



**Finance and Operations Subcommittee
Remote
January 7, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.
Open Meeting Minutes**

PRESENT: Geoffrey Epstein (Chair), Beverly Hugo, Scott Wadland, Tiffanie Maskell*

ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Executive Director of Finance and Operations Lincoln Lynch, Assistant Superintendent of Equity, Diversity, and Community Development Joseph Corazzini, Executive Assistant to the School Committee Joanna Hastry

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m. He said this meeting was being broadcast live on Facebook and being recorded. He read those in attendance, and how to participate in public comment. He noted that School Committee member Tiffanie Maskell will not be in attendance due to not feeling well.

Public Comment

No public comment

FY21 Operating Budget

Executive Director of Finance and Operations Lincoln Lynch said that there are a lot of unknowns currently with the City Council reviewing Mayor Spicer's proposed budget cut of \$800,000 to FPS due to sewer/water Enterprise Fund challenges, and if students return to in person learning or not. He said that COVID-19 testing will start next week for staff who are in the buildings three days or more a week, at a contract price of \$75 a test. He said that based on 1,200 staff being tested every week his estimate would be that it will cost \$2 million, but it depends on the amount of staff returning. He said that this will be paid out of ESSER COVID-19 relief funds, but there is only \$1.1 million remaining and other expenditures are also coming out of those funds such as signage and COVID-19 teams. He said that there could be additional COVID-19 relief funding if it passes through Congress.

*Ms. Maskell joined the meeting at 4:37 p.m.

Mr. Epstein asked if there are any plans to purchase N95 masks now that they are more readily available. Mr. Lynch said that there are no plans to do so, they bought tens of thousands of masks, visited the issue during negotiations with the FTA, and if they were to be used it would be the same protection as masks, shields, and PPE that are used by close contact staff. Mr. Lynch said in preparation for the return to school they started early with procuring PPE and chromebooks, and if tents were bought for usage outside it would be an additional COVID-19 expenditure, with 20 x 30 tent at each school costing \$35,000 a month.

FY22 Operating Budget

Mr. Epstein said that in the past they have had a joint subcommittee meeting with the City Council's Finance Subcommittee to discuss the budget and any possible adjustments that are needed, and asked when a good time to schedule this would be. Mr. Lynch said budget sheets from all Directors and Principals were due last week and they are putting together a master budget now, and would suggest scheduling the joining meeting towards the end of February. Mr. Lynch said this year they will be using Open.gov for the budget book, and they are still working on how this will work and look, but it will have the last five years of data and can pull charts and graphs better than other ways in the past.

Transportation

Mr. Lynch said that the District went out to bid for bussing and received bids from Durham School Services and NRT Bus, and they are still going through responses to make sure everything was submitted to make sure each vendor is responsive. Mr. Lynch said they have to take the lowest bid that is responsive, meaning submitted everything that was asked such as insurance documents, bond documentation, and also checking references. He said Durham submitted both a used bus and new bus bid, NRT submitted a new bus bid, and the NRT price is lower than Durham's. He said that they still have to go through the process to make sure they are responsive and responsible, and at the January 20th School Committee meeting he will be submitting a memo with a recommendation. Mr. Epstein confirmed, through asking, that NRT is the same company as VanPool, who the District currently uses. Mr. Wadland suggested making sure reference checks are done with other companies that the bidders are doing business with, and not just the references they submit.

Mr. Epstein asked if there were ways of getting meals to students using busses or other creative ways. Assistant Superintendent of Equity, Diversity, and Community Development Joseph Corazzini said there is an access issue, and they could try a pilot to get to areas where families are not able to get to schools for lunch. He said that he can come up with a proposal to present to the full School Committee. Mr. Lynch said that the District has three Flyer busses that could be used, or if it is a bigger project could contact Durham, as the contract says that the busses are for any uses that we need. He said that the only cost would be gas and for whoever is driving the bus.

Review, update and additions to current School Committee financial policies

Mr. Epstein said that there were referrals made from the Policy Subcommittee to this subcommittee to look at changes to certain policies and possible new policies, with examples from MASC, within Section D. He spoke about if procedures should be put into policy, such as with carry forward reserve funds from year to year due to major volatility in out of district special education students and the circuit breaker reimbursement rates changing year to year. Mr. Lynch suggested including the language from DESE in a policy regarding carry forward. Mr. Epstein shared on the screen policies DB-Annual Budget, DBC-Budget Deadlines and Schedules, DBD-Budget Planning, DGA-Authorized Signatures, DH-Bonded Employees and Officers, DI-Fiscal Accounting and Reporting, Capital Area of Finances, and P-Card Use, and discussion was held on each. Members agreed on not adopting Policy DBD and instead put such information within Policy DB. Mr. Lynch to look into what contracts need to be signed to provide information for

Policy DGA. Discussion on if a Capital Area of Finances Policy is needed or if information on that should be included in other policies, such as within Policy DB. Discussion on waiting on a P-Card Policy until the recent School Committee vote on obtaining a P-Card for the Executive Director of Finance and Operations is discussed with the City Treasurer. Mr. Epstein to work on drafts of the policies from the changes suggested in this meeting, as well as proposed new policies, and bring them to a future subcommittee meeting. Discussion on Policy DJA: Purchasing Authority and removing the portion discussing purchase order approval, as it is the same for all departments, as well as removing that budget reports will be provided to the School Committee Chair as it is available for all members to review.

*Ms. Maskell left the meeting at 5:26 p.m. due to not feeling well.

Review School Committee Goals/Metrics relating to this Subcommittee

Mr. Epstein shared his screen with the School Committee Goals specifically under Fiscal Planning and Operations. Discussion on the goals and progress made towards them. Mr. Lynch asked if members felt the budget process that currently happens is to their approval. Members spoke about having information earlier to be able to have more time to ask questions.

Approval of Minutes From 10/1/20 Subcommittee Meeting

Motion: To approve the minutes of October 1, 2020.

Moved: Ms. Hugo **Seconded:** Mr. Wadland **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (3-0-0)
(Yes: Hugo, Wadland, Epstein)

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn.

Moved: Mr. Wadland **Seconded:** Ms. Hugo **Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous (3-0-0)
(Yes: Hugo, Wadland, Epstein)

Meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Meeting Materials

Agenda

School Committee Goals 2020-2021

Section D Policies

Draft October 1, 2020 Minutes

These minutes were approved by the Finance and Operations Subcommittee in Open Session on May 24, 2021.

These minutes were sent to the City of Framingham for posting on July 20, 2021.

