

MINUTES OF THE HINGHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

January 16, 2020

School Department Conference Room, 220 Central Street, Hingham, MA 02043

- 1. Call to Order** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Michelle Ayer.

Members Present: Michelle Ayer, Nes Correnti, Carlos Da Silva, Libby Lewiecki, Kerry Ni, and Liza O'Reilly.

Central Office Present: Paul Austin, James LaBillois, Suzanne Vinnos and John Ferris.

- 2. FY'21 Operating Budget Proposal Update**

There are no changes since the last meeting.

- 3. Review FY'21 Budget Proposals for Functions**

Director of Business and Support Services, John Ferris, presented an overview of the Services and Facilities portions of the budget. The overall budget recommendation remains with an increase of 6.11% over FY'20. John Ferris presented items that are included in the base budget, items included with no budget impact, items requested and recommended that are not in the base budget, and items that are not recommended at this time. There are no new facilities requests. The maintenance department requested another FTE but that is not recommended at this time. He reviewed budget trends for Administration, Facilities, Health and Transportation by year since 2015-2016. He highlighted that aging school department infrastructure and equipment require attention. Priorities include the boilers at Hingham High School, maintenance of Foster School until it can be replaced or renovated, windows at Plymouth River School, mechanics and roofing at South School and the high school, and repair of Buildings 179 and 12. He also addressed the space needs in schools and offices for TRACES, Special Education, Central Office Administration, and Kids in Action. The cost of maintaining new buildings has increased because of the new technology. Student transportation is performing well with the bus lease and 2021 will be the fifth year of a 5 year lease. Offsets from METCO transportation are projected to decrease because we share buses with Cohasset and they are changing their school start times. New Ford Escort vans have taken over some Special Education transportation and that program is working well and saving some money. The Director of Business and Support Services' major goals are to continue to support the new superintendent, submit a statement of interest to the MSBA for Plymouth River school windows, implement automated time reporting for employees across the district, and complete the Master Plan report. He shared a chart outlining Facilities and Operations Budgets since 2014-2015. Maintenance and Custodial needs for FY'21 include existing personnel and allowances for increases to contract maintenance and personnel. Oil, natural gas and electricity usage and cost trends were presented with anticipated savings in FY'21, though it is difficult to forecast energy costs. Athletic needs were coach increases and a transportation increase. The Athletic Revolving account offsets can be increased to result in no net increase of the Athletic department budget. For Student Activities, HHS added beekeeping as their new club this year. The drama offset in the budget has been eliminated.

- 4. Warrant Article for Foster Feasibility Study**

John Ferris informed the Committee legal counsel had reviewed the language for the warrant article. The grammar of the final sentence of the proposed warrant article was discussed.

On a motion by Carlos Da Silva and seconded by Kerry Ni

It was

Voted: To authorize the Director of Business and Support Services to submit a warrant article requesting \$350,000 in addition to the \$750,000 voted in 2017 for a feasibility study for Foster Elementary School.

- 5. SOI and Warrant Article for Plymouth River School Windows**

John Ferris explained that the School Committee must vote the language prescribed by the Massachusetts

School Building Authority (MSBA) before a Statement of Interest (SOI) can be submitted.

On a motion by Kerry Ni and seconded by Carlos Da Silva,

It was

Voted: To submit the following language to the MSBA:

“Resolved: Having convened in an open meeting on January 16, 2020, prior to the SOI submission closing date, the Hingham School Committee of Hingham, MA 02043, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated February 14, 2020 for the Plymouth River Elementary School located at 200 High Street, Hingham, MA (Assessors Map 124/0/32 which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future for an accelerated repair project for the purpose of replacing steel framed windows, many of which are damaged and failing, have damaged or no screens, and they all provide poor thermal performance. The windows are original to the 1968 structure; and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the City/Town/Regional School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.”

John Ferris discussed submitting a warrant article for feasibility funds for Plymouth River School windows. The escrow account established for that project does not need an appropriation since it is not taxpayer money, so a warrant article is not required. Proof that the feasibility money exists will be sent to the MSBA. The Committee discussed the timing and likelihood of being invited into the MSBA’s Accelerated Repair program. John Ferris noted that no windows projects were approved by the MSBA last year.

6. Update for Buildings 12 and 179 and Potential Warrant Article

Dr. Austin communicated that he had spoken to two commercial brokers and Talbots about potential space for the TRACES program. Since the light plant is not usable for this purpose, it is important to find another place for the program quickly. Renovating Building 179 to bring it up to code could be a long term solution. John Ferris discussed the feasibility of making the space habitable and he believes the cost would be less than \$500,000. The department was previously quoted \$129,000 to install sprinklers in the building. The electrical system needs to be updated, walls removed, the boiler isolated, and an additional egress and accessible restroom built. The Committee heard that the students’ needs are not being met and it was noted that this project has been a Capital budget request for years. The Robotics club is also using limited space at the High School. John Ferris stated that the department is seeking a short term rental for this year but that a warrant article could provide a long term solution. The Committee discussed potential locations for the program. Dr. Austin will ask the All Town PTO on Friday about potential ideas for locations.

On a motion by Libby Lewiecki and seconded by Kerry Ni,

It was

Voted: To have the Director of Business and Support Services submit a warrant article for an amount up to \$500,000 to make Building 179 suitable for the TRACES program and the Robotics Club

7. Capital Needs for FY’21

John Ferris reported that the Long Range Planning Subcommittee has reviewed all requests and is recommended the Committee ask for \$2.1 million in funds. The requests show anticipated needs over the next five years. It was noted that there were many items that have been deferred for years. A discussion of the technology budget and whether it belonged in Capital or Operating ensued. The boilers at HHS alone are \$2.1 million. The Committee discussed whether now is the time to consider solar power at HHS. There is a potential warrant article from the Town to form an Energy Action Committee and there would be one School Committee

member appointed to the Committee.

On a motion by Carlos Da Silva and seconded by Kerry Ni,

It was

Voted: To direct the Long Range Planning Subcommittee and John Ferris to present a Capital Budget request of \$2,198,856 for fiscal year 2021.

8. Homeschool Application

On a motion by Carlos Da Silva and seconded by Nes Correnti

It was

Voted: To approve the home school application of Elliana (grade 4), Briana (grade 3), Joseph (grade 1) and Adalina (Kindergarten) Bellew for the period from late January 2020 through the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

9. 48 Hour Items: None

10. Adjourn

On a motion by Liza O'Reilly and seconded by Libby Lewiecki,

It was

Voted: To adjourn at 9:32PM

Respectfully Submitted by:
Kerry Ni

Documents Included:

[AgendaBudget II 1-16-20.pdf](#) 

[Item 3 Instructional and Maintenance Equipment ...](#) 

[Item 4 Foster School \(Draft Warrant Article\) \(BD1...](#) 

[Item 5 2020-2021 SOI_Vote_Language_School C...](#) 

[Item 5 Redline 2020-2021 SOI_Vote_Language_S...](#) 

[Item 7 Capital FY'21 1.14.2020.pdf](#) 

[Item 8 Home School Application - Bellew.pdf](#) 

Approved February 3, 2020

Michelle Ayer, Chair, Hingham School Committee

Date