

# QUINCY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

## BUDGET and FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, May 24, 2012

A meeting of the Budget and Finance Subcommittee was held on Thursday, May 24, 2012 at 5:30 pm in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room at the NAGE Building. Present were Mr. Paul Bregoli, Mrs. Kathryn Hubley, Mrs. Anne Mahoney, Mr. Dave McCarthy, and Ms. Barbara Isola, Chair. Also attending were Superintendent DeCristofaro, Mr. Mike Draicchio, Mrs. Joanne Morrissey, Mr. Jim Mullaney, Mr. Kevin Mulvey, Mrs. Maura Papile, Mr. Jim Rendle, Mrs. Colleen Roberts, Mr. Kevin Segalla, Ms. Judy Todd; Ms. Allison Cox, President, Quincy Education Association; Mrs. Tracey Christello, Citywide Parents' Council representative; and Ms. Laura Owens, Clerk.

Ms. Isola called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. The first item on the agenda was a review of the four areas of Subsidized Services (Athletics, Building Rentals, Food Services, Transportation). Mr. Mullaney reviewed the process for setting budgets for these areas: discussions are had about adjustments or recommended changes, generating additional revenue, and the operational and community impact of changing fee structures.

Food Services is self-supporting; only the Lunch Attendants are part of the Quincy Public Schools budget since they work with all children, not those just purchasing lunch. The recommendation for FY2013 is to raise Elementary and Middle School lunches by \$.10 each in order to meet the federal guidelines for reimbursement rates. For Building Rentals, the recommendation is to keep the rental pricing the same as this year, a range of \$40 to \$75 per hour plus a 10% administrative fee. For Athletics, the recommendation is to keep the same fee structure for FY2013, a range of \$100 for most sports with the exception of \$150 for lacrosse and football and \$300 for hockey. The family maximum is \$750 per year. For Transportation, the recommendation is no change in the transportation fee structure, which is \$200 per user and a family maximum of \$400. For bus rentals, the rate ranges from \$25 to \$35 per hour with a mileage surcharge from \$1.50 to \$3.00.

During the discussion that followed, Mr. McCarthy asked about our success in collecting transportation fees and Mr. Mullaney reviewed that of the 489 students transported, 243 are eligible for free or reduced price meals, so by law do not pay for transportation; 76 live beyond two miles from the school they attend, so by law do not pay for transportation. The remaining 170 students pay the \$200 fee and \$34,000 was collected this year. For athletics, the statistics are similar proportionally, with fee waivers granted for those who qualify for free and reduced price meals.

Mr. Bregoli requested clarification about the criteria for free and reduced price meals. Mrs. Morrissey clarified that anyone receiving transitional assistance or food stamps is automatically qualified (direct certification from the state); those who wish to qualify otherwise have to submit an

application. Applications are reviewed by Food Services, 3% are fully vetted through requesting supporting documentation (tax returns); this is the maximum allowed by federal law. As of March 2012, approximately 4,300 students receive free or reduced lunch; just over 2,000 through direct certification, the remainder through the application process.

The next item on the agenda was a discussion of the FY2013 QPS Budget that was presented at the May 14, 2012 Budget and Finance Subcommittee meeting. Dr. DeCristofaro noted that following the discussion, Mr. Mullaney will research any questions and issues and present on them at the May 30, 2012 Budget and Finance Subcommittee meeting.

Ms. Isola started the discussion by citing that she had concerns about the additional line items for Athletics on pages 15 and 23. While she supports the concept of athletics and the value they bring to students, she is questioning allocating 13% of the \$528,000 available for additional activities and expenses to Athletics. Ms. Isola requested exploring other places in Academic programs to add back staff or resources. Mrs. Mahoney agreed that Athletics are important, but Technology, which is required for MCAS at the middle schools is important, as are full-time Aides for Kindergarten.

Mr. McCarthy stated that he'd discussed this with Athletic Director Rendle and Dr. DeCristofaro and talked with the booster groups about how they had they've worked to fundraise to keep the 20-game schedule which qualifies them for the MIAA tournaments. In regards to the trainer, given the raised awareness about concussion issues, feels this would be important support to have, especially for basketball and soccer. Mr. Rendle clarified that Fallon Ambulance is present at hockey and football games as a first responder for catastrophic injuries (as part of their contract with the City of Quincy), not to evaluate other types of injuries. Mr. McCarthy feels confident about the budget as presented but is open to take a look and discuss. The trainers would cover athletes for all contact sports. Ms. Isola asked for clarification of the number of different students playing sports and Mr. Rendle estimated 800 different students play sports and many play more than one sport.

Mr. Bregoli stated that in the last several years, it has become an increasing burden on the coaches to stay on top of the concussion issues. Trainers would follow up with students post-injury about rehabilitation. Without proper funding for a full schedule, we are not being competitive with the school districts around us. Mr. Rendle clarified the funding would be used for two trainers that would cover 300 games for both high schools: all soccer games, football games (including freshman and JV), basketball, wrestling, lacrosse. Mrs. Mahoney asked if we would consider allowing advertising that would generate revenue? Mr. Rendle also pointed out that not all of the athletics teams have boosters, such as Wrestling, Golf, Boys' Volleyball, and Girls' Lacrosse. Students are paying a \$150 fee and only playing a 13-game schedule.

Ms. Isola requested that the Superintendent's Leadership look at the total figure of \$65,000 and suggest alternative uses for the money that would directly impact school operations and instruction: office aids, additional curriculum materials, Kindergarten aids. Mr. McCarthy requested information

on Career and Technical Education program enrollment and growth. He also pointed out that the Extracurricular money for the high schools is half of what it previously was and asked if we are comfortable with the textbook line item as it stands. He would like an overview of what will be purchased this year and anticipated for next and what is the long-term view of curriculum purchases.

Mr. McCarthy also asked about the five new teachers, do we have an idea on where they will be placed? Mrs. Roberts stated that she'd just finished reviewing all of the staffing requests, and is anticipating needing two middle school positions, one elementary position, and two high school. Mr. McCarthy then thanked Mr. Draicchio, Mrs. Morrissey, Mr. Rendle, and Mr. Kevin Segalla for their management of the revolving accounts, and complimented their staffs for their ability to collect and stretch every dollar they are allocated.

Mrs. Hubley requested consideration of allocating \$10,000 for anti-bullying curriculum and initiatives.

Mr. Bregoli inquired about considering charging for full-day Kindergarten and asked whether surrounding towns charge. Dr. DeCristofaro responded that full-day Kindergarten serves 750 students and families, and makes a tremendous difference academically and socially. Mr. Mullaney noted that this issue was reviewed during last year's budget discussion and he can share that presentation. Ms. Isola suggested that the notes from last year's budget meetings and the presentation be shared with both Mr. Bregoli and Mrs. Hubley.

Mrs. Mahoney made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 pm. Mr. McCarthy seconded the motion and on a voice vote, the ayes have it.