

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Ellington, Connecticut

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

The Finance Committee of the Ellington Board of Education met on Wednesday, September 30, 2020, at 4:00 p.m. in the Ellington High School Media Library Center at 37 Maple Street, Ellington, CT.

Attendees: *Board of Education Members:* Ms. Liz Nord, Mr. Michael Purcaro, Ms. Jennifer Dzen and Ms. Miriam Underwood.

Administrative Team Members: Mr. Brian Greenleaf, Director of Finance and Operations, Dr. Kristy LaPorte, Director of Special Education.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Ms. Nord at 4:10 p.m.

Agenda Items:

1. *Citizen and Staff Forum*

No one was present for the citizen and staff forum.

2. *Approval of the 2019-2020 Financials*

Mr. Greenleaf presented his report which shows the final balance of \$1,132,470.45 as previously discussed at the last board meeting. This is \$223,000 above what was anticipated in May primarily based on the negotiations with the bus company. Most of the savings is a one time savings due the closure of school and nearly half is within the transportation line item.

Ms. Nord asked the question regarding the \$287,000 for the faculty line items. Mr. Greenleaf responded that this is a combination of several items regarding multiple long term absences, unpaid leaves as well as early retirements not anticipated in the budget. Custodial staff line item is tied to contract changes, a retirement at EHS and using a floating custodian and rather than filling the position which equated to a \$40,000 savings. Further discussion continued regarding various line items of savings and shortages for the 2019-2020 school year.

Mr. Purcaro raised the question of where the variances and transfers are and how to determine where they went. Mr. Purcaro would like to have a meeting to discuss the variances and transfers to have a better understanding in order to prepare for next year's budget.

Motion: To the Board of Education transfers for 2019-2020 resulting in \$1,132,470.45. Surplus to be returned to the town with the previous request for the Board of Finance to allocate some or all of the unanticipated surplus to an establishment or reserved account.

1st. L. Nord

2nd. M. Purcaro

Mr. Brian Greenleaf provided a report regarding medical claims data. Medical loss ratio for the 2019-2020 was 90.9% which reflects a reduction from the prior year. High cost

claims have continued over the last 3-4 years but the underlying claims have remained steady. A premium credit of \$40,000 was requested by Mr. Greenleaf and granted by the insurance company and was applied to the first premium payment.

The Board of Education provided language to the Ordinance Committee regarding the possibility of a joint venture to move towards a self-insured plan for the district and town. In order for the district to consider a self-insured plan, 10% of the premium cost as well as a significant reduction in claims would need to occur before the possibility of proceeding with a self-insured plan for the district.

3. Discussion of the 2020-2021 Financials

Mr. Greenleaf provided information regarding the current balance of the COVID supplies response account which currently equates to \$376,000 and how the district will offset this account. Various grants and funding such as the Cares Act Grant for \$51,398 grant has been approved to offset the cost of desk shields. CRF (Coronavirus Relief Fund) for \$100,000 will be used to offset the cost of PPE supplies. An additional \$40,000 of relief funds can be used for Coronavirus transportation purposes. In addition to the various outside sources, the district will also use surplus funds not allocated during the summer for various salaries to offset the COVID supply response account bringing the remaining balance to \$80,000.

Mr. Greenleaf provided information regarding the Open Choice revenue account and explained how the funding is spent. Open Choice funds from the previous year are spent on the following year's budget. Open Choice Revenue from 2018-2019 was \$650,000 and during the 2019-2020 year we spent out \$639,000. For the 2019-2020 school year we took in \$576,000 for revenue and projected on spending \$594,000. We continue to have a positive balance in this account. Currently the district has 90 students in the Open Choice Program in Ellington.

4. 2021-2022 Budget Calendar

Discussion was opened to suggestions for any changes or revisions to the current budget calendar. Mr. Greenleaf pointed out to the committee the change to the calendar to reflect an addition of a BOE Workshop on December 21, 2020 with the faculty, staff and administrators to review the budget prior to presenting to the Superintendent.

5. 2021-2022 Board of Education Budget Guidelines

Discussion was opened to suggestions for any changes or revision in the Budget Guidelines. Suggestions and/or revisions will be reviewed and discussed at the next scheduled meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ms. Liz Nord, Finance Committee, Chair