

Town School Partnership meeting
January 3, 2022
4:00 pm via zoom

MINUTES

Present: Select Board members: Bernard Greene, Miriam Aschkenasy, School Committee members: Suzanne Federspiel, Helen Charlupski, Mariah Nobrega Advisory Committee members: Dennis Doughty, Cliff Brown, Staff: Mel Kleckner, Melissa Goff, Samuel Rippen, Linus Guillory, Kate MacGillivray

Approval of Meeting Minutes from November 10, 2021

On motion it was unanimously,
Voted to approve the minutes of November 10, 2021 as amended.

Town Administrator Mel Kleckner spoke briefly in the recent surge in the Covid virus and its impact on schools and the community putting a strain on the town's operations.

FY23 Forecast and CIP Update

Deputy Town Administrator Melissa Goff provided a PowerPoint on the Town's revenue summary.

- \$8.1 million deficit
- Review of town school split allocation
- Expenditure growth
- CIP funding policy
- Investment in Schools (\$243m 6yr plan)

Mel Kleckner added that this is the result of using one time funding in the school department; funding which has expired. This reflects on the large deficit on the school side.

School leases is a continued challenge, \$1.8 million devoted to those cost annually. This has put a strain on the CIP budget requests, including deferred maintenance cost to the schools.

Cliff Brown asked about future debt exclusions numbers. Deferred maintenance on school buildings has been an ongoing issue and a budget strain.

Mel Kleckner replied there is a possibility that the proposed infrastructure bill may cover some maintenance issues. There is no certainty at this time.

Mariah Nobrega asked about losses from FY21 for BEEP and Adult Education; are these losses included in the revenue replacement calculations. Melisa responded Adult Ed is, and they are looking at the BEEP numbers.

Continued discussion on the American Rescue Plan process

Mel Kleckner reviewed the ongoing public engagement process facilitated by the Brookline Community Foundation to help the Select Board prioritize the requests.

Covid related budget expenses formerly processed through the CARES and other outside funds will be shifted onto the ARPA funds. This is a slow and deliberate process with the ARPA funds that are intended for those most impacted by Covid. The Brookline Community Foundation is providing those affected with a voice and assistance with their request.

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FY23 operating budget: revenue replacement formula - how much will be allocated back to the budget. We need to resolve some things quickly. There are concerns with using temporary funding sources for permanent expenses.

Melissa Goff reviewed in mid-January, the Brookline Community Foundation will be reporting to the Select Board. They will schedule hearings for public and department funding requests.

Mariah Nobrega requested more information from the building department to clarify the request from the School Committee on maintenance funding; what is actually being requested.

Town/School Partnership Agreement

Mel Kleckner announced he is pleased with the consensus between him and School Superintendent Linus Guillory on updating the Town School Partnership document. They will put together a document for review and final edits by the committee with the goal to identify the principals and allocate funds effectively.

Cliff Brown and Mariah Nobrega will review the document and provide the edits.

Update on School Construction Projects

Driscoll: Mel Kleckner announced that the state agency approved allocating the Driscoll School climate system expenditures into the existing debt exclusion.

Miriam Aschkenasy reported that there is a good communication plan with the community providing project updates. They are looking at increasing parking spots.

High School: this project is still on track for mid-January.

Pierce School: Bernard Greene updated the committee on the Pierce School project. There are some concerns with traffic impact on School Street. A transportation study will be provided.

Helen Charlupski added if they are not ready for a debt exclusion in September, that could push back the opening date for the Pierce School.

Other Business – public comment:

Naomi Sweitzer asked about artwork by John Wilson located at the Pierce school in poor display. She asked about considerations to properly store them during the construction process, and return to the school in a better location as valued pieces of art.

Bernard Greene responded that this is of consideration with the Pierce School Project committee and active steps are being taken to ensure these valuable pieces; efforts are being made to get them properly valued and the design team is working on displaying them in a way that is appropriate and safe.

The meeting ended at 5:00pm.