

Finance Committee Meeting: June 16, 2015

Present: Mark Fleischhauer, Diane Lyons, Joe Phelan, Tom Burnell, Deirdre Burns

1. 2014-2015 Budget Review

While some of the numbers are still estimates the committee went through some of the highs and lows for the year. The district spent about 99% of its budget. In years past it was about 96%. It was noted that last year's finance committee recommended a tighter budget. Tom feels that based on the number of unexpected expenses that come up spending to 99% is to close for comfort and he would like to be closer to 97%. Some areas that we spent much more than expected were special education, supplies, the wireless project, technology, substitutes (long term) and transportation (there was a discrepancy in the contract language about the gap time).

On the savings' side, we did well with fuel oil costs. On the revenue side we had no tuition students as expected but overall we collected slightly more revenue than predicted.

2. Transportation Bid Update

The pre bid meeting will be next Tuesday and bids are due June 30. The board should see this either July 14 or 28th depending on BOCES. Tom also went through a meeting he had with Larry Fiber a transportation consultant who will be optimizing our bus runs. It looks like we may be able to reduce several runs.

3. Cafeteria Pricing

Larry Anthony joined us to discuss a possible price increase for next year. The district has not increased prices in the past three years. The committee looked at prices from 10 local districts. Rhinebeck currently charges the most for lunch. Milk and breakfast prices vary. Switching to biodegradable products will increase cost to the program. Larry is still looking into the possibility of using milk from Hudson Valley Fresh with a grant that is available. If we continued with the product after the first year there would be a substantial increase in milk price. Since there are so many exciting changes going on in the cafeteria it was felt that a price increase should wait to see if the changes grow the program. The committee was agreeable to an increase in the breakfast price at the HS and middle school. Currently the breakfast price just breaks even with cost. Larry also discussed an issue that has come up as he considers using a company called Farm to Table. This Company works with 22 local farms and uses a courier to bring whatever products are order directly from the farm to the school. The problem is payment; it must be made in a matter of days. This is impossible given the current process schools must use to make payments to venders. Tom will look into the possibility of getting a credit card for the district. Increasing participation is still the key and promotion, especially at CLS. Larry plans to continue the newsletter and is always happy to speak to district parents. The Committee thanked Larry for his hard work and a successful first year.

4. School District Income Verification (SDIV) Process

Tom will be filing a form that allows him to go through residents that list Rhinebeck as their school district on their income tax form. He will do this to verify that they are actually residents of our district. Sometimes this is not the case. Having residents list Rhinebeck when they are not in fact residents adds to the districts wealth ratio and can negatively affect our tax cap.

5. Budget Transfers

Tom will have them for the Board most likely for Tuesday but they were not ready for the committee to review. The committee asked Tom to give detailed descriptions for the board packet as this is new to some members.

Respectfully submitted by Diane Lyons