

Joint Hingham School Committee/BOS/Advisory

February 23, 2021

7:00 PM

Remote meeting via Zoom:

Dial-in number: 1-929-205-6099

Meeting ID: 451-213-735

Passcode: 111222

Website: <https://zoom.us/join>

Members present: Kerry Ni, Carlos A.F. Da Silva, Libby Lewiecki, Liza O'Reilly, Michelle Ayer, Nes Correnti, Jen Benham

Administrators present: Dr. Austin, Dr. LaBillois, John Ferris

1. Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM.

2. The School Committee attended a joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen to:

a. Receive an update on the FY'22 Financial Forecast

Tom Mayo, Town Administrator, provided the update: current deficit is \$4.5M, down from \$7M. Questions from the Advisory Board were taken. No questions were raised from the School Committee or the public.

b. Participate in a joint hearing with the Board of Selectmen on the Education Budget.

Dr. Austin, Superintendent, provided the budget request for FY 2021-22 for the HPS District. It includes a Level Services budget of \$59.8M plus a COVID Recovery Budget of \$2.5M (including 33 new positions) for a total of \$6.23M. The total expenses are \$68.8 which includes the following revenue sources: Federal Grants, State Reimbursement and Grants, Tuition charges, Student Fees, Other Budget Credits. The documented achievement gap could take several years to makeup. The budget does not include a Director of Fine Arts, Director of Fine Arts, Director of Equity and Inclusion, needed technology staff, Assistant HS Principal, other necessary district office staff, upgraded textbooks (necessary to address academic and accessibility issues), full day kindergarten, or integrated preschool.

Kerry Ni read a statement from the School Committee in support of the proposed budget as presented by Dr. Austin.

Questions from the BOS, and the Advisory Committee: Issues included state summer program grants, tents for outside classes, increased enrollment trends, non-recurring expenses vs recurring expenses, intervention system

requirements, strategic plan, using unassigned fund balance for hiring contractual positions vs. union positions, covid related positions at HHS, retirement savings, the potential need for an override to cover a 4.5% projected annual increase, academic recovery time (2-3 years), the Capital Outlay budget of \$2.4M, per pupil expenses, special education eligibility increase, and revolving funds.

Questions from the public addressed the following: how much more would be required to address many key components not in the budget, the need to address an override, increasing revenue from full day kindergarten, advocacy for the budget as presented, and directing excess levy towards seniors who meet low income requirements to alleviate stress of increased taxes.

John Ferris presented three school related warrant articles:

1) Warrant Article T - Five year bus lease:

Current busses under the five year lease from 2016 will be returned to the vendor at the end of this year with the exception of three which we will purchase. So we need to start 21 new busses with a new five year lease which requires town approval. Questions from the BOS included staggering the leases, total number of busses used (25), and extending the five year lease to six or seven years. Ramsey voted in favor of the warrant, seconded by Fisher, all were in Favor.

2) Article U - Town share for the Plymouth River Window project:

Questions regarded cost estimate for the town (\$1.9M) and the MSBA's contribution (approximately 32%). Power proposed delaying a vote until we have an actual estimate from an OPM.

3) Article V - PRS accelerated repair project:

To utilize the existing School Building Committee to oversee the accelerated repair project. Fisher recommended favorable action on article V, seconded by Ramsey, all in favor.

3. Items not reasonably known within 48 hours of the meeting.

None

4. Adjourn.

On a motion made Liza O'Reilly and by and seconded by Michelle Ayer the meeting adjourned at 9:57 PM.

This meeting is being held remotely as an alternate means of public access pursuant to an Order issued by the Governor of Massachusetts dated March 12, 2020 Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law. You are hereby advised that this meeting and all communications during this meeting may be recorded by the Town of Hingham in accordance with the Open Meeting Law.