

Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2025 6:00 PM
Willamina Elementary and High School Library

The Willamina School District Budget Committee met on Tuesday, May 6 at 6 PM to conduct its organizational meeting for the 2025/2026 fiscal year budget in the Willamina Elementary and High School Library. Minutes are as follows:

Budget Committee Members Present:

Board Members

- Roy Whitman
- Dan Rinke
- David Shenk

Public Members

- Greg Anderson
- Gary Brooks – (6:28)
- Alisha Parks-Shell
- Hailey Rankin - Absent
- Jaime Vandenbosch – Absent

Others Present

- Mike Gass – Superintendent
- Lisa Anderson – Deputy Clerk
- Tracy Jones – Fiscal Services Clerk

Call to Order:

First meeting of the 2025-2026 Budget Committee called to order at 6:28 PM. It was noted that there were enough committee members present for a quorum.

Election of Budget Committee Officers for 2025-2026:

Gary Brooks nominated Greg Anderson as Chairman –
Roy Whitman second – **VOTE 5 YES** – **Motion Carried**

Greg Anderson nominated Gary Brooks for Vice-Chairman –
Dan Rinke second – **VOTE 5 YES** – **Motion Carried**

Budget Update:

Superintendent Gass updated the committee on the current budget. He gave accolades to the previous administration on keeping the district in good financial condition. He indicated that included in this budget was adding an additional guidance counselor for more post-secondary counseling and career exploration for students. He also stated that an additional position for an in person Spanish teacher had

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been included as well to give students an additional option in foreign language beyond the current Chinuk class that was offered. He indicated that the focus was to continue to improve facilities to create environments conducive to student centered learning as well as a commitment to safety. He stated that small class sizes were also a priority and was important to maintain for student growth. He informed the committee that SPED costs have increased as we have had to look outside the district and financially support students in programs that meant their individual needs. He indicated that he had met with a neighboring school district to look at options in combining some programs and not relying on the ESD to provide services that were not as cost effective.

Supt. Gass also stated some concern of possible declining enrollment, especially with the CTGR new school opening and drawing students. Although he indicated that Willamina will continue to adjust and maintain the quality of education and services to all students to help stabilize enrollment.

Supt. Gass stated that Willamina has a history of fiscal responsibility and consistently budgeted conservatively. With the uncertainty of surrounding the current funding allocations he believed the district would be able to ensure sustainability with the conservative budget strategy.

Budget Discussion:

Gary Brooks inquired about the declining enrollment. Supt. Gass indicated that enrollment has been on the decline for several years. He did however state that overall the projected enrollment for KG was more than projected and that the district actually added another KG teacher to keep class size down. He did inform the board that there was a bill currently proposed in legislation that the Tribe had supported that would give them the opportunity to go directly to the state board an apply to be a Charter school. Although this might propose some concern for our enrollment there will be a lot of formalities that will guide the Charter process. He stated that the process to become a Charter school was extensive and if that is the progression it will take two to three years to complete, giving time for the District to adjust.

Alisha indicated that the process to be enrolled at CTGR had factors such as income considered, so at this time it would not be so much choosing a better school over another, it is also meeting the CTGR requirements as well.

Lisa Anderson reviewed the handouts that were given that reviewed current budgets and projections for next year as well as the rationale for any increases.

Gary Brooks stated that he understood that salaries were a majority of the budget. With that being the case, and not being able to do anything about salaries that the focus of the meeting should be on other areas. Supt. Gass also explained about the state funding and working with estimates to create the budget as well. He explained that a major focus was to be adding funds yearly to offset some of the construction bond money given the increase costs of material and such to ensure the outcome meets the expectation of the voters.

Greg Anderson inquired about needing additional classrooms if there was a decline in enrollment. Supt. Gass explained that the need for additional classroom was more about offering

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additional programs for students such as culinary arts. He also indicated he wanted to move SPED programs in the main building to be more accessible.

Dan Rinke inquired about the staffing and being over 80% of the budget how that would look in the future with more classrooms and would any redesigning of staff be necessary or how would that increase? Lisa Anderson also included that an additional counselor and Spanish teacher position was added into the budget in hopes of getting those positions filled. Dan inquired about how additional positions are paid and Supt. Gass explained out of the general fund dollars which we usually have a healthy carryover balance. He also stated additional state funds have been forecasted for next year.

Gary Brooks inquired about the CTE program in Sheridan and how that may affect our enrollment? Supt. Gass stated that the programs are going to be different and may provide more opportunities for students in a collaborative effort. He also stated that more technology classes including robotics was something he would like to see develop for our students.

Alisha Parks Shell inquired about the substantial benefit increase in the SPED dept. Lisa explained part of the increase in overall coverage of insurance from the previous year, when it was partially covered by a grant.

Roy Whitman inquired about the overall special ed cost going up from \$20,000 to \$230,000? Lisa explained that was a tuition increase for sending students to other programs such as OASIS that better fit the needs for that student. Overall costs of ESD services contribute to related costs for services.

Supt. Gass also explained that some of the technology funds increased with the help of the TAPP grant to support students with purchasing more chrome books to have more access to technology and programs to support them academically. Lisa Anderson also stated that some of the increase would also be used to update the reader board as the software was outdated and a new program needed to be purchased to continue using the Board. Gary Brooks indicated that the Chamber group may be able to support some funds for that project as they did help with the original purchase of the reader board.

Roy Whitman inquired about the decrease on the grounds and Lisa explained that the AD/Grounds position would move to Admin so that was part of the decrease. Another custodian is paid from part of the Food service as he cleans the kitchen. She also explained as well that the overall increase growing cost of utilities, fuel etc.

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Supt. Gass indicated that the charging stations were being installed for the electric busses so those should be running next year as well.

Alisha inquired about the benefit is the current Monday schedule for MS/HS? Supt. Gass stated it helped teachers with training and professional development but it was also the worse attendance day. Alisha also inquired about a four-day week and getting rid of in-service days, if that would help overall in staffing costs and operational expenses. Supt. Gass stated that teachers still would get paid the same it would affect more of the classified staff as well some of the operational costs. Supt. Gass stated he would have rather five days a week and have one day of in-service professional development day.

There was no public comment.

Greg Anderson moved to approve the budget as presented and written at \$29,448, 851.00.

Dan Rinke seconded. **VOTE 5 YES – Motion passed.**

Adjourn: 7:28