

Board of Finance
Special Meeting – February 10th, 2009
MINUTES

Attending:

Board of Finance Members: Al Alper, Robert Kelso, Jim Meinhold, Andy Pforzheimer, Warren Serenbetz, Lynne Vanderslice

Others:

Karen Birck, Gil Bray, Richard Dubow, Barbara Myers, James Saxe, Gary Richards, Ken Post, Joseph Dolan, Numerous Members of the District/School System and the Public

Call to Order:

Warren Serenbetz called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Review of the Board of Education's FY 2010 budget

Mr. Serenbetz offered brief opening remarks including reminding the attendees that the meeting was not a public hearing thus there would be no opportunity for anyone to make any statements. He also recapped the contents of a letter sent from the BOF to the BOE on 2/9.

Mr. Serenbetz asked Karen Birck for any opening comments. Ms. Birck briefly explained how the BOE had arrived at the BOE's recommended budget and ended by saying that there was concern that if the budget was pushed any lower it would force a bubble of pent up demand.

Mr. Pforzheimer stated that he hoped the two Boards could work constructively but he needed help understanding what budget cuts might still be implemented and referenced several examples in the BOE's written responses to previously submitted BOF questions regarding the 2009-2010 Budget. Mr. Post stated that the referenced items could not be budgeted for the unknown so that they were budgeted based on what they thought was reasonable from prior year's history.

Mr. Alper asked about the Technologist/Student ratio of 410 compared to 500-600 in the business community. Mr. Hepfer(?) responded that the Wilton ratio was lower than others in the DRG.

Mr. Meinhold asked for a clearer view of which Technology projects were truly critical. Mr. Hepfer responded that he relied on what was submitted by the teachers. Mrs. Birck added that Smartboards had been paired down to 14 in the budget from 42 originally requested.

Ms. Vanderslice asked why High School classes below the target range of 20-22 couldn't be brought back in-range or higher in-range. Tim Canty said he wanted to protect ranges. Mr. Dubow added that scheduling issues tended to interfere with the ability to have all classes in-range.

Mr. Serenbetz commented that Budget Accounts 4310, 4400, 6100 & 6800 collectively were increasing 8.6% vs. prior year and that these needed to be reduced.

Mr. Kelso asked if Medical cost estimates were still correct; Mr. Post stated they were.

Mr. Pforzheimer asked why Training & Conferences couldn't be budgeted at \$145K; Mr. Post stated that the budget reflected what was needed.

Mr. Alper felt there were many co-curricular activities with costs/student that were excessive and asked why fees were not being considered as a source of revenue; Ms. Birck stated that the BOE philosophy was not to charge co-curricular fees.

Mr. Meinhold asked about areas that volunteers might be used rather than paid positions; Mr. Richards stated that 33,000 volunteer hrs. were currently utilized by the District. Ms. Birck stated that the District policy of not allowing a volunteer to be alone with students minimized many opportunities.

Mr. Pforzheimer asked what would happen if Instructional Leaders were eliminated; Mr. Richards outlined the role of I.L.s.

Mr. Alper asked what the savings would be if computers were leased on a 4 vs. 3 year cycle; Mr. Dolan stated that computers were leased over 3 years but were kept 4 years. Mr. Richards stated the District is evaluating the newly allowed ability to auction used computers.

Ms. Vanderslice reviewed the assumptions and resulting Mill Rate in the current Mill Rate Model and stated that next year will be just as bad and possibly worse.

There being no other questions, Mr. Serenbetz thanked the BOE and adjourned the meeting at 8:58 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Meinhold
Clerk