

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE JOINT MEETING
MINUTES WITH WARRANT COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION
REMOTE MEETING
FEBRUARY 23, 2022**

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: March 8, 2022
TIME: 9:20 AM

Present: Mr. Michael Crowley, FSC Chair
Ms. Meghan Moriarty, Secretary
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations

1. Call to Order 8:02 am by Mike Crowley

2. FY22 Q2 Budget Update

The SD is projecting a positive variance of \$710,000 for the fiscal year. That number is down from \$797,000 that was projected at the end of the 1st quarter. It could come down further if additional positions are filled.

About 90% of the positive Q2 ending balance in the General Funds is in all salary lines due in part to leaves of absence and customary turnover savings. The SD has experienced an increase in paternity leaves. All 1 year hires and any hires during Q1, which were approved by the SC, are reflected in the ending Q2 balance. Not all of the 13 positions that were approved by the SC to address problems this year were hired and none of these positions will be rolled into the FY23 budget.

There is also a \$50K positive balance in the Substitutes line despite a surge increase in daily rates for a few months. The State COVID emergency sick leave approximating \$48K in reimbursements to the district is factored into this balance. This line was budgeted high assuming the district would need more substitutes than non COVID years.

A negative balance in district wide support expenses is due to tents for Fall and Spring, which will not be charged to ARPA.

Fringe benefits have about \$111K positive balance. There has been lower enrollment by employees in benefit programs, primarily health insurance.

Special education services are expected to break-even. The district is still waiting to hear about the EDCO decision and what the District will be responsible for. They hope to know by May in order to resolve it this fiscal year (FY22).

Anne Helgen - Suggested that these positive variances could be used to fund new FTEs.

Moving onto the revolving accounts; these accounts show 3 large negative variances. Food services and busing are timing issues. DESE and the FDA are picking up food services expenses. The district has not received reimbursements. Similarly with busing, fees have not all been collected. Tony fully expects these will be collected.

Rentals are also down. With the exception of the Chinese School and Afterschool programs, building rentals have been down this year. Some of the air purifiers and equipment were funded using this line item.

The committees discussed the Contracted Services line. About 20 different services are paid out of this line. Tony looked back to FY17 and compared the Q2 ending balances. Based on the last 5 years, this balance has ranged from positive \$15K to negative \$11K which speaks to the volatility of this item. But the variances are not a source of concern as they are fairly small.

Anne Helgen suggested the 2 Behavioral Specialists could be paid out of this line.

3. FY23 Out of District Update

The Multiyear OOD Funding Plan had been reduced by 5%. Additional Circuit Breaker funding has played into the favor of the District. The question is what is the amount the SD/SC want to carry forward.

Mike noted that this is a question for the full SC. Last year the consensus was to carry over 1.3-1.5 million in the SPED reserve fund.

Tony noted the district is currently about \$109,000 above budgeted for OOD tuition at the moment. He feels like the budgeted number is still on target.

John Phelan will ask at the next LABB Collaborative Board Meeting about their projections so we can use that number as a placeholder when budgeting for OOD next year (FY23).

Laurie Slap asked whether the FY23 budget for OOD can be reduced since the Circuit Breaker is greater. John Phelan suggests the district should stay where it has been with what they budget regardless. He noted that Belmont is the only district using ARPA for operating needs and there is a real need to keep an eye on FY25 when we lose ESSR and all the positions that go with it at the same time we move into the new MS/HS.

Public Comment:

Bill Anderson - Asked for the slides to be posted to the website. Would like to see the original projection and current balance for every line to get a better understanding of where we are and where we expected to be. He does not agree with budgeting with the idea that extra can just be turned back to the Town. He urged the SD/SC to consider the taxpayers. Finally, he thinks that a budget increase from FY22-FY23 is too high when the schools are down in enrollment.

4. Approval of Minutes

- Minutes from February 1 and February 7 with suggested edits approved on a motion by Mike, second by Meg. (2-0)

Next FSC with the WC Subcommittee for Education will occur on March 8

5. Adjourn at 9:34 am