



## MMUUSD Finance Committee Meeting

Thursday, November 10, 2022

6:00 PM

**In Attendance:** Kevin Campbell, Lisa Pawlik, Tara Arneson, Edye Graning, Diane Kirson-Glitman

**Administration:** John Alberghini, Nicole Fortier.

6:05 pm Chair Lisa Pawlik called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda.

**Public Comment:** None.

### **Review first draft of 2023-24 Budget:**

(Link to [Budget](#))

Dr. Alberghini highlighted the most significant drivers of the current draft as health insurance (at 12.5% increase), salaries, and special services (staffing and contracted services for students with unique needs). Some additions are the direct consequence of COVID. This budget is a very rough draft - a great deal of information is still required, particularly regarding revenues. Many revenue numbers are placeholders based on last year's figures. Enormous credit to Nicole Fortier for getting the budget draft ready, as she has stepped into a new position with unfamiliar systems. Great job well done.

Nicole Fortier shared the details on the draft budget, and in discussion with committee members, the following points were clarified:

- The increase in salary is currently listed as a placeholder of 4%.
- An increase in professional services from Howard Center is needed.
- A .5FTE Literacy Coach has been added.
- Transportation - wages and bus prices have increased.
- Food services - some surpluses in the fund, but it is unclear how food services will look next year.
- Technology - big increases expected in the cost of both hardware and software.
- Revenues are expected to be similar to last year, with some increase in Career and Tech Ed.
- Interest income is reduced due to decreased borrowing for the Tax Anticipation Notice.
- Transportation numbers for FY24 are unknown.
- The census block grant should generate an increase in Special Education revenue this year, comprising 6.31% of the increased revenue.

The Superintendent acknowledged that the current draft is nowhere near the targets, in fact is further off than any in recent memory. Few positions have been added. Both last year's budget and the actuals are used to create this draft. Some things are murky following COVID years. Edye Graning reminded the committee that it could be possible to pull funds from the Capital Reserve to reduce the increase. Also, MMUUSD has \$875K in reserve to mitigate the impact on



the tax rate in future budgets, though this may be needed in FY25, when the student weighting system changes. The district is also under audit, which when completed may provide additional options. It was agreed that as revenues can be adjusted after Town Meeting Day, once the budget is approved, there is still time to inject these additional funds as needed to ameliorate the tax rate increase. Funds would be used with Board approval, and publicizing such actions and the rationale behind them, would take great care and clarity for public understanding.

Dr. Alberghini closed by reiterating that the focus of the budget is on retaining staff, dealing with the effects from COVID, and providing services to students. Everything costs more.

**6:37pm Discuss Community Forum on November 17, 2022:**

The flier has been mailed. Edye Graning will post on FPF. Dr. Alberghini will prepare slides detailing the second draft of the Budget. The purpose of the forum is to hear public voices, and to let them know that if we are to maintain the standards of services in our schools, this is the increasing cost of doing so. Programming is sacred, and other options would be explored before affecting the quality of teaching. There is a Superintendent's Regional meeting this week and it will become clear whether this challenging budget situation is common across the region. At the Vermont Association of School Business Officials (VASBO) meeting on 12/1, the preliminary numbers from the Department of Finance will be available, illustrating spending statewide.

**Approve monthly warrants:**

(October)

**Kevin Campbell made a motion to approve the warrants, seconded by Edye Graning. Unanimously approved without discussion.**

**Approve previous meeting minutes:**

(Link to [10/13/2022 minutes](#))

**Kevin Campbell made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Tara Arneson. Unanimously approved without discussion.**

**Next meeting date and agenda:**

11/17 CHMS Pubic Forum with remote access.

**Meeting closed at 6:50pm.**

Respectfully submitted by Pat Straughan.

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