

Nantucket School Committee
Public Hearing Meeting Minutes
January 14, 2020

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2 Present Members: Vice Chairman Timothy Lepore, Zona Butler, Pauline Proch & Steve Sortevik
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4 The Public Hearing was called to order at 6:00 PM, by Tim Lepore, Vice Chair, in the Nantucket High School LGI. He
5 asked that the Committee move from Open Session to the Public Hearing. Zona Butler made a motion to approve the
6 agenda, seconded by Pauline Proch, it was approved unanimously. Dr. Lepore welcomed everyone to the Nantucket
7 School Committee Public Hearing on the FY21 Budget.
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9 **Superintendent, W. Michael Cozort – Nantucket Public Schools FY’21 Budget Development Presentation**

10 Superintendent Cozort offered a Power Point and began with the enrollment summary and reinforced this is what always
11 drives our budget numbers. He reminded that the data is from October, which is the official date information is submitted
12 to the Department of Education. He discussed the projected numbers and explained that it is not as simple as rolling
13 forward grade counts, because there are certain grades that historically have a bump in enrollment with new students
14 coming into first grade, third grade and in ninth grade (as students move from NES to NIS or as private school students
15 come back into the district). He pointed out the growth of over 400 students in a span of ten years with a projection of
16 at least 40+ more as an estimate. He reviewed the slide depicting the growth of population over a 20-year period, and
17 while this year we are down by three students, we still hover at the highest threshold, 1683 students, as ever before. The
18 20-year chart portrays the demographics within the community and clearly defines the demographic changes and the
19 growth of our ELL and Special Needs populations. Specifically, he pointed out the drastic increase in numbers for the
20 ELL population from 2005-2020 and even though there is a slight dip this year, the future numbers are hard to predict.
21 It is necessary to take into consideration the FLEP students, the political landscape and the economy that impacts families
22 coming or going to and from Nantucket. He also noted the rise in Special Ed students where it is a challenge to keep up
23 with the trends and the out of district needs in matching with the increase of students’ needs.
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25 In Fiscal Year 2021 our total budget is \$30,136,642, an increase of \$1,500,000 plus the one-time expense of \$160,000
26 for Technology. The 2021 Budget total shows a projected increase of \$1,660,000 which represents the projected budget
27 that moves forward, and a total projected increase of \$31,796,642. Within this number, \$5,311,006 (17%) of this increase
28 is expenses while 26,485,636 (83%) is contractual agreements for payroll. Mr. Cozort reviewed slides to support the
29 projections, depicting per pupil expenditure over the last ten years (\$21,306 to \$22,568) from last year to this year) and
30 the state average increasing in comparable fashion (\$13,006 to \$16,465) over that time. These numbers are determined
31 by a state formula and our dollars represent running a school district on an island and which includes Vocational, Special
32 Education, Athletic programs and Salaries, all being significantly at higher costs. The Chapter 70 funds comparison also
33 shows what we have received in the past ten years and while it remains fairly steady (with a moderate increase each
34 year) in the last three years, it now displays an increase from last year \$3,550,359 to this year \$3,600,249. These funds
35 are based on a complex formula designed by DESE and calculated to ensure that every district has sufficient resources
36 to meet its foundation budget spending level, through an equitable combination of local property taxes and state aid.
37 Superintendent Cozort reminded that we will have preliminary numbers in the next few weeks. He added this number
38 helps the Town factor the Appropriation numbers for the School, so these funds are an important piece of the puzzle.
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40 Beyond enrollment, there are many factors that contribute to the budget numbers. Mr. Cozort showed a graph portraying
41 spending at the various schools (high school having the highest percentage in expenditures) and within all departments.
42 He reminded the School Committee that we have previously presented each separate department budget in the preceding
43 meetings. He also outlined the level of Federal Grants that the district receives and quickly reviewed the funding of
44 each, specifically noting the new Title V “Perkins” grant, one that is slated to help offset Vocational expenses. He shared
45 a graph depicting the special education out-of-district tuitions and noted district efforts to develop in-house programs to
46 minimize the need to send students off the island for their education. He reaffirmed how years ago, we were woefully
47 under-budgeted for residential placements and if we had to support a residential tuition it had to come out of operating
48 expenses. Now with the new “Stabilization” fund, this helps to offset some unforeseen placements. (He reflected how
49 in 2011 there was a need to increase the appropriation so the district would not have a repeat of underfunding and having
50 to come up with money from elsewhere in the budget.
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Finally, the Superintendent reviewed a graph showing the Community School appropriation. Annually, the appropriation has fluctuated slightly over the years as the economy goes up and down, and we are fortunate with this year's proposed appropriation of \$550,000. This is critical funding, as without it the burden falls solely on participant fees, which could make it impossible for some families to participate in certain programs. He cited the need to find the balance in affordable programming and financial viability of the programs.

The parameters for the Administrative Team in creating this budget, as directed by the Superintendent and the School Committee directives, were as follows:

- 1) Align the budget needs with the district and school goals and the District Improvement Plan;
- 2) Justify the building budgets be based upon projected enrollments and increasing needs of students;
- 3) Have the principals identify essential services for their students;
- 4) Support programs that sustain the physical, social and emotional development of all students;
- 5) Develop these budgets to closely reflect actual expenditures from the last three years, continuing to reduce line item transfers;
- 6) Budget utility expenses more closely, with historical data as the reference, to reflect actual expenditures

A summary of increases to the FY 2021 budget was provided and Superintendent Cozort showed how they address the needs outlined in the parameters. The Budget increase requests are as follows:

- At NES, increase funding in General Instruction Technology
- At NES, add 1.0 EL Teacher
- At NES, add 1.0 Pre-K Teacher
- At NES, add 1.0 Pre-K Teaching Assistant
- At NES, increase funding in Professional Development Professional Services
- At NIS, increase funding in General Instruction Technology
- At NIS, increase funding in General Instruction Supplies
- At NIS, add .2 to the Spanish Language Teacher
- At NIS, add .5 for a Social Worker
- At NIS, increase funding in Professional Development Professional Services
- At CPS, add 1.0 World Language Teacher
- At CPS, add .6 to an Encore (Technology Teacher)
- At CPS, add 1.0 SPED Teaching Assistant
- At NHS, increase funding in General Instruction Technology
- At NHS, add 1.0 SPED Teacher
- At NHS, increase funding in Special Education Supplies
- At NHS, increase funding in Library Technology
- At NHS, increase funding in Professional Development
- ELL – increase funding in Professional Services & Professional Development
- SPED – add 1.0 Team Chair
- TECHNOLOGY – increase funding in Technology Repair & Maintenance
- TECHNOLOGY – increase funding in Hardware & Software
- CENTRAL OFFICE – increase funding in Curriculum Remediation

Finally, the Superintendent provided a breakdown of Capital requests for Fiscal Year 2020. A total of \$1,565,000 scheduled for NPS is hopeful for approval by the Capital Committee and the Financial Committee response (meeting on Tuesday, January 21, 2020).

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1. Campus Wide Master Plan: a request of \$750,000 to further work on the Campus Wide Master Plan – a contract is in place to have architects provide this plan which will examine classroom space needs and athletic improvements in accommodating future growth of district. This money is requested every year as these costs are to accumulate over a 10-year span of time not just for the next year.
 2. NPS Building & Grounds Improvements: \$300,000 for over-all improvements, not specifically identified, but a few examples are cabinetry at NES, concrete aprons, flooring, and shingles and siding needing repair over the campus,
 3. NHS Boiler Replacement: A high priority, this Capital Request is for \$300,000 to replace boilers that are original to the building from 1990. They have been refurbished twice due to internal leaking, and certain parts can no longer be fixed or replaced. There have been a multitude of issues.
 4. NPS Grounds Bobcat Replacement: \$65,000 to replace the Bobcat for the Grounds Department. Current equipment is from 2004 and which now has several mechanical issues that are no longer fixable. Equipment is used everyday for many functions for our district.
 5. NPS IT Infrastructure: Overall, with added staff, and keeping up with technology needs/requirements, \$70,000 is requested for Phone Servers to come up to speed with the virtual environment server upgrades. NPS uses network monitoring and Rapid Recovery Storage servers that are beyond useful life and need to be replaced. Also, \$80,000 to replace interactive panel projectors that are beyond six years old – Advancements in technology, newer Interactive TV’s and Panels have been requested by staff.

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In conclusion, Superintendent Cozort re-emphasized the steps that were taken to create the budget, sharing the information with faculty, gleaning feedback from constituencies, presentations by principals and department heads, and now holding this public meeting. He will next present to Fin Com on January 21, 2020 with finally a vote from the School Committee and then the voting at the Town of Nantucket Annual Meeting.

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Comments from the Public - None

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Pauline Proch confirmed this information was all taken from the last four or five meetings of budget information. She asked about bringing this forward to the Finance Committee and if we can comment after that meeting. Steve Sortevik was curious about attending the FinCom meeting and could he ask questions there, pertaining to what is being presented. Superintendent Cozort assured the School Committee they are attending as individuals, not as a Committee, and they could ask questions representing as such.

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The School Committee thanked everyone for their hard work and agreed that this year’s budget has been a transparent process. Vice Chair Tim Lepore reinforced that while our numbers and needs continue to increase significantly, he appreciates the continued focus to meet the diversified needs and is confident the budget will remain reflective of these.

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Steve Sortevik made a motion to adjourn from Public Hearing, Zona Butler seconded, the meeting was adjourned.

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Public hearing adjourned at 6:42 pm.

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Respectfully submitted,
Logan M. O’Connor, School Committee Clerk