

May 4, 2020

A meeting of the Westfield School Committee was held on Monday, May 4, 2020 at 7:00 pm remotely (due to COVID-19 crisis). Members present by roll call were: Ramon Diaz, Diane Mayhew, Bo Sullivan, Cindy Sullivan, Heather Sullivan, Tim O'Connor and Chairman Humason.

At 7:00 pm Chairman Humason called the meeting to order.

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. School Committee Policy File: BDDH Public Participation at School Committee meetings
3. Public participation, excluding personnel: (submitted via email)

Cindy Sullivan read the following emails that were submitted for public participation:

1. Jeffrey Gosselin, Elm Street, Westfield MA

I am still thinking about what happened with the FY2020 budget. I know from experience with wages and health insurance costs you cannot have a zero-based flat level budget. Looking at this year's proposal, I believe it is time for a renewed sense of priorities. Have you the (School Committee) ever thought about creating some of your own scenarios and goals you would like to reach? Each member needs to write a list of what is important to you.

Here are some on my list of ideas:

- a. The maintenance department consolidation seems good in theory, but too many unanswered legal questions. The shift of staff and resources can actually cost more in time and labor. Maintenance workers are the backbone of our schools and we need them in our schools.
- b. Look at other areas of consolidation, such as central office. Keep an open mind. Don't be trapped in ideology and have the will power to look at opportunities.
- c. Get the school department central office out of its present location. If you wish to save every penny, think about the high rental expenses. Seek out other buildings that could be more practical during these devastating economic times.
- d. Include each school parking lot and landscape upgrades as a separate line item on the FY2021 budget.
- e. Don't be afraid to re-organize work roles and positions.
- f. Please tape/audio the Finance Subcommittee. Also, I would like an update on the Unit A/teachers retirement incentive option and how this is working out in the overall school budget planning.

I thank you for your time and I look forward to future discussions about the budget and our Westfield Schools.

2. Laura Marxx, Westfield

Working from home full-time (which I am lucky to be able to do) and helping two kids navigate the transition to online learning doesn't leave much time to watch videos of city meetings. But I've powered through the recent ones, and am submitting the following comments about next year's school budget as public comments to be read at the City Council meeting regarding the school budget.

Every year, the Superintendent and department heads create a budget that holds increases to a nearly impossibly low amount. Every year, they justify every line and every dollar. Every year, they face fixed personnel and quickly-increasing special education costs that result in their submitted budget not being enough to cover those costs. And every year, at the very last minute, when they think no one is watching, a small group of City Councilors pushes for another million here or two million there in line item cuts.

This year, when those same Councilors are praising the school for donating their cleaning supplies and medical supplies to local first responders and hospitals, when the schools are working with the Boys and Girls Club to make sure every child in need has food to eat, and when families across Westfield are able to access their children's teachers and materials using the school's Chrome books, I am asking for a different pattern. The school budget is not inflated, especially not in a year when we can anticipate that students will return hungrier, lower-income, and with greater mental health and special education needs than before. The Superintendent and his team have already thought through how to put the small cost savings from this year into next year to even further lower the amount of money they are asking for. Please pass the budget as is and help the school be in a position to get parents back to work and students back to school as soon as it is safe to do so.

3. Melissa Rutkowski, Miller Street, Westfield

I would like to address the school budget and how essential services have been being provided for my children during this time of crisis. My daughter's teachers at the Westfield Intermediate School have been meeting with my daughter and her classmates on a regular basis -- answering questions and responding to individual needs. Her team even set up a weekly call for parents to keep parents informed and answer questions. Crisis can bring out the best or the worst in people. Over the past weeks, it has brought out the best in my daughter's teachers. They are working hard to provide a quality education using a remote format. Please continue to support our schools.

4. Catherine York, Westfield

A meeting that was supposed to be held tonight to discuss the school budget has been postponed. The school budget is, as usual, roughly a flat budget -- just a 2% increase which we know from past years is usually well below the increase in special education and personnel costs. There are other new costs probably not in the budget, too, like buying more cleaning supplies, extra janitorial time, masks and gloves, substitute teachers when regular staff are on sick or medical leave, and the additional needs of students who have fallen behind after losing so many months of school time - my son being one of them.

My child attends White Oak and though they have been wonderful thru this adjustment to online learning there are some services and needs they simply cannot meet. One of those services, Occupational Therapy cannot be given virtually because Westfield does not yet have a secure

system in place thru a third party to meet that need and while my child does receive speech therapy virtually it is not the same as in person sessions. Even if social restrictions were lifted, I would not be able to take my child to an outpatient facility due to the fact I am one of many who has lost their job and insurance does cover the costs associated with those therapies.

Regression is a reality many parents of special education students will have to face next year and while I am sensitive to the situation at hand a 2% increase has not covered the need in the past and will not it in the future. Now is not the time to decrease staff or services, our students already face an uncertain future in so many ways please do not sacrifice their needs in the name of a budget. Children are not numbers or a percentage or the scores on test or even their IEP they truly are our future and they need us more than ever to support them in every way possible. Let us send a supportive, encouraging united message to all children, teachers and families and increase the budget, increase the staff and increase the services.

I am so proud and encouraged by how the Superintendent and supporting staff have stepped up for our children let us keep stepping up for them.

4. Review of the 2020-2021 Budget Proposal

Superintendent Czaporowski and Ron Rix reviewed the budget proposal.

5. Approval of School Committee meeting minutes

a. Special meeting minutes, March 16, 2020

Diane Mayhew moved, Cindy Sullivan seconded to approve the March 16, 2020 special School Committee meeting minutes. All were in favor. Motion passes.

b. Regular meeting minutes, March 16, 2020

Diane Mayhew moved, Bo Sullivan seconded to approve the March 16, 2020 regular School Committee meeting minutes. All were in favor. Motion passes.

b. Regular meeting minutes, April 6, 2020

Diane Mayhew moved, Heather Sullivan seconded to approve the April 6, 2020 regular School Committee meeting minutes. All were in favor. Motion passes.

6. Rescind vote: Maintenance consolidation plan with the city and school department

Diane Mayhew moved, Ray Diaz seconded to rescind the vote regarding the Maintenance Consolidation Plan with the City and School Department.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>	
Bo Sullivan	X		
Cindy Sullivan	X		
Heather Sullivan	X		
Ramon Diaz	X		
Diane Mayhew	X		
Tim O'Connor	X		
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>		
	7	-	<u>0</u> motion passes

7. Adjust the early retirement incentive option with the Westfield Education Association Unit A/teachers

Cindy Sullivan moved, Heather Sullivan seconded to adjust the early retirement incentive option with the Westfield Education Association Unit A/teachers, as presented.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>		<u>N</u>	
Cindy Sullivan	X			
Heather Sullivan	X			
Ramon Diaz	X			
Diane Mayhew	X			
Bo Sullivan	X			
Tim O'Connor	X			
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>			
	7	-	0	motion passes

8. Report of the signed weekly warrants

Bo Sullivan reported the following warrants were signed:

April 10, 2020 – 12 batches totaling \$296,544.62

April 17, 2020 – 5 batches totaling \$193,544.62

9. Acceptance of the Special Revenue Accounts, April 2020

Cindy Sullivan moved, Bo Sullivan seconded to accept the Special Revenue Accounts, April 2020, as presented.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>		<u>N</u>	
Heather Sullivan	X			
Ramon Diaz	X			
Diane Mayhew	X			
Bo Sullivan	X			
Cindy Sullivan	X			
Tim O'Connor	X			
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>			
	7	-	0	motion passes

10. Acceptance of the Westfield Public Schools Financial Statements, April 2020

Ramon Diaz moved, Diane Mayhew seconded to accept the Westfield Public Schools Financial Statements, April 2020, as presented.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>		<u>N</u>	
Ramon Diaz	X			
Diane Mayhew	X			
Bo Sullivan	X			
Cindy Sullivan	X			

Heather Sullivan	X		
Tim O'Connor	X		
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>		
	7	-	<u>0</u> motion passes

11. Budget Transfers

Bo Sullivan moved, Heather Sullivan seconded to approve the following budget transfer:

Amount	From Account	Into Account
\$70,000	50029236/5114000 Prof Development Substitutes	50081510/519900 Severance

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>		<u>N</u>
Diane Mayhew	X		
Bo Sullivan	X		
Cindy Sullivan	X		
Heather Sullivan	X		
Ramon Diaz	X		
Tim O'Connor	X		
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>		
	7	-	<u>0</u> motion passes

Bo Sullivan moved, Heather Sullivan seconded to approve the following budget transfer:

Amount	From Account	Into Account
\$80,000	50029237/510000 Prof Development Payroll	50081510/519900 Severance

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>		<u>N</u>
Bo Sullivan	X		
Cindy Sullivan	X		
Heather Sullivan	X		
Ramon Diaz	X		
Diane Mayhew	X		
Tim O'Connor	X		
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>		
	7	-	<u>0</u> motion passes

12. Superintendent's Reports

a. Acceptance of gifts/donations

Tim O'Connor moved, Heather Sullivan seconded to accept the following gifts/donations:

-Westfield Public Schools, Westfield Emergency Management Agency, \$1,500.00,
Volunteers in Public Schools gift account

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>		<u>N</u>
Cindy Sullivan	X		

Heather Sullivan	X		
Ramon Diaz	X		
Diane Mayhew	X		
Bo Sullivan	X		
Tim O'Connor	X		
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>		
	7	-	<u>0</u> motion passes

b. Acceptance of grant

Tim O'Connor moved, Heather Sullivan seconded to accept a grant from Project Bread to support the labor costs associated with food service staff providing meals to students during COVID-19 pandemic in the amount of \$5,000.

The following roll call vote was taken:

	<u>Y</u>		<u>N</u>
Heather Sullivan	X		
Ramon Diaz	X		
Diane Mayhew	X		
Bo Sullivan	X		
Cindy Sullivan	X		
Tim O'Connor	X		
Chairman Humason	<u>X</u>		
	7	-	<u>0</u> motion passes

c. Other

Superintendent Czaporowski provided an update.

13. Mayor's update

Mayor Humason provided an update.

14. School Committee update

Diane Mayhew provided an update regarding the Superintendent's Evaluation.

15. Items for referral to subcommittees

16. Old business

17. Subcommittee Reports/Recommendations

a. Reports: none

b. Minutes: none

18. Any other items not reasonably anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting

19. Next regular School Committee meeting: May 4, 2020

At 9:09 pm Cindy Sullivan moved, Ramon Diaz seconded to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. Motion passes.

Mr. Stefan Czaporowski, Superintendent of Schools
Clerk – Westfield School Committee

A true copy, Attest:

Cindy Sullivan, Secretary
Westfield School Committee

CS/cm