

FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES
March 31, 2016

Attendance: Deirdre Burns, Deirdre d'Albertis, Mark Fleischhauer, Joe Phelan, Tom Burnell

School Lunch Update:

The committee received an update from Tom on the school lunch program. The program is currently running at a deficit of approx. \$15,500.00, which is the same as last year at this time. It was noted that the deficit is far lower than previous years.

Free and reduced lunch participants are approaching 20% of the student population. The major reason for this is that SNAP and Medicaid recipients can be automatically enrolled in the free/reduced lunch program, though those families may opt out of the free/reduced program if they wish. The school district actually can receive more reimbursement on a meal purchased through the free/reduced program. Tom reported that for the 2016-17 school year, free/reduced forms will be provided in both English and Spanish. Hopefully, any Spanish speaking families who are eligible for, but not enrolled in the program will then complete the paperwork to be enrolled.

More students are purchasing breakfast. Approximately 1,500 breakfasts are purchased per month.

The district will need to consider an increase in the price of meals for 2016-17. The Committee has asked to have Larry Anthony join us at an upcoming meeting to discuss a potential price increase as well as strategies for increasing lunch participation as well as increasing ala carte sales.

Transportation bid update:

Transportation bids were opened on March 30 (one day prior to the Finance Committee meeting). While bids are higher than anticipated, it appears the transportation cost will be within the amount set aside for transportation in the 2016-17 budget. More details will be provided in Executive Session.

2016-2017 Budget Update:

Tom reviewed items from the previously provided cut list that can now be considered definite items to be removed from the proposed budget. These items total \$158,000.00 in cuts. These cuts, combined with the anticipated elimination of the GEA in the State budget, will still leave us with a budget gap of approximately \$452,000.00. There are still a few "moving parts" which will cause the gap to close a bit, but nevertheless, there will still be a gap.

The committee discussed various options for "piercing the tax cap". It was noted that a tax levy of increase of 3% or just slightly below 3% would wipe out the gap as it currently stands. A 3% increase would be lower than the increases for the past several years.

Next meeting: April 21

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Fleischhauer