



TOWN OF TEWKSBURY

TOWN HALL
1009 MAIN ST
TEWKSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS 01876

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Thomas L. Cooke, Chairman
David Aznavoorian, Vice Chair
Damin Sutherby, Clerk
Ralph Ford
Raymond Lisiecki
David McGinness
Kelly Brooks

Meeting Minutes for March 2, 2013

1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:07 a.m. by the Thomas Cooke, Chairman, at Tewksbury Memorial High School. Present were David Aznavoorian, Ralph Ford, Raymond Lisiecki, Damin Sutherby, David McGinness, and Kelly Brooks. Also present were Richard Montuori, Town Manager, Karen Kucala, Finance Director, and Melissa Johnson, Recording Secretary.

MOTION: Mr. Aznavoorian made the motion to recess for a half hour for a tour of the new high school; seconded by Mr. Ford and the motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Cooke called the meeting back to order at 9:50 a.m.

2) Introduction to School Committee, School Administration and Finance Committee

Present from the School Committee were Krissy Polimeno, Chair (late arrival), Dennis Francis, Brian Dick, Joe Russell and Jamie Cutelis. Also present was Dr. John O'Connor, Superintendent of Schools, and Jeffery Sands, Business Manager.

3) Presentation FY2013-2014 LEA School Department Budget

Mr. Sands reviewed the key assumptions for the salary and operating costs. The salary costs reflect a 2% base salary increase effective July 1, 2013 for all personnel, both union and non-union. No new positions are being added. The operating costs have mostly been level funded from FY13 with some exceptions. These exceptions include such items as a \$218,000.00 increase in maintenance costs at the new high school, a \$35,000 increase in replacement copier lease costs, a \$50,000.00 increase in in-district transportation, a \$50,000.00 increase in out-of-district SPED transportation, etc.

Mrs. Polimeno arrived.

Mr. Sands reviewed each line item of the salary budget aloud and noted that there are three upcoming retirements. There are decreases in the salary budget including custodian

overtime, substitutes, part-time hourly staff, and summer staff. The increases include a 2% salary increase, longevity, sick leave buyback, etc.

Ms. Brooks asked if any thought has been given to eliminating sick leave buyback and longevity. Mrs. Polimeno explained that the school department is looking into eliminating sick leave buyback and longevity from new employees that are hired; however, it cannot be taken away from existing employees unless another incentive is offered. This was tried in negotiations and was unsuccessful. Mr. Ford asked if these items are paid over a period of time or if it is given in a lump sum and Mr. Sands explained that it is typically paid out in a lump sum.

Mr. Sands reviewed the salary offsets aloud. Included in these items are such things as Preschool (\$70,000.00), food services (\$230,255.00), TMHS parking (\$10,000.00), full day Kindergarten (\$352,000.00) and Athletic Fees (\$84,582.00). Mr. Sands noted that the rental fees have been taken from the salary offsets and put towards the operating offsets.

The LEA budget funds approximately 400 employees at \$23,938,292.00. The grant/revolving funds approximately 33.25 employees at \$1,823,361.00.

Mr. Sands reviewed each line item of the operating budget aloud and noted that there is an overall increase of \$285,029.00 from FY13. The increases include items such as SPED tuition, athletics, copier leases, copy center, transportation, etc.

Ms. Brooks asked what items fall under “dues” and requested a breakdown. Mr. Sands explained that the dues cover items such as subscriptions and conferences.

Ms. Brooks asked what the copy center is. Mr. Sands explained that the copy center is located at the new high school and is used district wide. The school department would eventually like to service some of the other town departments as well in an effort to generate revenue. Mr. Sutherby noted that the technology of the equipment used in the copy center will likely evolve and asked if this has been accounted for. Mr. Sands explained that this is something that will likely be addressed in the future.

Mr. Sands reviewed the operating cost offsets which include such items as extended day, SPED tuition, athletic and activity fees, rental fees, etc.

Discussion took place on the fees paid to play sports. Mrs. Polimeno explained that she would like to see a cap on the costs for sports. This is something that has been tried in the past and was not successful. Mr. Russell explained that there used to be a cap; however, it was taken away approximately five years ago by the School Committee.

Discussion took place on fundraising and PAC’s as well as marketing the high school to bring in groups to rent the school for events.

The proposed FY2014 school department budget is \$46,522,966.00. The town manager’s recommended FY2014 school department budget is \$46,308,416.00. With a difference of \$214,550.00. Mr. Sands and Mr. Montuori are working together to close this gap.

Mr. Cooke opened the meeting to the members for their questions.

Mr. McGinness asked if the school department ever does lateral transfers. Mr. Sands explained that on occasion they do lateral transfers and they work with Ms. Kucala on this.

Mr. Sutherby asked if any research has been done to reduce the cost of SPED transportation costs. Dr. O'Connor explained that this is something they look at each year and it would not be cost effective to bring the necessary staff in district unless it brought back a large group of students. Mr. Sutherby asked if students from any other towns come to Tewksbury schools and Dr. O'Connor stated no.

Mr. Dick left the meeting and did not return.

Mr. Aznavoorian commended the School Committee, Dr. O'Connor and Mr. Sands are their hard work and noted that he will send his questions to Mr. Sands through the Committee's liaison, Mr. Lisiecki.

4) Documents Presented and/or Discussed

FY2014 School Department Proposed Budget

Adjourn.

MOTION: Mr. Aznavoorian made the motion to adjourn at 12:09 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Ford and the motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved: _____
Damin Sutherby, Clerk

Date