

Newtown Public Schools
BOE CFF Subcommittee Meeting
January 11, 2024 6:00pm
BOE Conference Room

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

BUSINESS

Item 1 Approval of BOE CFF Subcommittee Minutes of December 14, 2023

NEW BUSINESS

- Financial Report and Transfers
- Transportation Update
- Facilities Update
- Superintendent's Update
- Approval of BOE CFF Meeting Schedule for 2024

PUBLIC COMMENT

ADJOURNMENT

Newtown Board of Education
CIP/Facilities/Finance (CFF) Sub-Committee Minutes
December 14, 2023 6:00 pm
BOE Conference Room

PRESENT: Alison Plante, Shannon Tomai, Christopher Melillo, Tanja Vadas,
Steve Goodridge, Board of Finance

CALL TO ORDER: Mrs. Tomai called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

BUSINESS:

Mrs. Plante moved to accept the minutes of November 16, 2023. Mrs. Tomai seconds the motion. All in favor of the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

Financial Report and Transfers:

Mrs. Vadas presented the financial report for November. She talked about what was captured and spent for last month and with looking at variances she stated we are on point with the previous month with a slight change in the balance of just over \$12K. Our projected balance stands at \$541K. She went on to say that there was a large change in our salary accounts which is still the major driver with a projected balance at \$372K. There were small changes in employee benefits, other purchased services, purchased property services and supplies which were all pretty much consistent with last month.

Salary accounts continue to drive our budget which is coming from the Paraeducator Union. Certified salaries carry a small balance in our teacher staff account and we did a realignment of our encumbrances which accounts for teachers on leave and transfers. She requested a transfer this month of \$87K to cover our contracted services BT's which would come from our teacher accounts. We have included projections in the teacher account for a MG sped position, Hawley Psychologist position, and two leaves coming up in Jan-Feb which would account for the turnover. She stated we have 20 sped para positions and 4 classroom positions open.

All accounts in benefits are in alignment with the budget. Our 401A plan is a moving target. New employees go on this plan so when we budget we never know what this number is going to be. She stated we pay 5% towards this plan and the defined benefit is an annual payment.

She mentioned unemployment and that the state is no longer sending bills and we are finding out we now have to go on-line. We have had some turnover in our accts/ payable dept. so we did not get caught up with this until lately. We recently received a \$26K quarterly bill and our budget is \$30K for the year. In the prior year when we were budgeting we did not have that much in unemployment costs. So we will be watching this account.

The Professional Services account includes attorney fees, psychological testing, and all of staff development and training. We are on target right now to spend all of our budget in these educational services.

Mrs. Tomai asked if the psychological testing was considered sped.

Mrs. Vadas stated it is a sped service that is captured in this object...She stated there is a lot of departments that go into this one object as part of government accounting.

Purchased Property Services are accounts at the building level. This is showing a small balance emerging in the water account and is hard to predict because our irrigation costs can be very high.

In the building site and emergency repairs, we have spent 40% of the budget and we are on target for this time of year. In emergency services we have only spent \$3,800 thus far and the remainder has been for general building maintenance.

Other Purchased Services includes contracted services, transportation, insurance, communications and out-of-district tuition. In contracted services we just hired a new firm to help with BT costs and they are providing reduced rates which are much lower than last year. Currently we only have 3 BT openings. This financial report does include a transfer of \$87K from our certified salary surplus to cover the BT contracted services for the remainder of the year. We also have IDEA money of about \$60K which is grant money. We currently are down 3 BT's and we budgeted for 25.

With the Out of district tuition we have readjusted all encumbrances and we are currently showing a negative balance of \$37K. Projections are in place for about \$250K and we have the excess cost grant so we are hopeful to break even.

In supplies we have a balance emerging in our virtual net metering. Next year we will be more in alignment and may not see as large credits with more data available.

The propane fuel for buses was budgeted at \$1.40/gal and it came in at \$1.27/gal.

Mrs. Tomai asked if we were paying separately for the fuel.

Mrs. Vadas stated we have always paid for fuel for the buses even when it was diesel. Propane saved us a lot of money not to mention we can apply for a credit.

Mr. Melillo stated it also meets the requirement of the State's need to have buses be green. Propane is a clean burn. A lot of districts are looking at electric buses but electric buses are \$500K each. The propane buses meet the required law.

Mrs. Vadas stated we are on schedule to use all of the gallons it is just coming in a little bit less.

Mrs. Vadas wanted to discuss the Excess Cost Grant and stated that we did submit our first estimate of \$1.8M to the State which went on December 1st. The total estimate was just over \$1.824M and our budget was just over \$1.832M. We are only short \$7,300 based on our estimate.

Mrs. Plante asked to get an explanation of what the Excess Cost Grant is.

Mrs. Vadas stated it is a State grant that reimburses us for 70% of the high costs for out-of-district tuition and transportation that are above an amount known as our basic contribution. The basic contribution and the remaining 30% are the obligation of the district.

Transportation Update:

Mrs. Vadas stated we have the same amount of drivers and we are in a really good place. We have 6 spares with another one coming on. She stated last year we had to outsource all athletic trips. Last year at the end of November we had 118 trips. Out of those 118 trips, only 44% was completed by All-Star due to lack of drivers. This year we have 115 trips and at this time 73% have been completed by All-Star.

Facilities Update:

None

Superintendent's Update:

None

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

Mrs. Tomai made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Plante moved the motion. Mrs. Tomai seconds the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanne Morris

THESE ARE DRAFT MINUTES AND ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE BOE CFF/CIP
SUB COMMITTEE.