

**Sudbury Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 27, 2020**

Members of the Finance Committee present were:

Finance Committee Members Present: Chairman, Jeff Atwater, Vice-Chairman, Eric Poch, Susan Berry, Ronald Brumback, Lisa Gutch, Jean Nam, Bryan Semple (Arrived at 7:18 pm), Scott Smigler

Absent

Christopher Carmody

Also in attendance were:

Dennis Keohane, Finance Director/Treasurer-Collector. Pat Brown, and Daniel Carty of the Sudbury Board of Selectmen, Bella Wong, Superintendent/Principal, and Peter Rowe, Interim Finance Director, from Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School (LSRHS), Ellen Joachim, Chair, Lincoln-Sudbury Regional School District Committee

CONVENE:

Chairman Jeff Atwater called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. The meeting convened at Police Station, in the Silva Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, 278 Old Sudbury Road, Sudbury, MA 01776.

ITEM 1: Public Comment

Chairman Jeff Atwater opened this portion of the meeting for Public Comment. There were no public comments.

ITEM 2: General Business

- **Approve Meeting Minutes**
There were no Meeting Minutes to approve.

- **Budget Transfers**
There were no Budget Transfers to approve.

- **Liaison Report**
There were no Liaison Reports

- **Review Calendar**

ITEM 3: LS Budget Hearing

Bella Wong, Superintendent/Principal presented the Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School proposed FY2021 Budget Update. She began with a summary of enrollment projections from FY19-FY25 as well as the current median class size. Ms. Wong mentioned the funding gap of \$464,755. She stated that the funding gap went

down because the Lincoln Assessment adjusted up by \$28K, and there was an increase of \$65,676 in Chapter 70 funding, but the transportation reimbursement is down \$72,286, so the net is slightly negative \$6610. Ms. Wong went through a list of financial assumptions. She responded to Susan Berry's questions on health insurance and transportation. She stated that the health insurance rate is not known but that the Executive Board meets on February 3rd and she may know soon after that. She also stated that contractual costs for transportation are increasing and she is adding a Lincoln morning bus. Ms. Wong responded to Jean Nam's question on Circuit Breaker reimbursements and the influx of students coming in for FY21 needing out-of-district placements. Ms. Wong stated that because reimbursements lag, what LS receives in FY21 is based on what was spent in FY20. Ms. Wong went on to describe projected adjustments to close the budget gap. She stated that actions taken to control operational costs include reductions to utilities, re-bidding health insurance, and special education transportation, as well as cost avoidance with LS Academy. Additional measures include reductions to instructional staffing as well as cutting incremental costs. Ms. Wong stated that reductions to expense line will be the remaining strategy in addressing the gap. The conversation veered to a discussion on OPEB costs. Ms. Wong stated that it is currently being funded at \$383,109. Ms. Wong noted that the OPEB Trust Committee for Lincoln-Sudbury will convene on February 26, 2020, and anyone is welcome to attend to receive a better understanding of the liability. Ms. Wong's presentation included a slide on the Positive Financial and Programmatic Impact of L-S Academy. She stated that LS is receiving a significant number of students that are out-of-district in the FY21 budget, but the tuition line would be level-funded. She added that this is because LS was able to absorb the tuition coming in because students have either graduated or are not being sent out-of-district. Ms. Wong reiterated that LS is reducing staff by 3.5 FTEs incrementally across the departments for next year and is level funding \$383,109 to the OPEB liability. She added that LS is mindful of the OPEB liability and has not reduced it. She also added that LS is mindful to absorb a significant amount of student need and is level funding the tuition line. A general discussion followed on operational costs. Ms. Wong continued with a review of the FY21 Capital Requests. Ms. Wong continued with the anticipated use for E & D funds and described the approval process. She added that both Lincoln and Sudbury have been alerted for possible need of warrant articles. Ms. Wong described concerns for FY22 and FY23 and outlined the budget timeline.

The conversation continued with a lengthy discussion on the FY21 Budget Reconciliation Worksheet. The Finance Committee fully discussed the details and issues of the FY21 Budget

Reconciliation Worksheet. At the end of the presentation, the Finance Committee took the time to discuss their observations.

ITEM 4: Town Meeting Articles (if available)

There was no discussion on this item.

ITEM 5: Public Comment

Chairman Atwater opened this portion of the meeting for Public Comment. Chairman Atwater recognized Pat Brown, a member of the Sudbury Board of Selectmen and liaison to Sudbury Public Schools, speaking on her behalf.

Pat Brown had a question for LS regarding the health benefits bid cycle. Pat Brown stated that when the original legislation went through to move people to the GIC, Minuteman Nashoba had a withdrawal period that was ninety-days before the beginning of their plan year on June 1st, and subsequently, the members of Minuteman Nashoba chose to change that so that the current withdrawal date is December 1st. Pat Brown asked if it is possible to go back to Minuteman Nashoba and express the need for a March 1st date? She stated that with the current withdrawal date of December 1st it is just not possible to do a valid comparison to know if it is a good plan or not.

Bella Wong responded that many requests were made for a change in the withdrawal date but that Minuteman Nashoba was not responsive.

ITEM 6: Possible Future Agenda Topics

There was no discussion on this item.

ITEM 7: Adjournment

Motion and Vote:

Lisa Gutch moved, and Ronald Brumback seconded the motion that the January 27, 2020, Finance Committee meeting be adjourned at approximately 9:15 p.m.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance Committee is Thursday, January 30, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted: Cheryl Gosmon, Recording Secretary