Date: 09 November 2016

Budget Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Members Present: T. Buono, P. Fitzsimmons, L. Richards, W. Hodges

Others Present: K. Lyons, K. Prentakis, S. Givens, K. Sherwood

T. Buono called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

The draft minutes for the 12Oct2016 were reviewed. *P. Fitzsimmons motioned to accept the minutes as presented. Second by L. Richards.* Motion passed unanimously.

S. Givens stated that she will schedule a meeting with the auditors to review findings. She commented that the change in staffing in Central Office over the past few months brought to light that procedures/protocols need to be establish to ensure that future staffing changes will not result in lost productivity.

S. Givens said that she and D. Batchelder and S. Goodman met with Habeeb engineers regarding the Facilities Assessment draft report. Habeeb was given feedback on the layout/presentation of the report, which they will revise. The plan is for them to have a reworked draft for a meeting on 11/29/16. The goal is to have a final draft of the report by the end of the calendar year for the Budget Subcommittee to review. This report will be one item that the Subcommittee will need in developing a Capital Plan. The Subcommittee will report findings in the report during this budget cycle, however, a definitive Capital Plan that will break out needs over a longer time period will be developed after approval of the FY18 budget in March. It was noted that we still need to move forward with a warrant article to present to the 3 towns on the telecommunications system. We had tried the approach last year, but Topsfield felt the proposal was too last minute for them to thoughtfully consider the approach. We intend to submit to the towns much earlier this year. S. Givens has discussed the telecommunication system needs with Habeeb and the plan is to have a draft of a warrant article with appropriate costs for discussion when we have our FY18 budget meetings in early December. Consensus was that cost to towns should not exceed $500K total and we should consider taking from stabilization for anything over that amount.

S. Givens discussed the current protocol regarding extracurricular scholarships for students, which has a hard stop that scholarships submitted past the due date will not be considered. Very rarely, there have been some students that have missed the deadline and it has been due to the student/family experiencing a crisis. In these instances, S. Givens sought donations for the student’s fee since she was precluded from taking from the scholarship fund. She would like the Budget Committee to make an exception to the deadline requirement for crisis situations. The consensus of the Committee was that S. Givens would have the authorization to award a scholarship in these circumstances up to 3 times per year upon notification to the chair of the Budget Subcommittee.

K. Lyons discussed the Central Office Model. He noted that Human Resources is an area that is handled piecemeal by many individuals and really needs to be consolidated under one position to improve workflow, communication, and organization and to round out the support services provided by Central Office. He submitted a job description for a Human Resource Director. The position is common in many school districts and salary typically ranges in the mid-$80K. He plans to present the Central Office Model in more detail during budget discussions in December and also intends to recommend title changes for the CFO and Director of PPS. These will be title changes only with no cost involved.

K. Prentakis asked whether the school checks on the validity of a student’s address on a regular basis. K. Lyons stated that they are always reviewed at the beginning of the school year. Discussion ensued on whether they should be reviewed during the year as well. K. Lyons will look into having the registrar review home sales on a regular basis to confirm that students have moved in/out of district.

Our next Budget Subcommittee meetings are 12/6, 7 & 12. These will be the budget meetings with Administrators and Department Heads on FY18 budget proposals. All meetings will be at 7pm in the Presentation Room at the High School.

*P. Fitzsimmons motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:39pm. Second by W. Hodges.* Motion passed unanimously.