

**Minutes
Finance Committee
June 11, 2019**

Present:

Tony Pesco, Committee Chair
Ruby Hedge, Committee Member
Dr. William McKersie, Superintendent of Schools
Richard Rudl, Director of Finance and Operations

Absent:

Dan McNeill, Committee Member

Public:

Gina Albert, Weston Resident

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Pesco at 9:02 a.m.

The Committee discussed the following items regarding the monthly financial update including internal services fund (for dental):

- Mr. Rudl reported a projected fund balance for FY 2019 of \$1,723. Encumbrances total \$7,285,566 against a budget of \$51,954,365.
- Mr. Rudl informed the Committee that the report reflects transfers totaling \$123,647. Of these transfers, four are in excess of \$5,000. These include \$23,970 for consultation on IEPs, \$14,976 for accumulated sick time payout due to the elimination of SPED drivers, \$9,258 for premium cost share reduction due to census change in health insurance, and \$6,336 for curriculum writing.
- Mr. Rudl reported that the District instituted a soft budget freeze on May 30th. This allowed schools and cost centers to encumber necessary end-of-year items with all unencumbered funds frozen to cover various needs as reflected in the May financial report. At this point in time, Mr. Rudl expects the fiscal year to end with a small margin to the positive.
- Regarding the Internal Services Fund, which now only includes dental and medical claims run-out, Mr. Rudl reported that the current fund balance is \$1,535,325.

The Committee discussed the following regarding the monthly financial update on PPS/SPED:

- Mr. Rudl reported that regarding special education out of district tuition and unilateral agreements for FY 2019, actual costs are \$2,229,485 but projected costs are \$597,520 for a total projection of \$2,827,005. This is against a budget of \$2,827,005.

The Committee discussed the following regarding an athletic field update:

- Mr. Rudl reported that proposals have been received from Diamond Landscaping as well as US Pitchcare regarding repair work that is needed on the athletic fields. The Revson varsity field has issues both in the infield and outfield, while the junior varsity field at Revson has only outfield issues. The middle school softball field has primarily outfield issues but does retain significant amounts of water in the infield given that the field is on wetlands. There is no alternative site for a varsity field within Weston.
- Mr. Rudl informed the Committee that Diamond Landscaping believes that Revson varsity field can be made playable by pitching it correctly. With the way the field is currently pitched, water is unable to run off of it. Additionally, there are holes in the outfield leading to standing water when it rains. Once the holes are filled, the field graded properly, the curtain drain in the outfield cleaned out, and the field Shockwaved, he is confident the problem will be fixed. Additionally, switching to Partac clay instead of the Keegan clay now being used would improve the field's condition. Diamond also offered to hold a training session with baseball coaches to review the proper way to maintain the fields. Regarding the middle school JV softball field, Diamond recommended adding topsoil to level out the undulations, switching to Partac clay, and Shockwaving that field as well.
- Mr. Rudl reviewed the costs associated with the proposals, from both Diamond Landscaping and US Pitchcare, and also funding options. Among the alternatives available to pay for the work are, requesting a supplemental from the town, increasing the participation fees and coupling that money raised with the current athletic field repair budget (\$20,000), re-allocating existing funds from a currently budgeted line item, which would require a budget cut, or deficit spent to cover this project and implement a freeze later in FY20 or request a partial supplemental. Mr. Rudl also suggested that the District could consider selling advertisement to hang on the outfield fence which would help raise funds, but this would require that the Board revisit their advertisement policy.
- The Committee agreed to bring a motion to the full Board of Education at the June 17th meeting awarding Diamond Landscaping the project.

The Committee discussed the following regarding a campus sewer analysis update:

- Mr. Rudl reported that Veolia created a proposal for a district-wide sewer analysis which would develop mapping of existing underground utility mapping for water, storm drainage and sewers for all four schools. The mapping will include the location of the water supply wells, underground septic tanks and the wastewater treatment facility. They

would also conduct smoke testing of the sewer system around the middle school and dye testing of all roof drains and any identified inflow sources observed from the smoke testing. The project would take approximately two weeks and would be done when school is not in session. Mr. Rudl added that Veolia discovered that when it rains they notice a 30% increase in the amount of water going through the Zenon plant, indicating that there are water drains going into the plant which should not be. The total cost of the project is nearly \$225,000. Mr. Rudl also added that after speaking to the Town Administrator and Town Engineer that the Town is not interested in having a sewer analysis done for Town buildings at this time.

- Dr. McKersie added that since this wouldn't be done this year anyway, it would be a good idea to wait until the new Facilities Director is on board and also suggested getting the Town involved.
- Mr. Pesco suggested that he and Ms. Albert first speak to the First Selectman and the Chair of the Board of Finance regarding the project before getting the Building Committee involved.

The Committee discussed the following regarding potential legislative changes to the State partnership plan:

- Mr. Rudl informed the Committee that he received notification from the State that the State's partnership plan for health insurance is running at a \$10 million deficit and in order to make up for this shortfall they are recommending some changes, including geographic-based pricing, which would result in a Fairfield County surcharge, and increased rates for FY21.

The Committee discussed the following regarding a budget de-brief:

- Mr. Pesco asked if the de-brief could be held with the full Board of Education, and Dr. McKersie suggested that the August retreat would be a good opportunity for this. He also added that a multi-year outlook for some budget areas should be modelled. Mr. Pesco added that enrollment should also be discussed, and next year the Board of Finance should be involved budget in discussions sooner in the process.
- Ms. Hedge asked if the District's Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services could deliver his presentation on SPED to the Board of Finance as it was very informative and would help the Board of Finance better understand the situation facing the District. Dr. McKersie agreed and felt the fall would be a good time for it.

The Committee discussed the following regarding approval of the May minutes:

- The Committee approved the May minutes.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 10:09 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Andrew Galli

Administrative Assistant to the Director of Finance and Operations