

LEXINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Saturday, January 23, 2016
Lexington High School, Auditorium
251 Waltham

Present:

Chair Jessie Steigerwald, Vice Chair William Hurley, Margaret Coppe, Alessandro Alessandrini, Judy Crocker, Superintendent Dr.Czajkowski; Ian Dailey (Interim Director of Finance and Operations)

Student Representative Abigail Schwartz was not present

Submitted by Bill Hurley, Vice Chair

Called to order at 10:14 AM. Opening of meeting was posted for 10:00 AM but was delayed due to difficulties with the sound system. LexMedia was able to resolve the situation by 10:14 AM

Public Comment- None

Public Hearing – Steigerwald opened Hearing at 10:15 a.m. on the Superintendent’s Recommended FY 2017 Budget. Chair asked the public if any questions. There were none. Steigerwald closed the hearing at 10:15 a.m.

Agenda:

1. FY 17 Budget Discussion

From the audience, Pat Costello, Precinct 7, asked to be recognized and shared views about the proposed reintroduction of Elementary World Language in the FY17 Operating Budget. Ms. Costello asked when the program had been cut from the budget, was it required to be taught, and why was it being included at this time.

The program was cut for the budget in 2006. It was explained that it is not a requirement. School Committee members spoke to the value of World Language being offered in early years of child development, and that the money in next years budget includes a .25 position to work with a staff committee to investigate the feasibility of offering it in a future year’s budget based on prioritizing needs and fundability. The citizen expressed concern for the impact of budget to real estate taxes especially for those on fixed incomes and modest financial means.

Committee members discussed Special Education funding and asked if there are sufficient funds to cover any additional students who might require out of district placement. Mr. Ian Dailey, Director of Finance and Business Operations, explained that a contingency is found in the high risk category within the budget.

The committee thanked Mr. Dailey for providing specific information identifying budgets for substitutes, and reduction of legal expenses.

Further discussion included whether to reconsider some proposed capital projects for FY17 (vs. deferring them), including potential to partially fund some air conditioning units in the Hastings classrooms most impacted by the heat, and space-mining at the high school. High School space mining was discussed in the Guidance area and Nursing area, and the connection these staff members have to provide direct support to students under stress. The costs include \$30,000 for design money and \$298,000 for construction. David Kanter, member of the Capital Expenditures Committee, presented thoughts about spacing out timing between a project's design study and construction period. The Superintendent did not recommend bringing these projects back into the FY17 budget.

2. FY 17 Warrant Article Discussions.

The Superintendent addressed the 5 points in her handout. (Please note that these points are called Articles, but are not the ordering of actual articles that will be presented at subsequent town meetings.) In the Superintendent's handout Article 3 appropriation for \$4,470,900 is for space mining at Clarke and Diamond. This work needs to begin by April to be ready for occupancy in September 2016. Article 2 is an appropriation of \$65,806,000 for construction and renovation of the Clarke and Diamond Middle Schools, including installation of new and upgraded HVAC to Diamond. Mr. Kanter, asked if the above referenced \$4,470,000 for the space mining at the middle schools would be subtracted as a subset from the \$65,806,000, the total cost for the middle school projects. The committee agreed to this approach and the Chair will speak with Town Manager Carl Valente regarding the recommended wording for the article or articles. Article 4 in the handout addresses an appropriation for \$13,125,000 to upgrade LHS HVAC. The Superintendent recommended not including this request at this time. It was agreed that \$500,000 in design money be used to do a design of the required work before asking for construction dollars in the future. Article 5 in the handout asks that we not ask for an appropriation for a new Hastings at this time. The Superintendent explained that the MSBA Board will vote the seven applications that they will support on Wednesday, January 27.

Discussion moved to what to do about future space for Lexington Children's Place. It was decided to wait to ask for design monies until we know if we elect to build a stand-alone structure or an addition to Harrington Elementary with or without inclusion of the LCP. Members noted they had not yet had a full discussion about the Harrington report from DiNisco Design. There is also the potential of the Pelham property might be used subsequent to negotiations for that property by the Town. Dr. Czajkowski and members agreed to continue the discussion at an upcoming meeting.

Elaine Ashton, Precinct 1 and Diane Biglow, Precinct 8, asked questions about the potential projects and timing for upcoming meetings.

Vote to request Selectmen to place on a Special Town Meeting in March the following Articles:

- A) Middle School projects to include construction, renovation, additions, and site-work at Clarke and Diamond, and Diamond HVAC system at \$65,806,000.**
- B) Middle School space-mining at Clarke and Diamond at \$4,470,900.**

Vote was approved unanimously (Steigerwald, Crocker) 5-0

Consent Agenda:

1. Approve Minutes of December 22, 2015

Motion to approve Consent Agenda: (Crocker, Alessandrini) 5-0

Vote was unanimous, Consent Agenda was approved.

Ms. Steigerwald asked members if they would be open to considering a vote on the budget on February 2 and all members agreed. Steigerwald asked to have everyone hold February 9 as a potential date should there be a snow day.

Ms. Steigerwald noted the Committee's tradition of honoring members for their service, and as Ms. Coppe is not seeking another term, asked Ms. Coppe to consider dates when she would be available for a reception. The reception will be open to the community.

Ms. Steigerwald provided an update on the Committee's Executive Assistant's contract and hours. This is a relatively new position, and everyone is learning from the first year. The current contract will expire in June 2016, and the budget for FY17 includes funds to maintain the position. There has been discussion about managing Ms. McDonough's hours within the 40 specified by the contract, due to late night Committee meetings and packet preparation nights. Mr. Hurley met with Mr. Harris and Dr. Czajkowski to begin a discussion. Ms. Steigerwald, Mr. Hurley and Mr. Harris had a second conversation. Ms. Steigerwald, Dr. Czajkowski, Mr. Harris and Mr. Hurley continued the conversation. They plan to meet again and when they have refined proposals, the full committee will meet in an Executive Session for their input around contract negotiations.

Ms. Crocker asked for an agenda item at next meeting, or soon, with a member of Planning Board to receive update on two-family dwellings and potential impact on rising enrollment. Four members agreed they would like this as a short item— similar to the recent visit from Mr. Hornig who described the Civic Use District.

Motion to adjourn: 12:00 p.m. (Coppe, Hurley)

Vote was unanimous.

Place on Consent Agenda for SC Approval 2.23.16

Voted Approved by the School Committee 2.23.16