

Budget Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
October 12, 2022

Present: Lynn Cavicchi; Frank Delvecchio; Sara Walsh; and Walter Wilk. Jennifer Walsh was not present at the start of the meeting but arrived at 7:10PM.

Also Present: Kevin Dumas, Teresa Murphy, Barry LaCasse, Debbie Scott, Matt Violette, and Ed Donoghue.

Not Present: Diana Bren

1. Open Meeting

Ms. Sara Walsh called the Budget Subcommittee meeting to order at 6:05PM with four members present.

2. Discussion and Consideration to Approve the Meeting Minutes of August 31, 2022

Ms. Sara Walsh asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes of August 31, 2022.

Motion: To approve the meeting minutes of August 31, 2022. (DelVecchio/Cavicchi) **Passes 4:0**

3. Reorganize

Ms. Sara Walsh asked if the Committee members would like to delay the reorganization again because the full committee was not present.

Motion: To appoint Sara Walsh as Chair of the Budget Subcommittee. (DelVecchio/Wilk) **Passes 4:0**

Ms. Sara Walsh then asked for a Vice-Chair

Motion: To appoint Frank DelVecchio as Vice-Chair of the Budget SubCommittee. (S. Walsh/Wilk) **Passes 4:0**

4. Update on process from Town and School

The discussion began with the Town side and Mr. LaCasse stated that it will be similar to FY23. Department heads will enter in their budget information into MUNIS by first week of November. He stated it will be clear that this is a level service budget and there should be no FTE requests and should only include contractual increases and supply increases. Mr. LaCasse noted that a similar memo went out in regards to CIP.

Mr. Donoghue stated that on the School side he has sent out the budget templates and they are due back by November 10th and that later that week he will meet with principals to go through the budget. Mr. Donoghue noted that utility increases were not budgeted for this year and that teacher negotiations will not be complete before budgets are done. Superintendent Murphy stated that several districts have already negotiated with the teacher's union and the City of Boston got three percent and the Town of Franklin got four percent. Ms. Murphy stated that it is going to be challenging with the administrative team, but wants to be realistic and have some cuts prepared.

Mr. Wilk asked what amenities could be offered to help retain staff and Mr. Dumas commented that they are discussing things because the first union negotiations is going to mediation and there are four other contracts that may go the same way because the unions are asking for large increases due to inflation. Mr. Dumas further noted that there are going to be some huge holes to fill due to retirements and he is starting succession planning. Ms. Murphy stated that she met with local superintendents and Mansfield is in a better position than other local districts as there are mainly openings for paras and food service employees instead of teachers and special education teachers. She noted that many paras left last year because other Towns were paying higher per hour rates.

5. Agreement on Presentation and Data Points for February Consensus meeting

Ms. Sara Walsh stated that lots of data came last minute and the goal is to create transparency. It was noted that it may be difficult to get data from other communities and Mr. DelVecchio thought that FinCom could be a resource for helping that get that information put together. Mr. LaCasse stated that in 2018 a large overhaul of fee structure was completed and at that time the rates were compared to surrounding communities. Mr. Dumas stated that ambulance fees and building department fees are the only two fees that are worth comparing because all the others are so small that it is not worth the time spent researching. Mr. Donoghue stated that the school look at fees frequently and gave the examples of custodial fees and bus fees. Ms. Cavicchi stated that comparing fees is part of the budget process. It was also noted that the tax data that the Assessor does is not always a straight comparison and the example of trash was given, some communities do not include trash. Ms. Sara Walsh confirmed that everyone was good with a PowerPoint presentation from the Schools and the Town. She also stated that the Finance Committee will discuss town fees and that the consensus data comparison can be paused.

6. Discussion on possible strategies for balanced budget

It was noted that the process will be later than normal.

7. Communications strategy

Ms. Sara Walsh asked how can the committee help make people aware of these steps that were taken and how to get more information out and asked the committee members for thoughts. Ms. Cavicchi asked who is saying we are not communicating. Ms. Sara Walsh responded that it is everywhere and wants to get information out there and explain the processes and steps that have taken place and advertise when meetings are planned. Mr. Dumas stated that he will do a press release with the schools and that everyone is working together on this.

8. Any Items Not Known within 48 Hours

The committee discussed when to have the next meeting. Ms. Murphy noted that the School Committee will have their budget presentation on January 10th and anyone is welcome to attend that meeting. The Committee decided to meet on January 11th at 6PM. Ms. Walsh then confirmed that a Consensus Budget Sub meeting was scheduled for February 8th at 6PM.

9. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the Budget SubCommittee meeting of October 12, 2022 at 7:15PM. (DelVecchio/Cavicchi)

Passes 5:0

Signature

Date

Minutes prepared by Carrie Champagne