

**The Hamilton Wenham Regional  
School Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, January 24, 2018 8:23 pm  
Buker School Administration Offices - Dr. Michael Harvey's Office**

**Present:**

Jeanise Bertrand  
Kerry Gertz (partial attendance)  
Joshua Liebow, Chair  
Stacey Metternick  
Gene Lee  
David Polito  
Michelle Bailey

**Also Present:**

Michael Harvey, Superintendent  
Jeff Sands, Assistant to the Superintendent  
Craig Genuardo, Athletic Director  
Jeremy Coffey, community member  
Marty Cooke, community member

**Regular meeting of the School Committee Budget Workshop**

Joshua Liebow calls the meeting to order at 8:23 pm.

**New Business**

Jeff Sands outlines the agenda for the evening. Last week school committee heard from Peggy McElhinney and Stacy Bucyk. Tonight there will be discussion on the details of the athletic budget, maintenance budget, custodial budget, IT budget, leadership team requests that did not make it to the FY19 critical priorities list, and the district's capital plan.

Athletic Director Craig Genuardo has joined us for discussion on athletic program budgets.

**Discussion of FY19 HWRSD Budget**

Jeff Sands provides recap on the budget process, calendar, and next steps. Reiterates that the committee has the ultimate responsibility to adopt a budget on February 3rd, which will then be taken before town meeting in April.

**Overview of Superintendent's Recommended budget, including:**

- Definition and practice of *level-service*;
- Increase in gross operating expenditures;
- Key assumptions;
- Summary of critical priorities and their implications on budget (including last week's presentations from Peggy McElhinney and Stacy Bucyk);
- Expense Category Analysis & Primary Drivers in FY19 Budget;

- District totals to include expenditures, funding sources, and town assessments;
- Hamilton & Wenham town expenses;
- Capital improvement plan, including FY19 capital projects and brief plan overview in future years;
- FY19 Budget calendar overview, including next steps, meetings to address the budget, and vote & adoption of the Budget.

Discussion regarding the meaning of *level service* and how it is incorporated into operations and staffing models.

Michelle Bailey asks about the cuts made to operating costs.

Jeff Sands states that the district continually reviews costs and makes cuts as appropriate. For example, the copier lease agreement was recently cut due to cost efficiency, however there were no staffing cuts made this year.

## **I. Athletics Programming**

Craig Genuardo, Athletic Director, speaks about methodology incorporated in Hamilton/Wenham Athletic programs, and reviews the 4 pillars adopted:

- *Participation* rates (75%/ 3 out of 4 High School students played at least one sport);
- Athletes are successful *academically*- 2 years ago 80% of athletes had a 3.0 or higher, with last year increasing to 91%;
- *Sportsmanship* - all teams have exceptional sportsmanship in terms of other teams' and communities' perceptions;
- *Wins* - clarification that the program does not value winning in and of itself, however combined with pillars listed above, this becomes an important aspect. Continuous dedication and wins show a commitment to bettering individuals and teams as a whole in their aspirations to succeed!

*(Kerry Gertz exits the school committee meeting at 8:44 pm).*

### FY19 Budget Athletic Budget Methodology

Jeff Sands:

- Two major components of Athletic budget:
  - Operating budget for individual athletic program &
  - Development of detailed athletic administration budget;
- User fees;
- Budget established by individual team sport;
- 70% of athletic program costs are passed along in forms of user fees;
- No administrative costs are factored into the calculation of user fees.

Committee members discuss scholarship opportunities for students who are not on the free/reduced lunch program. Craig Genuardo clarifies that the primary qualifying factor for scholarships is being on the free/reduced lunch program. However, the application also contains

a section for exceptions where families can explain exceptional circumstances. The expense of the sports the students is signing up for is not a factor.

Michelle Bailey asks if the district has always set aside 10% of the budget for this purpose.

Jeff Sands states that the district has never gone over this amount, but if we reduce that number it will be seen in user fees. Recommends and advises committee that 10 % is an appropriate and reasonable percentage to put aside for this purpose.

Craig Genuardo further explains that there are about 20 players per season who qualify and use the scholarship - either full or half scholarship.

Stacey Metternick asks about keeping track of town sports.

Craig Genuardo explains that he knows the participation rate at HWRHS, but he does not track town sports, because as director he is not allowed to recruit athletes.

Jeff Sands: Budget in **FY19: \$727,76.00**. Explains the prior year budgets in comparison. User fees cover 70% of the athletic program costs. Expenses in the budget include staff salary increases, 2.5% increase in transportation (in line with transportation company contract), equipment and user fee rental, contracted services, increase in coaches' salaries (contracted, moving gymnastics to varsity level resulted in a significant change), distribution of costs and budget. 75% of increase is from contractual increases and the JV hockey cost increases.

Committee members discuss costs of painting lines on sports fields and costs associated with renting facilities at Gordon College and elsewhere.

Jeff Sands: Presents table outlining athletic budget. The top section represents individual sports, with the bottom section outlining administrative costs.

Discussion regarding determining cost for enrollment in specific sports. Further discussion regarding language including raw fees, boosters, etc., and how these items determine the final out-of-pocket expenses for families. This formula gives a sense of the program and participant costs, but there are variables at play.

Discussion regarding family cap per year, fluctuation, use of town fields, Patton Park, number of participants versus graduation numbers, sports user fees, fees compared to other districts, reducing user fees from 100% approximately 10 years ago to 70% now.

Marty Cooke asks about the comparable user fees in neighboring districts.

Jeff Sands compares HW fees to his hometown school district: \$150 in his district for a particular sport, that would cost \$1,100 in H/W.

Marty Cooke asks for clarification on this discrepancy.

Michelle Bailey explains that the school committee cut out a number of sports offered as well as the Sports Director many years ago.

Discussion regarding the complexities of the current tiered sports user fee system.

Jeanise Bertrand suggests evening out the user fees for all sports.

Craig Genuardo: explains that by doing so, every sport would cost families somewhere in the range of mid to high \$400s.

Stacey Metternick and Jeanise Bertrand recommend reexamining the current model.

Michelle Bailey states that since this is public education, it should be paid for by the public, not by individual families.

Discussion regarding current model, user fees, and cost burden in Hamilton/Wenham, other districts' strategies. Dr. Michael Harvey recommends reviewing data compiled at <http://superednet.com/> for comparative data in other districts.

Jeremy Coffey, community member, points out that the high fees exclude a large number of students from participating, and states that it would be helpful for the community to have guidance from the committee on specific strategies to help and have their voice heard.

David Polito explains that School Committee budgeting process is for *leveling service*. We try to make this clear, and we want community support in doing this.

Discussion continues regarding town meetings, attending town meetings and other public meetings, citizenry, etc.

Joshua Liebow underscores that the end result is the school committee needs people to participate and make sure they are voicing their concerns. Everyone would support a model with no user fees, but this cannot happen without community backing up the committee. The public is encouraged to contribute in determining committee's priorities.

Thank you to Craig Genuardo! (*Craig Genuardo exits the meeting*).

## **II. Maintenance, Custodial and Facilities**

Jeff Sands provides a quick review of the maintenance, custodial and facilities expenses. Administration is recommending a 2% decrease year after year. Outlines the budget showing the top section illustrating the salary placeholder for COLA and the bottom section representing changes in operating costs.

Jeff Sands talks about our agreement with Hamilton/Wenham for lawn maintenance. Hamilton recently cancelled this agreement and administration is currently trying to work out a new MIA. Further details provided in regards to utility costs in buildings as well as FY19 special custodial/facilities projects.

### **III. Technology**

Jeff Sands provides the administration's technology budget recommendation. The outlined budget shows a top portion representing salaries for the IT director, IT staff, as well as Secretarial/Clerical support, with bottom section demonstrating operating expenses with a recommended \$18,000 (equates to 1.7%) increase year after year.

Discussion about the recent hiring of relatively inexperienced staff member and administration's recommendation to invest \$1,500 for advancing his particular skillset.

Committee members discuss concerns in technology, and the need for new servers.

Discussion regarding FY19 special projects: replacing classroom technology, replacing smartboards and projectors, providing Ipads for students on scholarships, etc. Committee members discuss EdFund and the help they have provided in the past with technology expenses. EdFund funded the middle school grow wall. Possible funding opportunities discussed

### **IV. Review Leadership Team Request List**

Committee agrees to hold item until next meeting

### **V. Capital Plan**

Committee agrees to hold item until next meeting

### **VI. Approach relative to timing of debt exclusions**

Committee agrees to hold item until next meeting

Next meeting to be held next Wednesday, 01/31/2018 at 7:00pm. Warrant sub-committee meeting will be held immediately beforehand at 6:30 pm.

Jeff Sands recommends that specific changes the committee would like to the Budget be made at the next meeting to allow adequate time to prepare and make those changes. Upcoming meetings are:

Wednesday, 01/31/2018 @ 7:00 pm

Wednesday, 02/07/2018 @ 7:00 pm

Tuesday, 02/13/2018 @ 7:00pm

#### **1) Vote to Adjourn**

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING ADJOURN AT 10:02 PM.**

**MOTION by Stacey Metternick; SECONDED by Jeanise Bertrand.  
Unanimously approved by 6 members present.**

*Respectfully submitted Mahala Lettvin*