



**Highgate Elementary School
Special Board of Director's Budget Information Meeting
February 22, 2018**

1.0 CALL TO ORDER: A meeting of the Highgate Elementary School Board of Directors was called to order on Thursday February 22, 2018 at 7:30 pm by Connie Beyor, School Board Chair. Those in attendance included:

- Connie Beyor, Board Chair
- Chris Shepard, Board Secretary
- David Roddy
- Nola Gilbert
- Patrick Hartnett, School Principal
- Chris Palmer, Assistant Principal
- Lora McAllister, Business
- Winton Goodrich, Superintendent
- A Channel 15 representative (taping for public access television)

2.0. AGENDA AMMENDMENTS - None

3.0. BUDGET INFORMATION MEETING:

Nola Gilbert provided an overview of the Highgate School FY19 budget. It was noted that Highgate worked diligently to present a budget that met the needs of Highgate students while keeping the budget in line so as not to burden tax payers.

Before getting to numbers, it was noted that the school continues to focus on using the Marzano framework, and working within a tiered structure of support for students. Professional learning communities are using restorative circles to help improve communication. Lastly, all teachers are being evaluated using Swivl technology. This allows teacher evaluation via a recording device which minimalizes impact in the classroom. Recorded sessions are viewed by the teacher and administrator as part of ongoing evaluation.

There are currently 43.8 professional staff at Highgate Elementary School. This includes teachers, interventionist, and student support people (nurses, guidance counselors, contracted services etc.) There are currently 8 support staff (office staff, custodian, bookkeeper), and there are 32 paraprofessional staff.

Projects completed last FY:

- Two offices were joined and remodeled into one classroom in order to keep the three 4th grade classes together in the same wing.
- The school applied for a grant to address the pooling water in the parking lot, but was not awarded. The fence alongside the white building was repaired. We continue to look into options
- We signed into a net metering deal that will result in savings off the electric bill.

Projects built into this budget:

- A Magnetic door closure system – this would allow classroom doors to stay open to promote air circulation and a more open environment, but to be closed at the push of a button in the event of an emergency
- A remodel of the front desk area that would make the area more open and inviting, but also more secure if needed.
- Roof replacement (coming from capital reserve fund)

The projected Education Spending in FY19 is \$4,511,300, and the equalized pupil spending is \$13,757.

Some budget increases include:

- Negotiated contracts with support staff
- New healthcare plans (increased cost). Cost is broken down to 80/20 (employee/district) with an HRA to help cover deductible. 74% of the deductible is covered by the school. The budget includes 75% of the value of the 74% the school covers.
- Technology line has increased – this is to cover a new Chromebook Lease, and to cover updates to infrastructure.

The proposed Highgate School Budget is \$5,125,240.

It was noted that the school budget does impact the tax rate, as do several other factors outside of the control of the school board. It was noted that revenues impact tax rate, and we have seen an increase in revenues. It was noted that the tax rate is calculated using the property tax yield, and this has not yet been set by legislators.

Town Meeting is on Tuesday March 6th at 10:00 AM.

After hearing the school budget presentation, the following questions were raised:

Parking Lot: A question was raised about whether or not the standing water in the parking lot was due to fill brought in near the rail trail a while back. It was noted that standing water has always been an issue in the parking lot. The state is encouraging the use of rain gardens, which would not be ideal during the cold season, but fine for the warmer seasons. We continue to look into options to address the water issue in the parking lot, and plan to make this a priority.

Equalized Pupil Rate: Is the equalized pupil an actual reflection of the number of students in Highgate? It was noted that the equalized pupil rate is a calculation based on several factors including grade level, level of poverty, special education etc. The equalized pupil number is not a direct reflection of the number of students in Highgate; equalized pupil number is larger than the actual number of students in Highgate.

SUPERVISORY UNION BUDGET

After discussing the district budget, Connie Beyor provided a brief overview of the Supervisory Union Budget. While the SU budget cannot be voted up or down by the public, members of each district are on the SU Board, and any member of the public can attend the SU Board meeting to ask questions or to provide feedback on the SU Budget.

It was noted that there are three parts to the SU Budget: Central Office, Early Childhood, and Special Education.

Highgate's portion of the central office budget is 15% - this based on the number of students at Highgate. There was an unanticipated increase in the central office budget line due to several factors including an increase in health insurance premiums and participation, new auditor, snow removal and sanding of SU parking lot, and local school bookkeeping expense. It was noted that the increase in bookkeeping costs is the actual cost associated with the service provided, and in years past we have been under budgeting for this expense. It was clarified that, while bookkeeping has been moved to central office, the finance committee of the board still has to approve warrants for payment, and only the school board treasurer can sign off on this.

Highgate's portion of the early education budget is 26%. This covers 3 programs at HES (two ten hour programs and one thirty hour program). In addition, this covers a portion of tuition for students that attend early education programs outside of the district.

Highgate's portion of the administrative portion of the special education budget is 13%, and 12% of the share of the psychologist and special educators.

The Highgate Elementary School special Board of Director's Budget Information Meeting adjourned at 9:02 PM.

4.0. ROOF BIDS

The School Board has been actively seeking bids to fix the school's leaking roof. So far two bids have come back, and a third bid has been pending with now follow through. The two bids that have come back are from Black River Builders in Albany, VT and R & A Enterprises out of Montgomery. The Black River Builders bid came in at \$42,190.63 and the scope included replacing the valley and pans. The bid from R & A Enterprises had a larger scope addressing valleys, ridge cap, and wall flashings and came in at \$49,000. A request was made to build a 15% contingency into whichever bid was selected. After discussing each bid presented, the Board decided to accept the bid from R & A Enterprises because they are a local business, and provided several references up front as part of their bid.

Action – motion made to accept R and A Enterprises bid at \$49,000 for the valleys, ridge cap, and wall flashings with a contingency of 15% (\$7,350) built in – grand total of \$56,350 financing through the capital reserve fund. Motion made by David Roddy, second by Nola Gilbert.

Vote: 4:0

5.0. ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Action: A motion to adjourn to executive session was made by Nola Gilbert and seconded by David Roddy. The Board entered executive session at 9:25 PM to answer the Executive Session Compliance Question "Where premature public knowledge would clearly place the Board or other party at a substantial disadvantage"

Vote: 4:0

Recorded by: Rebecca Fenn, School Board Secretary
Submitted in behalf Chris Shepard: School Board Clerk