

Budget Subcommittee
Arlington School Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 6th, 2021, 9:30 a.m.

Meeting held remotely via Zoom.

Attendance

Subcommittee Members: Kirsi Allison-Ampe, Len Kardon, Jane Morgan
Administration: Kathleen Bodie, Superintendent, Michael Mason, CFO, John Bowler, Athletic Director, Roderick McNeal, Assistant Superintendent, Robert Spiegel, Director of Human Resources
Additional: Bill Hayner and Liz Exton, School Committee, Dean Carman, Finance Committee

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m.

Public Comment – none

Motion to table all items up to Athletic Fees made by JM, 2nd by LK, passed 3-0 via roll call vote.

Athletic Fees

MM and JB wanted to present their proposal regarding fees for this year. They have gone over the finances for the Fall '20 season, and compared the costs to the athletic fees paid. They found that one sport (Soccer) had fees that were in excess of 40% of the cost of the sport, and proposed refunding these families \$50. They plan to do the same analysis at the end of the Winter Season and again requesting a refund if a sport has not incurred costs such that fees cover 40%. JB explained that, to his knowledge, there are no students who are not participating because of the fee amounts. The committee requested that they inform parents and families of their plans to reaccess at the end of the season. MM and JB also intend to address athletic fees in general at a later time.

Motion to recommend to full SC to to approve Finance Dept recommendations to refund \$50 to soccer families on basis of presented analysis, made by JM, 2nd LK, passed 3-0 via roll call vote.

Motion to remove all previous agenda items from table made by LK, 2nd JM, passed 3-0 via roll call vote.

FY 22 Budget

KAA: had email and conversation yesterday evening with Charlie Foskett, Chair Finance Committee, suggested that he wants to use FY20, FY21 as basis for FY22.

KAA explained to CF that she could only speak for herself, not committee, but strongly disagreed with concept, because FY20 and FY21 are fiscally very anomalous years.

MM presented a multi-year view of the APS 5-year strategic plan and its implementation. Live document had commented cells explaining updates to plan; printed document is pivot table and does not show updates. Subcommittee asked questions about OMS half-cluster, etc.

MM also presented chart showing the effects of various approaches to funding given changes in enrollment. Subcommittee preferred approach based on no growth rate until enrollment recovers based on modified projection; this uses projection based on 100% return. This is felt to be most reasonable to capture additional students who will enroll as others stay out. DC suggested presenting estimate as CFO's recommendation, as that is what it is.

DC reported meeting with CF/Adam Chapdelaine/Sandy Pooler, who didn't indicate that his idea [\$0 for enrollment growth but hold \$ in reserve] was unreasonable although CF feedback was similar to above.

Subcommittee discussed override commitment to fund APS strategic plan and how that could be maintained. Some committee members felt strongly that because of override commitment it was very important to see additional \$600/600/800/800k in budget as promised to voters, others were uncertain because additional \$ can't build resources if main funding is cut.

Subcommittee raised question of documenting educational needs for next year, post-pandemic education. KB: have preliminary data which suggests issues in math, key skills in reading, but uncertain what will be status at end of year. Ideas for remediation approaches include lower class sizes, reading support, assistant principals.

There was also concern that APS does not have information yet re unmet needs but that they still exist; could reserve be earmarked for unmet needs too, not just enrollment growth?

COVID stimulus funding also discussed. Amount uncertain as of yet.

FY 21 Budget update

No additional updates at this time.

Role of Finance Committee Representative to School Committee/Budget Subcommittee

Subcommittee had a discussion of the role of Finance Committee Representative and while appreciative of efforts being made on behalf of APS, conveyed a desire to receive copies of important written communications as they were shared more broadly, rather than after the fact.

Approval of Minutes

LK **moved** approval of the minutes of 12/30/20, 2nd by JM, passed 3-0 via roll call vote.

Adjournment

JM **moved** to adjourn, 2nd by LK, passed 3-0 via roll call vote. Meeting adjourned 11:15am.