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SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Tuesday, March 21, 2023
TIME: 6:00 pm
LOCATION: 123 Cambridge Street, Burlington, MA 01803
Administrative Offices, School Committee Room

ATTENDEES

MEMBER(S) PRESENT: Chair Ms. Katherine Bond, Vice Chair Mr. Carl Foss, Ms. Martha Simon, Ms. Chris Monaco, Ms. Melissa Massardo, Superintendent Dr. Eric Conti, Finance Director Ms. Nichole Coscia, Director of Operations Mr. Bob Cunha

MEMBER(S) REMOTE: None

MEMBER(S) ABSENT: None

GUEST(S) PRESENT: Ways and Means Representative Mr. Steve Morin, Pine Glen Principal Mr. John Lyons, Francis Wyman Principal Ms. Nicole McDonald, Fox Hill Principal Mr. David Rosenblatt, Memorial School Principal Ms. Pat English-Sand, Marshall Simond Middle School Principal Dr. Cari Perchase, High School Principal Mr. Mark Sullivan and High School Director of Guidance Mr. Joseph Attubato, Network Systems Manager Mr. Jose DeSousa, MSMS Assistant Principal Ms. Panagiota Athinelis, MSMS Assistant Principal Ms. Cheryl Mantia, Director of English Learner Education Ms. Kerri Lamprey, Athletic Director Mr. Shaun Hart, Math Coach Ms. Carrie Fortunato, Director of Science Center Ms. Wendy Pavlicek, IT Director Mr. Dennis Villano, K-5 Social Studies Science Coach Sean Musselman

GUEST(S) REMOTE: Visual Arts Director Mr. George Ratkevitch,

PUBLIC PRESENT: None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REMOTE: None

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bond called this special meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., and read the following statement: The public can also access this meeting via WebEx Technology. The Burlington School Committee will hear only in person and virtually. Meetings are also broadcast live on Burlington Cable Access TV (BCAT) as usual. Chair Bond reminded participants that comments and statements are limited to 3 minutes each. Meeting Access Code: Meeting number (access code): 2337 804 4601 | Password: Tuesday.

EQUITY STATEMENT

Educational equity means **that every child belongs and receives whatever support he/she/they need to develop his/her/their full academic, emotional, and social potential to learn and thrive every day.** This begins with kindness and valuing the humanity of every child or individual.

APPROVAL OF WARRANT

Motion was made by Ms. Monaco to approve the Warrant; seconded by Mr. Foss.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - abstained, Mr. Foss - aye, Ms. Massardo - aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 4:0:1.

LEARNING, EQUITY, THRIVING

Dr. Conti stated this meeting is a special budget meeting so the regular agenda items will be deferred until next Tuesday's regular business meeting. Any regular agenda items for this evening are either a first reading or there is a time constraint.

LABBB Agreement and Expansion – 1st Reading

Dr. Conti explained that the new Executive Director of LABBB Collaborative, Ms. Pam Girard, has updated the Agreement and Bylaws. The Collaborative exists of Lexington, Arlington, Burlington, Belmont, and Bedford. With the dissolution of EDCO, some communities were left with no collaborative in which to send their students. One of these communities is Watertown and they offered space. The initial LABBB group is proposing to include Watertown as a contiguous community, with the approval of this committee. Dr. Conti supports this proposal.

DECA Out-of-State Travel

Dr. Conti noted that DECA's International Career Development Conference is in Orlando, Florida from April 21 - April 26. Over this past weekend at DECA's State Conference, 24 Burlington students qualified to attend DECA's International Conference and there are 20 students attending. The out of pocket cost of the trip, after applying some fundraised funds, is \$1200 per student and this will be paid for by the participant's family. The High School Business Department (Krista Anderson and Danielle Trouve) will be attending as advisors/chaperones. Students will be flying out of Logan to Orlando and back. There is ground transportation in Orlando and parents will drop off and pick up their students from Logan. Dr. Conti recommends that the committee approve this out-of-state travel for the DECA students.

Motion was made by Mr. Foss to approve the DECA's International Career Development Conference in Orlando, Florida from April 21 - April 26; seconded by Ms. Simon.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - aye, Mr. Foss - aye, Ms. Massardo - aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

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Statement of Interest – BHS

Mr. Cunha explained that a Statement of Interest needs to be made through the MSBA. The committee needs to read the text and vote then Mr. Cunha will attend a Select Board meeting to get their approval for submission.

Dr. Conti read the following text:

Resolved: Having convened in an open meeting on 03/21/2023, prior to the SOI submission closing date, the School Committee of Burlington, 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 03/21/2023 for the Burlington High School located at 123 Cambridge street, which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority categories for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future Priority #3 Prevention of the loss of accreditation, Priority #5 Replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility and priority #7 Replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide for a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements 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.

Ms. Monaco made a motion to accept the resolution as read; seconded by Ms. Simon.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - aye, Mr. Foss – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

Addendum - Proposed Changes to the 2023/2024 Program of Studies

Mr. Mark Sullivan and Mr. Joe Attubato clarified that during the 2023/2024 school year, there are four courses that meet the senior wellness requirement and all seniors are required to choose one of the four courses. In addition, they need to complete an exploratory requirement. Basically, seniors need to take one of those courses as their senior health requirement and if they want to take an additional course, they can do that and use it to satisfy their exploratory requirement.

Motion was made by Ms. Simon to approve the clarification of the BHS Program of Studies that was already approved; seconded by Mr. Foss.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - aye, Mr. Foss – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

FY'24 BUDGET SESSION

Dr. Conti explained that at the start of the budget season, Ms. Coscia added this special meeting in order for the school committee to publicly hear budget requests directly, prior to Town Meeting. Dr. Conti stated the budget was projected with a 3.75% increase and after all the requests came in, the budget is now at 7%, which is close to double the increase that was provided and that is approximately \$2M over the guidelines that we have discussed with the Town. Dr. Conti reminded the committee that this is a working document and there can be changes. In addition to those budgets this evening, there will be more budgets presented at next week's regular business meeting.

Elementary – Planning for Success – 1st Reading

Pine Glen Principal Mr. John Lyons, Francis Wyman Principal Ms. Nicole McDonald, Fox Hill Principal Mr. David Rosenblatt, and Memorial School Principal Ms. Pat English-Sand presented their Planning for Success with a focus on Learning, Equity, and Thriving.

Ms. McDonald stated the needs for Francis Wyman is to refill the math specialist position. In addition, she advocates for an assistant principal for all schools. Ms. McDonald stated that with the rising costs and being level funded for a few years now, the costs are taking a toll and she envisions wise math, but it is difficult because the budget is rising.

Mr. Lyons stated that a position needed at Pine Glen is a math specialist and that position would be able to assist at all the elementary buildings to help the teachers at all elementary schools.

Ms. English-Sands stated that the position needed at Memorial is an adjustment counselor/social worker. The students need to access people to speak with because, as national data shows, mental health needs are on the rise since Covid.

Mr. Rosenblatt stated there are two positions needed at Fox Hill, an assistant principal as well as an adjustment counselor. Mr. Rosenblatt stated that since there are 430 students at Fox Hill an adjustment counselor will help not only support the students, but also the teachers.

Ms. Coscia stated that on page 6, it lists Fox Hill with the detail of line items through page 27.

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MSMS – Planning for Success – 1st Reading

Marshall Simond Middle School Principal, Dr. Cari Perchese, and Assistant Principals, Panagiota Athinelis and Cheryl Mantia presented the Middle School Planning for Success document focusing on Learning, Equity, and Thriving. The MSMS team pointed out that this budget section requests are due to the increased enrollment. MSMS had 787 students last year and are now at 826 and next year the projection is 874 and that requires a significant increase in the students' needs and a maximum capacity and personnel in enrollment needs. Projecting 22 additional students receiving services through special education. Students moving into the district include 48 English learners. The requests include at least one special educator, school adjustment counselor, 1.6 team chairs need 2 full time team chairs, a .5 reading teacher, a full time World Language teacher in Spanish, an ELL Instructional Assistant, additional clerical support to help with the morning students. A maximum capacity of an additional math coach with budget considerations due to going over budget, new science curriculum and copy machines. There are 48 English learners for next year. Two full time teachers and a tutor working Math.

BHS – Planning for Success – 1st Reading

Mr. Mark Sullivan presented the High School Planning for Success document core objectives, which is Learning, Equity, Thriving and Facilities and Operations.

There is a slight increase in the high school budget due to increases for line items such as vendors for on-line learning programs and goods and services, equal to 8%. There is an expansion to the alternative educational opportunities for students, to provide hands on discussion based education while attending high school during the evening while working during the day. This includes requesting a newcomer academy at the BHS that is a one-year or two-year program for immigrant students that has a rapid English language program in order to orient youth to the American culture. This program will develop foundations to SEI and other educational classes at BHS. There is an increase of 64 English learner students that increased in just one year. Mr. Sullivan stated this newcomer academy will need an aide and a teacher, or, if the academies are combined, it would need a director, 1 ESL teacher, 1 Instructional aide and other staff. Two concrete positions Mr. Sullivan added to the budget is a high school Instructional coach and an assistant principal due to increasing student and staff capacity. Mr. Sullivan there is a sense of urgency for these changes.

Dr. Conti noted that the High school budget starts on page 68 and MSMS starts on page 48 and the expansion.

Budget Session

Ms. Coscia stated that on page 5, there is a scorecard so you can see which departments have increases. On page 4, it has the links so you can see the whole budget. Positions requests start on Page 225.

Curriculum Literacy

Dr. Conti stated on line 42 is a 0% increase.

Elementary Math

Dr. Conti stated the math budget is at a 0% increase.

Ms. Carrie Fortunato's request is for a math specialist. Carrie coordinated a three-year grant so there is a 0% increase for straight math and a \$3,500 per school, which is a big discount. There needs to be a math specialist in each school so we are in need of one more.

Social Studies

Dr. Conti stated there is a 0% increase.

Mr. Sean Musselman has a 0% increase and is helping to utilize these funds so the Social Studies budget is aligned and up-to-date. Most of the budget is being absorbed by the curriculum materials at the 4th and 5th grade level. For K-5, there is a strong need for a DEI position, K-5 Social Studies curriculum is not currently consistent across the schools and Mr. Musselman stated he wants to change that so the curriculum's pilot purchase is for the 4th and 5th grade levels.

Music

Dr. Conti stated there is a 0% increase and no additional music requests. There are some clerical support needs in the music office that will be advocated for next year.

Guidance

Dr. Conti stated that Guidance has a very limited increase and is level funded.

Mr. Attubato stated that 3 years ago he added a school adjustment counselor and last year he added an adjustment counselor. These counselors are able to focus on Tier 2 students. School counselors have done a lot of training due to student dynamics and the need for a lot more social/emotional work. Burlington pays for all student's PSAT's and works with ASCA searching data in the counseling office.

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Athletics

Mr. Shaun Hart has a 0% increase in budget and the students are being represented in this budget, as well. Mr. Hart stated last year he added a full time trainer supporting the hours from 3:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., for 400 students, and needs an additional trainer again this year. MIIA and rules are requiring more safety at games and more people at games. State regulations require adequate personnel with a focus of care and safety. As far as rental services and supplies, they have all increased. Ms. Bond thanked Mr. Hart for his continued support of the Boys Gymnastics Team. The boys representing these teams are an excellent example of what good sportsmanship means.

PE/Health

Dr. Conti stated there is a 0% increase for PE/Health and are requesting an elementary health teacher. There is a youth risk survey that was administered today and the results will be available by the summer.

Science Center

Ms. Wendy Pavelick stated her budget is level funded. There are available high school students who work in the science center and this is an elective class or used as a study to approve time.

Art

Mr. George Ratkevitch, the Visual Arts Director, noted a 0% budget increase.

IT

Mr. Jose De Sousa has a 2% increase and mentioned the items are listed on page 111. These items would include contracted services, supplies and equipment because there is an overall increase in these services within the marketplace so those can't be cut. The second item is the need for an additional person in the department to assist with the increase in tech calls.

Library

Dr. Conti stated that the library is at a 16% increase.

Mr. Dennis Villano stated not all of the 16% increase is for the library. The library budget is actually 0% increase. The new request that is 16% increase is specific to computer science in order to follow-up on grants and warrants and to build programs for K-12. This request is for the maintenance of the computer science and it covers replacement of the items from the warrants and grants. Contracted services for development services would fall in its own category in the future. Mr. Villano noted the leagues all have a fee.

Health Services

Dr. Conti stated that Health Services has a 0% increase.

SIO

Dr. Conti stated that the School Information Office reports the student outcomes to the state every year on October 1, which is tied to all the state money that comes into the district. This budget is increasing mostly due to the vendor, Open Architects. Dr. Conti stated the increase is for the subscription of this service as it is data rich and information rich and the dashboards are in real time.

Ms. Robin Miliano stated they have contracted with Open Architects, who takes student data and creates dashboards for students and covering enrollment, Special Ed dashboard, data for MCAS, assessment testing for EL students and all assessments utilized at the elementary schools. It's an all-in-one dashboard in order to look at the data in many ways. It covers staff hiring practices relative to diversity and the Principals have stated that Open Architects is an invaluable resource and the company is good to work with.

ELL

Dr. Conti stated the ELL budget is on page 5 and has a 0% increase. Mr. Conti expressed that the students coming to Burlington, with languages other than English, is an asset to the district.

Ms. Kerri Lamprey stated the asset for the all the students is diversity.

Transportation

Dr. Conti stated there is an increase in the contractual consumer price index. This is the last year of this transportation contract and we will have to re-write the RFP and go through the bid process.

Operations & Plant

Dr. Conti explained that the Maintenance Operations and Plant budgets are level funded but increased by \$5,000 for field maintenance and partnership with the Recreation Department.

Capital Warrant Articles

Mr. Cunha stated there is a new process this year; the Capital Warrant Articles are narrowed down to fit into the budget with a priority list as follows:

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MSMS – Security Cameras

Mr. Cunha stated there is a need for additional cameras at MSMS.

Motion was made by Ms. Simon to move forward with the Capital Warrant Article to Town Meeting of the MSMS Security Cameras for a total of \$45,111; seconded by Mr. Fox.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - aye, Mr. Foss – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

Pine Glen Instructional Space

Mr. Cunha explained that the renovation to teaching spaces includes drop ceilings that need replacement, exterior door repairs and one additional space to use for instructional space.

Motion was made by Ms. Simon to move forward with the Capital Warrant Article to Town Meeting of renovations at Pine Glen for an additional instructional space for a total of \$115,532; seconded by Mr. Fox.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - aye, Mr. Foss – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

BHS Lightspeed Amplification Systems

Mr. Cunha stated that at the BHs there is a mobile model and this new system would be to move away from the mobile model and fit each space in classroom.

Motion was made by Ms. Simon to move forward with the Capital Warrant Article to Town Meeting of the BHS Lightspeed Amplification Systems for a total of \$154,980; seconded by Mr. Fox.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - aye, Mr. Foss – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

BECC Student Bathrooms Renovations

Mr. Cunha stated that the BECC at high school needs updated bathrooms so they are ADA compliant for height.

Motion was made by Ms. Simon to move forward with the Capital Warrant Article to Town Meeting of the BECC student bathroom renovations for a total of \$82,770; seconded by Mr. Fox.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - aye, Mr. Foss – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

Francis Wyman Stairwell Resurfacing

Mr. Cunha explained that there are four stairwells with synthetic surface on them and they are worn and in need of repair.

Motion was made by Ms. Simon to move forward with the Capital Warrant Article to Town Meeting for repair of the Francis Wyman stairwells for a total of \$42,049; seconded by Mr. Fox.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - aye, Mr. Foss – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

Pine Glen Siding and Soffit

Mr. Cunha noted that underneath the roof at Pine Glen underneath the roof there are soffits, which are deteriorating and cracking and needs to be replaced in order to close up gaps to the roof and attic space.

Motion was made by Ms. Simon to move forward with the Capital Warrant Article to Town Meeting for the repair of the siding and soffits at Pine Glen for a total of \$150,403; seconded by Mr. Fox.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - aye, Mr. Foss – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

Francis Wyman Cafeteria Grease Trap

Mr. Cunha explained that all the water that is required to go through the grease trap so is now undersize and by code the grease trap needs to be upsized with replacing sinks.

Motion was made by Ms. Simon to move forward with the Capital Warrant Article to Town Meeting to replace the grease traps in the Francis Wyman cafeteria for a total of \$39,393; seconded by Mr. Fox.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - aye, Mr. Foss – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

Memorial Fire System Upgrades

Mr. Cunha stated that the fire system at Memorial needs updating because it is out of sync and company won't certified it. It needs to be replaced and won't pass inspection.

Motion was made by Ms. Simon to move forward with the Capital Warrant Article to Town Meeting to upgrade the fire systems at Memorial School for a total of \$41,190; seconded by Mr. Fox.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - aye, Mr. Foss – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

Field Maintenance Improvements

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Mr. Cunha explained that there is an undermined number of field improvements that are tied to the master field plan that we are working on. We have narrowed it to 3 particular fields; the baseball field at Francis Wyman, the practice and band fields at BHS. We will get numbers within the guidelines. Right now we need a placeholder for the Town Meeting Warrant. The detail will be forthcoming and it will match the number for the Town TBD with 3 separate place holders.

Motion was made by Ms. Simon to move forward with the Capital Warrant Article to Town Meeting for field maintenance, improvements and renovations at the Francis Wyman grass field behind the school with an amount TBD; seconded by Ms. Monaco.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - aye, Mr. Foss – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

Motion was made by Ms. Simon to move forward with the Capital Warrant Article to Town Meeting for field maintenance, improvement and renovations for the MSMS athletic fields with an amount TBD amount; seconded by Mr. Foss.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - aye, Mr. Foss – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

Motion was made by Ms. Simon to move forward with the Capital Warrant Article to Town Meeting for the field maintenance, improvements and renovations for the BHS athletic fields with an amount TBD; seconded by Mr. Fox.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - aye, Mr. Foss – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

Capital Warrant Article - BHS Feasibility Study

Mr. Cunha explained the need for the BHS Feasibility Study and suggested the return of the previous allocated funds for the high school music room floor in the amount of \$450,000 approved by Town Meeting last year.

Motion was made by Ms. Simon to move forward with the Capital Warrant Article to Town Meeting for the BHS Feasibility Study in the amount of \$1.5 million; seconded by Ms. Monaco.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - aye, Mr. Foss – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0.

ADJOURN

Motion was made by Ms. Monaco to adjourn at 9:51 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Simon.

Ms. Monaco - aye, Ms. Simon - aye, Mr. Foss – aye, Ms. Massardo – aye, Mr. Bond - aye.

Motion Carried 5:0:0 by Roll Call Vote.

SUBMITTED

Respectfully,
Marianne Fabbri
Recording Secretary

Date Submitted: 5/9/23
Date Approved: 5/9/23