidly by the board when referring to the teacher negotiation. So, just some food for thought that just like our residents were supportive of just I think no it's okay just like our residents were supportive of the capital improvements I feel that we would be equally supportive of meeting kind of the union's demands for an increase and that's really all.

Mr. Bilker ~ Just letting us know that and I appreciate that presentation and that those comments Nick. I at one point that I want to I don't think that any members of the board were just simply offering like this is what we think is going to happen with taxes I mean it's in response to community members saying you don't have to raise taxes to do this and I mean that sounds accurate to you guys right. We've been told you can just do it you don't have to raise taxes the reason that that's come up is because that's that it's just not the case so that's you know I don't I don't think it I I take your point that like it hasn't happened over the past couple years but there hasn't really been somebody saying you know you don't have to do this because we're in a position where we go.

Mr. Siano ~ I was going to say the same exact thing in the previous years we haven't had the same discourse and we're open to discourse so more conversations.

Mr. Kwoczak ~ Looking forward to more discourse and really looking forward to any sort of plain talk explanations of the budget going forward so thank you everybody appreciate the time.

3.09 Adjournment

Mr. Bilker adjourned the Budget and Finance meeting.

4. FACILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

4.01 Committee Report – Nicholas J. Reynolds, Sr., Chairperson

4.02 Additions to the Agenda

Mr. Gallagher advised that there were none.

4.03 Approval of Section 4 of the agenda relating to Facilities and Transportation

The agenda was approved.

4.04 Approval of Minutes

With no discussion minutes were approved.

Mr. Reynolds ask for the following motions to be approved by the full Board

4.05 Donation

MOTION: To approve a donation from the high school baseball boosters of two (2) refrigerators and cabinets for the snack bar at the new lower fields (\$5,000.00 donation).

4.06 Facility Use

MOTION: To approve the Special Olympics Weight Lifting Competition in the auxiliary gym/cafeteria at the high school on Saturday, May 13, 2023 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

MOTION: To approve From the Top Dance Studio, Newtown Square, with the rental of the high school auditorium for a recital on Sunday, June 4, 2023 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., along with one rehearsal during that week.

MOTION: To approve Art of Motion Dance Studio, Broomall, with the rental of the high school auditorium for a recital on Saturday, June 3, 2023 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., along with one rehearsal during that week.

MOTION: To approve both high school baseball and softball booster programs to host an event, game or showcase to support the teams for the upcoming 2023 season at the lower fields.

4.07 Emergency Repair on Foundation at Administration Building

MOTION: To approve Pereira Construction, LLC, Co-Stars No. 536618, with the emergency repair of the foundation and stone wall at the Administration Building in the amount of \$19,900.00. This will be paid out of the capital reserve fund.

All of the above motions will be sent to the full Board for approval.

4.08 Transportation

Mr. Reynolds advised that there were no report or motions for this agenda.

4.09 Other Business

There was none.

4.10 Public Comment

There was none.

4.11 Adjournment

Mr. Reynolds adjourned the Facilities and Transportation meeting.

5. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

5.01 Committee Report – Nicholas V. Siano, Chairperson

5.02 Additions to the Agenda

There was none.

5.03 Approval of Section 5 of the agenda relating to Curriculum, Instruction and Technology

Approved

5.04 Approval of Minutes

With no discussion minutes were approved.

Mr. Siano asked for the following motions to be approved by the full board.

5.05 Policies

MOTION: To approve the second and final reading of reviews for Policy 201 - Admission of Students and Policy 204 - Attendance, as presented. First reading was approved at the March 28, 2023 Regular Board Meeting.

MOTION: To approve the first reading of the new additions and updated Home Education Program Policies 137-137.3, as presented.

5.06 Student Trips

MOTION: To approve Mrs. Linda Wigo to accompany the Paxon Hollow Middle School Renaissance students to a Wilmington Blue Rocks game in Wilmington, Delaware on May 24, 2023. The cost of transportation is \$1500 and paid by the students. The cost of the activity is \$20 per student and paid by the students. There is no cost to the District for this trip.

5.07 Book Disposal

MOTION: To approve the disposal of the list of books from the Culbertson Elementary School Library, as presented.

MOTION: To approve the disposal of the list of books from the Marple Newtown High School Library, as presented.

5.08 High School Club

MOTION: To approve the Society of Women Engineers (SWE) at the high school. The purpose of the club is to offer students the opportunity to explore multiple engineering fields and encourage students to pursue them in the future. The club advisor will be Regina Kleiner.

5.09 Textbook Adoption

MOTION: To approve the following textbook adoptions for MNSD's curriculum, as presented.

5.10 Technology

MOTION: To approve the contract for laptop computers using Hewlett Packard Financial Services with an annual payment of \$39,937.60 for a term of five (5) years.

Mr. Bilker asked if this was staggered.

Mr. Driscoll ~ Yes, well this is an addition to the current level of leasing we have for laptops we feel that we're going to need some additional laptops for the start of next year with growth and other reasons. So, this is to prevent us from not having enough laptops to start the school year and they're very difficult to get. Chris can speak a little more to that so we just want to make sure we have, you know, the inventory we need to start next year.

Mr. Bilker ~ how's it going with I said like 24 - 7 but some kind of an idea of how we think this investment is very important and I think it'll get a little better.

Mr. Driscoll ~ not to hijack that but with the with the Board just approved in renewing and replacing all the wireless access and you know we doubled our or tripled our inventory of computers over those years but there was infrastructure here that wasn't exactly prepared for it and this summer Chris and his team are going to, with that approval will be that wireless capabilities in the building will be significantly increased.

5.11 Donation

MOTION: To approve the donation of a GaGa pit to Russell Elementary from the Russell PTO.

MOTION: To approve the donation of \$7500 in AdoptAClassroom.org credit from Rafferty Subaru to be used to purchase classroom materials at Loomis Elementary for the 2023/2024 School Year.

All of the above motions will go to the full Board for approval.

5.12 Other Business

There was none.

5.13 Public Comment

Mr. Kwoczak ~ just two quick follow-up items not related to the ongoing negotiations. Has there been any progress on getting the recordings to be added to the list.

Mr. Bilker ~ We've discussed it, but it hasn't gone anywhere that doesn't mean that it's not going I've been moving forward I'm fine, but we want to start. Chris, if we can start saving the meetings for longer so that they can be accessed on the website. If you can figure out a way to do that or look into that.

Mr. Kwoczak ~ That's great and then last item realize we're all coming back from break given the current climate, the one of the things I loved when we first moved into the district was the diversity and equity committee. It's been really, I would say quiet for the past 18 months or so. I'd love to see the Board kind of revisit that and re-engage the parents that had signed up for communications. It's been quite so anything around diversity and equity that we can kind of reinvigorate now that it is the spring. I think more folks would be willing to engage.

5.14 Adjournment

With no further business for the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:44 PM.