

Nantucket School Committee
Meeting Minutes
December 17, 2019

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2 Present Members: Chair Jennifer Iller, Vice Chair Timothy Lepore, Zona Butler, Pauline Proch, and Steve Sortevik

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4 The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM, by Chair Jennifer Iller, in the Nantucket High School LGI. Steve Sortevik
5 made a motion to approve the agenda, it was seconded by Pauline Proch and was approved unanimously.
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7 **Comments from the Public**

8 None
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10 **Presentations and discussions of interest to the Committee**

11 **Town of Nantucket Budget Presentation – Town Administrator, Libby Gibson & Town Municipal Finance**
12 **Director, Brian Turbitt**

13 Mrs. Gibson and Mr. Turbitt presented the General Fund Budget recommendations to the School Committee and
14 announced this would be an abbreviated version of the same presentation, done a few days earlier for the Board of
15 Selectman. Mrs. Gibson gave a review of their process and timeline dictated by the Town Charter: starting September
16 18th, reviewing preliminary numbers and creating budget projections; in October and through December, there was further
17 review with key staff members; the recent final presentation made to the Board of Selectman, and the presentation at
18 Annual Town Meeting. Mrs. Gibson was positive about the preliminary meetings with the Superintendent and Deputy
19 Superintendent, as they move forward with the upcoming presentation(s) to the Capital Committee and Finance
20 Committee. The increase for this year is consistent with previous years, with instructions to support a Level Funded
21 budget while following specific mandates and cost savings where possible.
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23 Mr. Turbitt reviewed the current and new initiatives, priorities such as capital investment in infrastructure/facilities, project
24 management, housing issues, transportation, the staffing study which continues to determine how to meet service and
25 seasonal demands that are required in response to our growing community and ‘bigger city’ issues that we are facing in our
26 small Town, plus the Strategic Plan. He unveiled the projected total revenue is \$106,595,195 with the projected total
27 expenses of \$106,242,704. The projected FY2021 unused levy capacity is a very small number at \$353,491. Mr. Turbitt
28 reviewed the major revenue categories: Property Tax, local revenue, motor vehicle tax, license and permits, rooms/meals
29 tax, allowance for abatements, and state aid, noting that state aid is always a difficult calculation, because we never know
30 what we are going to receive until very last minute. He then outlined the general fund expenses of which the school is
31 steady at a repeated 30.4% of the overall budget. Expenses include operational expenses, and salaries. The fixed costs
32 associated include health insurance, general insurance, debt service, retirement costs and enterprise fund subsidies. The
33 Town Expense increase requests show a lower total sum from FY20 - FY21 totaling \$3,732,594 in submitted requests,
34 \$1,072,387 to be recommended and which includes a one-time of \$842,000 and on-going as a one-time amount of
35 \$230,387, funded through available tax levy, budget adjustments/reallocations, alternate funding sources, free cash, and
36 potential revenue increases.
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38 There are Special Appropriations to consider and unknowns such as the Strategic Plan impact, the implications of future
39 budget forecasts, the update of the five-year forecasting, and possible necessary tax overrides to fund which includes OIH,
40 Solid Waste and NRTA year-round service. Additional unknowns continue to include federal tax reform or legislative
41 changes, State Aid impacts, the Harbor Place Project (the tank farm opportunity for redevelopment), Citizen warrant
42 articles, Open Space and Recreation Plan and revenue options which always encompass property tax but now also includes
43 the established short-term rental tax.
44

45 The Preliminary Free Cash General Fund is estimated at \$10,334,761 and breaks down into categories of Town Expense
46 requests of \$842,000, a one-time School expense request of \$160,000, Town and School Capital Projects of \$6,000,000,
47 Town stabilization account of \$500,000, Capital stabilization fund of \$750,000, a Town Accrued Leave Reserve of
48 \$750,000 and unallocated Free Cash at \$1,332,761. A point to note is the unallocated Free Cash potentially reserved for
49 the additional subsidies to the Enterprise Funds (OIH and Solid Waste); this money could very well be slated only for the
50 subsidies this year. Mrs. Gibson and Mr. Turbitt reminded everyone these numbers are still fluid and subject to change
51 and recommendations until approved by the Board of Selectman, therefore, remaining preliminary. Mrs. Gibson and Mr.
52 Turbitt wrapped up their comments, focusing on the additional material provided, the Budget Message Appendix offered
53 to illustrate the finer details of the budget in a narrative form.

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They then asked for questions. Steve Sortevik had many: He stated he was “troubled” that the Ad Hoc Town Budget Committee has not met. Mrs. Gibson responded she feels this Committee does not need to meet as it once did. It was formed to help the communication that was lacking a decade ago, but because the Town/School relationship works so well, she feels well informed regarding the School requests. She stated the Town could reconsider having this group meet again for FY22. Mr. Sortevik’s next question was regarding the School’s funding request of \$1.7 million and wanted to know if it covers the combined operating and salaries. Mrs. Gibson answered it covers everything asked for by the Superintendent and Finance Director, and the School can use the funds however they determine. Mr. Sortevik asked about the 5.6% funding offered to the School and queried the percentage difference of funding between the Town and the School - he feels it was not enough for the school. Mr. Turbitt noted Town budget increase is less than 2%. Mr. Sortevik asked for clarification of the override discussion and how that might affect available funds for the school and town. Mr. Turbitt attempted to define the most responsible uses for an override (citing some examples) and outlined the OIH consideration is to remove the pressure from the General Fund. Mr. Sortevik asked about ballot voting and timing, stating “we need more” and wanted to know when the vote on the override is held. Mrs. Gibson said the approximate timing is January with Mr. Sortevik stating the budget timing does not coincide with our given timelines. Superintendent Cozort interceded and reviewed the timeline again for the School Committee – January 14 is the Finance Committee, January 16, the NPS Presentation and Mrs. Gibson confirmed there is always tweaking that happens as a result. Zona Butler asked about the Community School \$550,000 and last year was \$500,000 with Mr. Turbitt sharing the School asked for the increase for NCS.

Budget Development FY21: Cyrus Peirce Middle School, Principal Julie Lamoly

Mrs. Lamoly detailed the pictures on the front of her budget presentation, praising both staff and students and then turned to fiscal information. Cyrus Peirce Middle School is \$4,518,698, 15% of the total budget, of which 97% covers payroll obligations. She reviewed her requests and followed up with her narrative to support these needs. The total ask is an increase of \$143,772, which includes 2.6 Full Time Equivalents of a 1.0 World Language Teacher, 1.0 Special Education Teaching Assistant and a .6 Encore/Technology. These teaching positions have some movement in the hire concentration of curriculum, possibly including technology and digital literacy, STEM curriculum, and/or music such as band, no longer needing to share a music teacher with NHS. Mr. Sortevik was pleased to hear of the increase for Technology, he asked about Spanish offerings for the different grade levels and then zeroed in on Math. He said while small improvements have been seen in CPS, it is still showing the weakest grades for Math and wanted to know why a Math teacher or Interventionist is not among the requests. Mrs. Lamoly responded they have had success in small group instruction and a Teaching Assistant is specifically designated to help in this regard. Chair Jennifer Iller asked about the World Language Teacher now offered and what about other language opportunities that might not be taught at NHS. Mrs. Lamoly said they are keeping options open as to what language might be offered..

Budget Development FY21: Special Education Department, Director Michele Brady Boebert

Mrs. Boebert stated the Special Education Department is \$6,266,478, 21% of the total budget, with 84% for payroll. She is asking for a total increase of \$286,761, most of which comprise requests already embedded in school budgets. She did a quick review of what was included throughout the four schools and added her one additional request of a Team Chair 1.0, a position that would focus on grades PreK-5 and allow the current Assistant SPED Director to focus on grades 6-12.

Budget Development FY21: English Language Learners, Director Kelly Ann Cooney

Director Kelly Cooney said ELL budget is \$1,226,938, which represents 4% of the total budget and payroll obligations equate to 97%. Ms. Cooney emphasized the multilingual students and ELL growth in our district and in order to meet compliance with state initiatives and the Coordinated Program Review, this supports the funding increase request. The ELL department is looking to add another 1.0 ELL teacher (already depicted in the NES budget). The department is also asking for additional money of \$7,500 for specialized Professional Development and translation services for Portuguese, a growing language in our district. Mr. Sortevik asked what increase requests do not appear in her list. Ms. Cooney responded she would like two SEI Coaches. Mrs. Butler asked for some clarification of positions and budget amounts for ELL and back tracked to SPED. She feels a disclaimer added to the sheets would be helpful to outline the monies. Mr. Anguelov assured the School Committee there are no double counts on the budget. Superintendent Cozort added in the past, we had not separated out the ELL, SPED and Athletics (they all fall under Central Office), but determined it would be beneficial to break them out for their own recognition and have presented them this way for the last few years.

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Budget Development FY21: Athletics, Director Christopher Maury

Mr. Maury presented Athletics and praised the varsity teams depicted on the cover, all performing quite well in Playoffs and State Qualifying Tournaments. He reviewed the budget for Athletics is \$ 765,042, 2% of the total budget, and 66% of that is to cover payroll obligations. Mr. Maury said at this time, there are no significant increases requested, although we have added coaching positions over the last several years with the addition of new sports. Mrs. Pauline Proch asked about Pay to Play and the user fee system along with that waiver opportunity. She wondered about looking for additional scholarship money to cover the waivers. Mr. Maury accounted for revenues of approximately \$100,000 for annual participation fees and guaranteed no student is denied sports because of any difficulty to cover the fees.

Committee discussion and votes to be taken

Vote to Approve Donation from Nantucket Community Park & Recreation to NCS Jetties Tennis, \$1,594.60 Zona Butler made a motion, seconded by Pauline Proch, with none opposed, the motion was approved.

Vote to Approve December 3, 2019 Meeting Minutes. Pauline Proch made a motion to approve the minutes, Tim Lepore seconded, and the motion was approved.

Vote to Approve the Transfers & Invoices

Tim Lepore made a motion to approve the transfers and invoices, Pauline Proch seconded, the motion was approved.

Superintendent’s Report – W. Michael Cozort

Annual Report

Recently the Annual Report for the year 2018-2019 was sent to the School Committee for their read (not for a vote). This document is an amalgam of written contributions from the Principals and Directors, then collated and submitted by the Superintendent to the Town of Nantucket to be included in the Annual Town Meeting Report. The Superintendent encouraged the Committee to review and offer any suggestions or edits before final submission.

Subcommittees & Acknowledgements

Cape Cod Collaborative - Zona Butler attended the meeting. Conversation was about busing and the many problems CCC is encountering with the new buses that cost upwards of \$100,000 for a new vehicle. It seems there are monthly issues with the new buses. For Nantucket, it is especially difficult when new buses are in need of repair and having to go back and forth on and off island to accommodate maintenance. Dr. Lepore still likes the idea of trying to incorporate the NRTA bus system and our school busing needs. Mrs. Butler thought aloud an additional bus added to the route around Bartlett Road (currently there are six) might alleviate some traffic pressure.

On the Horizon

January 7 will have the School Improvement Plans. Superintendent Cozort is not sure when the Veritas staff will come to a meeting. He reminded the Committee about the Budget Hearing and Finance Committee on January 14 & 16, 2020.

At 7:34pm the School Committee adjourned on a motion made by Pauline Proch and seconded by Steve Sortevik and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Logan O’Connor, School Committee Clerk