

Auburn Budget Committee Meeting
November 23, 2021
Auburn Village School
Media Center
Minutes
6:00 PM

Members Present: Peter Miles, Chairman, David Wesche, Vice-Chairman, Dan Carpenter, Paula Marzloff, Joanne Linxweiler, School Board Representative Janice Baker and Selectman Representative Keith Leclair

Others Present: Superintendent of Schools William J. Rearick, Assistant Superintendent Marge Polak, Business Administrator Amy Ransom, Principal Lori Collins, Director of Student Services Deena Jensen, School Board Chair Alan Villeneuve, Adrian Newton, and Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary

Chairman Miles called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Budget Presentation:

Superintendent Rearick and Business Administrator Amy Ransom presented the proposed FY 2022/2023 Auburn Village School budget.

Superintendent Rearick described some of the drivers of the proposed budget including COVID-19, transportation of students, difficulty finding substitutes and paraprofessionals and the need to fill learning gaps.

Principal Collins detailed some of the needs for additional furniture, online registration software, the new reading program, as well as math and science programs

Superintendent Rearick noted there would be one student graduating out of SPED services, no longer needed, resulting in a net reduction of \$17,370.

Principal Collins noted three teachers would be retiring and the plan to hire a half position world language teacher. She noted the three second grades would transition to three third grade classrooms next year and the four first grade classrooms would become three second grade classrooms. She expects full day Kindergarten enrollment, which is up, will be a draw for the Town of Auburn and Superintendent Rearick noted he believes that enrollment will remain stable.

Superintendent Rearick indicated enrollment was at 628 students as of October 1st with 606 students enrolled last year. As of today's date enrollment is projected to be 634 students. High school enrollment is expected to decrease by 2% (six to nine students). There are 242 high school students this year and next year it is projected to be 233 students. Mr. Villeneuve noted they are seeing more alternate education students with Charter and Montessori schools.

Mr. Leclair asked about the ½ FTE foreign language position. Mr. Villeneuve explained the plan to offer language to the sixth graders which will benefit the availability for the seventh and eighth graders to be offered French or Spanish. It will fulfill the requirement for 7th and 8th grade instruction and as a bonus benefit the sixth grade. Principal Collins noted the cost is estimated to be \$28,000 seen across multiple lines. Without the addition of the ½ FTE language teacher the classes would have to be offered to the 7th and 8th grade students by a lottery system next year. The current language teacher is certified for French, but not for Spanish although doing an excellent job teaching six classes, four in 7th and two in 8th. Mrs. Baker noted this requirement, the state policy for certification, is something they have been discussing with the Department of Education.

Mr. Leclair asked how many students are taking language. Principal Collins noted there are three sections of Spanish and one of French this year in 7th Grade. It is estimated there will be 22 sixth graders for Spanish next year. There are 56 eighth graders and 16 not electing language who are going to SPED reading support or opting out to teacher study.

Mr. Wesche asked the number of students left behind if the position were not added and Principal Collins noted there are 73 sixth graders of which 63 students will want to enroll. Three sections of 21 kids would be needed for Spanish and 42 of them would have to take French or not enroll in language. Mr. Leclair noted it is really not leaving any student behind just giving them less of a choice. Principal Collins noted enrollment is currently a two-year commitment. Mr. Villeneuve noted with three sections, 63 students combined 7th/8th Spanish could not be offered in 7th Grade next year as the teacher could only teach six classes maximum. Mrs. Linxweiler opined it was beneficial not to have the lottery system she experienced in the early days of Pinkerton Academy pitting parents and students.

Mr. Leclair asked how easy it would be to hire a half time position and if they expected that position would become full-time in a year or so. Mr. Villeneuve agreed it has been difficult with Covid and bus drivers. Mr. Leclair asked about the health insurance offering for paraprofessionals and whether an increase in salary would be preferred to benefits some may already have through a spouse or partner. Deena Jensen noted interviewing six to eight people were lost because the position had no benefits. All positions are 32.5 hours. All districts are having trouble finding staff. Hourly wage starts at \$12 and is competitive. Surrounding towns are offering the benefit. Mr. Villeneuve agreed local people are looking for the benefit over the salary. Superintendent Rearick noted three bus drivers left for less money to have health insurance. They were paid between \$18 and \$20 per hour. Mrs. Linxweiler asked if there were a buyout if insurance wasn't wanted and he noted there was not.

The Committee reviewed Line 1100 Regular Education.

Mrs. Linxweiler motioned to approve \$4,765,653.32 for Line 1100. Mrs. Marzloff seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 1105 Regular Education High School Tuition which included a \$14,238 reduction in SPED. The line is \$3,381,930.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve \$3,381,930 for Line 1105. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 1200 SPED with the reduction of \$31,609. The line is \$2,482,299.81.

Mr. Leclair questioned whether the 2% increase for administrative staff was sufficient considering they have gone above and beyond. Mr. Villeneuve noted that could be addressed at the end of the year in May through the fund. Everyone in the building got a bonus last year.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 1200 in the amount of \$2,482,299.81 for SPED. Mrs. Linxweiler seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 1230 Extended School Year (ESY)

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve Line 1230 for \$55,527.38. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 1260 ELL.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 1260 for \$13,838.74. Mrs. Linxweiler seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 1270 Advanced Learner Tuition Public proposed for \$19,364.28. Principal Collins noted the 3.8% increase is an estimate as they have not been given the final numbers. The line was cut last year due to remote learning. Mr. Leclair asked if there would likely be 10 students this year and Principal Collins noted there may be closer to five.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve \$12,000 for Line 1270. Mrs. Marzloff seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 1410 Cocurricular. Mr. Leclair questioned the stipend for sports and Principal Collins noted there were two NFHS advisors splitting the additional stipend for volleyball.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve Line 1410 for \$26,831.29. Mrs. Linxweiler seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 1420 Athletics. Mr. Leclair asked if the softball and baseball fields would be ready for the spring and if the gator was purchased and line painting was budgeted. Mr. Villeneuve noted the fields will be ready, the gator has been ordered. Mrs. Baker noted the final walk through is scheduled for the baseball field. Drainage and fencing have been fixed. There is no discussion to install dugouts.

Mrs. Linxweiler motioned to approve Line 1420 for \$39,003.88. Mrs. Marzloff seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 1430 Summer School.

Mrs. Marzloff motioned to approve Line 1420 for \$9,850.25. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 2120 Guidance. Mr. Leclair asked if there would be two full-time guidance counselors, and the answer provided was yes.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 2120 for \$200,896.14. Mrs. Linxweiler seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 2130 Nurse.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 2130 for \$118,286.37. Mrs. Marzloff seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 2140 Psych.

Mrs. Marzloff motioned to approve \$69,664.27. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 2150 Speech Services. Mrs. Marzloff asked the number of staff and Mrs. Jensen noted there were two full-time speech pathologists, and they are required to pay for out of district, charter or pre-school.

Mr. Carpenter motioned to approve Line 2150 for \$238,651.87. Mrs. Linxweiler seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 2160 Therapy Services proposed at \$154,101.26.

Mrs. Linxweiler motioned to approve Line 2160 for \$154,101.26. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 2190 Other Support Services. Principal Collins detailed the addition of the second Assistant Principal position and how that addition is helping to support middle school discipline issues, learning gaps and strategies and allows the principal to focus more on curriculum and Covid contact tracing issues.

Mrs. Linxweiler motioned to approve Line 2190 for \$1,800. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 2210 Staff Development.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve the line as presented at \$6,665.84. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 2220 Media.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve Line 2220 for \$176,808.80. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 2310 School Board Services.

Mrs. Marzloff motioned to approve Line 2310 for \$46,885.58. Mrs. Linxweiler seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 2320 SAU Services.

SAU Services which has an eight percent increase due to election changes in health insurance. The Joint Board approve the \$20,000 fund for bonuses at the end of the year. The Joint Board proposed a 4% increase for support staff (with Administration at 2%).

Mrs. Linxweiler motioned to approve Line 2320 for \$382,812. Mrs. Marzloff seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 2410 Principal Services.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve Line 2410 for \$609,829.69. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 2600 Maintenance. Mr. Leclair asked if the \$191,000 in improvements were in the CIP and Superintendent Rearick noted they were. Mr. Leclair asked if all three were scheduled for this year. Principal Collins noted the goal was to have the same area done, the windows and baseboard heating which is why they elected to move them up together.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 2600 for \$872,605.29. Mrs. Linxweiler seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 2700 Transportation. Mrs. Baker noted the bus contract ends in 2023 and will go out to bid in spring or summer for the 2023/2024 budget. Mrs. Baker noted the Board would like to see more balance in the contract and noted difficulties obtaining drivers for after school sports activities, cross country, baseball and basketball games.

Mr. Carpenter asked why half of the buses couldn't be removed as a lot of them are empty. Mrs. Baker noted there is an imbalance in routes, some buses are packed, and others are not and there would be difficulty getting students to school on time.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 2700 for \$845,858.64. Mrs. Linxweiler seconded the motion. A vote was taken, Mr. Carpenter voted nay, Mr. Miles voted aye, Mrs. Marzloff voted aye, Mr. Wesche voted aye, Mrs. Linxweiler voted aye, Mrs. Baker voted aye and Mr. Leclair voted aye. The motion passed 6-1-0.

The Committee reviewed Line 2840 Information Technology. Superintendent Rearick detailed the spam and phishing protections, and Principal Collins detailed the teacher supervision with computer use in class and Chromebook alerts.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve Line 2840 for \$224,333.81. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 5110 Principal of Debt.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve Line 5110 Principal of Debt for \$705,000. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed Line 5120 Debt Interest.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve Line 5120 Debt Interest for \$469,085. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Business Administrator Ransom noted the new bottom line was \$16,385,584 after reductions.

Superintendent Rearick and School Board Chair Villeneuve thanked the Committee. Mrs. Baker reviewed drivers and goals for the next budget cycle.

Next Meeting: Thursday, December 2, 2021 at 7:00 PM

Adjourn

Mrs. Marzloff moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:53 PM, seconded by Mr. Wesche. A vote was taken; all were in agreement, the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Hoijer,
Recording Secretary