

4.3.2

Long Range Planning Committee

Minutes March 27th 2018

Present: Joe Phelan, Tom Burnell, Laura Schulkind, Deirdre d'Albertis, Diane Lyons

Tom helped the committee understand some questions that have come up regarding the budget. The board has been asked why other school districts spending are relatively low in comparison to Rhinebeck's in certain areas. In NY State schools are not required to use the same account codes or put all items in the same category, this in short is why you see differences. We looked specifically at attendance. We spend approximately \$107,000 while other districts show no spending or very little about \$32,000. Tom explained what is included in our attendance code. We have three staff members for each building some spend about 20% of their time on attendance. We also have a small supply budget. The cost for school tool is also included. School tool is a student information system that is used for attendance, but also for grades and state test scores. This is an item that could be put in several other budget codes. If we left the staff fully in their primary roles and put school tool in administration or guidance, this would show Rhinebeck also having very little in the attendance code. It is actually extremely difficult to compare spending with other districts without knowing how each district codes items.

It is important to note when budgeting for schools that there must be some over estimating for expenses that you cannot control, money that is not used goes into the districts fund balance.

As we looked at the curriculum budget there is summer work that our teachers do that is included under curriculum but there is also summer study money that is in a different part of the budget as it is part of the teacher's contract.

We started a conversation on teacher substitutes; we looked at 8 years of actual expenses and the current year's budget. The number is high and changes dramatically some years. The range is from \$122,505 - \$437,516 this includes both long term and short term substitutes. It is currently our practice to hire certified substitutes. a school can hire non certified substitutes but the amount is limited. There is a substitute shortage in NY and currently when there is no substitute the district pays teachers to cover classes during their free periods. Other districts have hired a full time substitute at a slightly higher wage, it is unclear if this would save us money or actually cost more. More time is needed to study this issue to see if we could cut costs.

The committee was updated on a new requirement that Marvin must do for the state. The district must report the free and reduce status on all residents that attend other schools. This information can affect our federal reimbursement. The challenge is gaining the information from schools that currently do not track it. The bottom line is that this is a time consuming task and it's unsure if it will benefit the district.

Diane Lyons