

OUUSD INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Via Zoom

April 5, 2021

Present:

Board Members: Angela Colbeth, Danielle Corti, Timm Judas, Chelsey Perry

Administration: Emilie Knisley, Bruce Williams, Marla Ianello, Jean Williams, Brian Emerson, Morgan Moore

Others: Claude Phipps, Julie Bingle, Rick and Emmy Hausman, Marvin Harrison, and other members of the public

- I. The meeting was called to order at 6:07 PM by Danielle Corti, Chair
- II. The format of the meeting was reviewed.
- III. Financial Information—Emilie Knisley
 - A. SU assessments for all of the districts are down.
 1. They are down more than simply from the moving expenses. They are down a staff member, and they have applied a surplus.
 - B. OUUSD budget shows an increase in equalized pupil spending of 1.71%. Bradford tax rate up 0.47%, and Newbury's is down 0.47%. Proposed Budget of 17,171,968. Estimated education spending of \$12,378,025. Equalized pupil counts are up, so we will get more money from the State. Estimated education spending per equalized pupil of \$18,044. Property yield: up to \$11,385. This can fluctuate until the legislative session closes. Base tax rate \$1.58. Bradford: tax rate: \$1.6554. Newbury tax rate: \$1.5798.
- IV. Principals' Presentation
 - A. Newbury: Morgan Moore: NES successfully implemented Teachers College Reading and Phonics programs this year. They also implemented the Illustrative Math Program with OUUSD. They participated in the All Learners Network, which is professional development training. They have added music lessons, had a winter ski program, and have purchased specialized bikes. Forest & Outdoor Programming: They hope to identify some outdoor spaces. They have received a grant to fund outdoor learning supplies. They are hoping to grow vertical and District PLC's. They are looking forward to continuing work with Restorative Practices. Budget decreases include grant funded consultants and reduction in custodial staff. Increases include an addition of .3 music teacher, Professional Development for paras and teachers, and facilities costs.
 - B. Bradford: Marla Ianello: BES collaborated with Newbury through the Digital Schoolhouse. They were able to give students, who were working remotely, access to live instruction from a licensed teacher all day, every day. Outdoor Education and Low Forest is enjoyed by most grade levels, spending the entire day outdoors. This gives them a chance to engage in their learning in a way that does not involve being on their computer. In Math they are using Illustrative Math. Library services have been updated with many new titles. 4th and 6th grade students have started a letter writing program as pen pals to some of our local elders. This is good for our sense of connection. They are

looking forward to coordination of English Language Arts with framework development. Library Hours are expanding to 4 days/week. They are going to focus on continued community connections through outdoor education, letter writing, local library programs, etc. Budget: Decreases include facilities, OESU assessment, and PreK tuition. Increases are from health insurance, benefits, technology, and salaries.

C. Oxbow: Jean Wheeler: Projected student numbers will increase by 30 for next year. They continue to focus on the goal of getting as many students back in school for as many days as possible, while staying safe. Drama has continued, even under pandemic conditions. 51 students participated in basketball this season. The Student Council has changed dress code language to be more respectful to individual differences. 43 students are scheduled to graduate this year. For the future: building on a program to help re-engage students. Increase more learning opportunities that allows flexibility. Exploring STEM and career academy models. Will introduce project-based learning in June Term 2022. Budget: Increases include salaries and benefits, special education, tuition increases at River Bend, 2 new teaching positions. Decreases include: OESU Assessment, shift in staffing, shifts in guidance department.

D. River Bend: Brian Emerson: Sugaring season is still continuing. In the recent ProStart Competition for culinary students, RBCTC came in second place in the state.

Recruitment: Because of COVID they couldn't have in-person visits. However, as of today, they are on pace for an average year. Planned for future: Building statewide CTE Proficiencies. Continued community connections: through work-based learning, building dugouts for Bradford Little League field, etc. Upcoming Adult Education Courses: heavy equipment and CDL courses his summer. Budget: actual increase is about \$66,000. Savings include: heavy equipment repairs, technology upgrades, and OESU lowering assessment. Increases include: health insurance, salaries and benefits, student college tuitions, culinary supplies, tech camp, deficit from previous year.

V. Danielle Corti thanked the building administrators for their presentation.

VI. Public Comment:

A. Claude Phipps asked about maintenance budgets for various facilities.

1. Marla Ianello: BES: 5 yr. maintenance plan. Replacing windows slowly. Switching over gradually to energy efficient light bulbs.

2. Jean Wheeler: Patching the pavement in the driveway at Oxbow. Changing out the internal transformers. Finishing the storage and locker room project. Considering trading in the plow truck.

3. Brian Emerson (RBCTC): Jean Wheeler and Brian Emerson have a partnership in what is shared between Oxbow and RBCTC. RBCTC has just gone through a Civil Rights Review, but have not received the report yet. He stressed the importance that the building is nearly 50 years old.

a. J. Wheeler expressed thanks to the custodial staff. Some COVID outbreaks in the community have not gotten into the school.

4. Morgan Moore (NES): a few windows and doors need replacing. Correct drainage from the Common into the basement.

B. Bruce Williams: We are having an energy audit, and hope to make some thoughtful improvements to our buildings in the years ahead. This is helpful information so we can

plan the most strategic efforts. May be receiving some COVID funds to help with building costs. Half the cost of E-911 upgrades or replacements were funded by state money.

C. Danielle Corti: considering forming a Facilities Committee, not just for OUUSD, but for OESU level as well.

D. T. Judas: asked C. Phipps and B. Williams what their understanding is as to what will happen next regarding high-speed internet service. C. Phipps: EC Fiber is working on getting broadband to families for both Newbury and Bradford. They are hoping to utilize as much COVID money as possible, but it's hard to meet their deadlines. They are working hard to make it happen, but it's not immediate.

1. D. Corti: noted Future Items list for future agendas. She will add this topic to be dealt with on a future agenda. C. Phipps: urged everyone to go onto the EC Fiber website and sign up. This will get the focus on our towns.

VII. Danielle Corti: Update on OUUSD Budget Numbers. Year to year comparison since 2019-2020

A. Special Education PreK – 12. Costs are going down.

B. Transportation costs are pretty stable.

C. Food Services: have had Federal Food for Children program. This will continue through this summer.

D. Federal Medicaid moneys

E. Increases in salaries and benefits, new hires or increased time.

F. Professional Development is a contracted service

G. Facilities

H. Debt services

VIII. Proposed Budget Figures

A. Proposed budget increase: 2.33%

B. Amount of increase: \$391,785

C. Annual Tax payment for a \$200,000 house:

1. Bradford tax increase: \$15.40.

2. Newbury tax decrease: \$15.00.

D. OUUSD is responsible for 47% of the OESU budget

E. Julie Bingle: asked for clarification on decreases and increases in Special Education.

1. Emilie Knisley: spoke about how costs can shift. Out of district placements are sometimes needed.

IX. CARES AND ESSER FUNDING:

A. There are two pots of money through the Federal Government. CARES is from Corona relief fund to cover expenditures incurred by the SU last spring to comply with CDC guidelines. \$523,137.88.

B. ESSER \$614,732,14. Spent for personal protection equipment, devices and needs, furniture needed for social distancing, instructional materials, replacement costs, Zoom and eSign subscriptions, air quality study. We need to keep these funds separate from the local budget

B. This money is very specific to help cover cost of Coronavirus guidelines and expenses.

C. Recovery Planning. The Agency of Education is requiring a Recovery Plan for the upcoming school year. Three areas will be addressed: Academic Proficiency, Engagement, and Social Emotional Well Being

D. The Team is working on developing a framework for the recovery. The SU Team has begun working on the Needs Assessment as part of Phase 2 of the Agency's plan. OESU will receive approximately \$2.7 million in funding towards this plan.

X. D. Corti thanked everyone for being here and the principals for their presentation.

XI. Public Comment

A. Claude Phipps: Was interested in the multi-year comparison of costs '19-'20 and '20-'21. Danielle thanked the budget and finance committee for their work and input. We have had a one-year bubble. C. Phipps: thought this was one of the best programs he has seen at informational meetings.

XII. Motion by Timm Judas, seconded by Chelsey Perry to adjourn the Informational Meeting at 7:40. Motion voted on and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:

Nancy Perkins, Minutes Clerk

The minutes are in draft format and are unofficial until formally approved by the Board at a subsequent meeting.