



Town of Wilmington

Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 6, 2018

Finance Committee Vice Chairman, Bernard P. Nally, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in Town Hall, Room 9. Members present were Neal Couture, John F. Doherty, Jonathan Eaton, Marianne Gallezzo, Michele Kincaid, and Leigh Martinson. Excused: Theresa M. Manganelli and Kevin Stokes.

SHAWSHEEN VALLEY TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

PRESENT IN INTEREST: Tim Broadrick, Superintendent-Director, Melanie Hagman, Assistant Superintendent-Director of Finance, Robert G. Peterson Esq., and James Gillis of the Shawsheen School Committee.

Mr. Broadrick provided an overview of Shawsheen Tech's security plan. The surveillance system is currently out to bid for replacement. The plan is to convert a land-locked, walk-in closet into the central location for security monitors to which the Police will be able connect in the event of a crisis. Mr. Broadrick stated that the students are preparing a memorial ceremony for the Parkland, Florida victims on March 14, 2018, and that everyone just wants to feel safe while at school.

Mr. Broadrick stated that the school has a new principal, Jessica Cook, who has been in the district for over ten years. The previous principal, Bob Canales, who had been with the district for over forty-five years, retired on December 31, 2017.

Mr. Broadrick stated that regional vocational schools are effective for students because they prepare students for finding a place in the economy. Shawsheen Tech administration considers the value of post-secondary education options, the cost and value of four-year degrees, and programs such as two-year certificate programs, which help shape their course and program offerings.

Shawsheen Tech's MCAS Student Growth Percentiles (SGP) from Spring 2017 showed English Language Arts (ELA) in the 74th percentile, and Math in the 65th percentile. Fiftieth percentile is average growth. The Composite Performance Index (CPI) in 2017 showed 97% of tenth graders scoring Advanced or Proficient in ELA, 95% Advanced or Proficient in Math, and 86% Advanced or Proficient in Science.

Mr. Broadrick stated that typical high schools in Massachusetts enroll approximately 12-13% students with special needs. A typical regional vocational school enrolls twice as many. Shawsheen Tech has approximately 26-28% of students enrolled with special needs.

Mr. Broadrick provided a summary of the Coop program in which 80% of seniors who qualify are working in their field of study while getting paid. He also noted many recent accomplishments of Shawsheen Tech students at Skills USA, a national trade competition organization.

Mr. Broadrick stated that the total capital budget for FY 2019 is \$1,717, 719. Grants, revolving funds, Perkins Act funds (the federal act which provides funds for equipment for vocational schools), and other

funds account for \$472,354, which leaves \$1,245,365 assessment to participating Towns (Bedford, Billerica, Burlington, Tewksbury, and Wilmington). The excess and deficiency fund, which acts as a reserve fund like a municipality's "Free Cash," is valued at \$700,000.

The total operating budget is proposed at \$29,775,195, which includes all fixed costs including: snow removal, custodial services, health insurance, and personnel salaries. The school carries health insurance with Blue Cross Blue Shield, but the school funds the plan. The staff is younger and healthier and has had good performance against claims. Retirees were moved to the Group Insurance Commission (GIC). As a result, the school does not fund retirees' health insurance, but funds its portion toward the GIC.

Mr. Broadrick noted the utilities budget was increased last year for the new LED (light emitting diode) lights on the new athletic fields. There was no increase in utility cost, but with the fields completed, and anticipated night games, the utilities budget was level funded for this year. Most fluorescent bulbs in the school building were also replaced with more energy and cost-efficient LED tubes.

Two new artificial turf fields account for a decrease of \$20,000-\$30,000 in this year's operating budget. Costs to the athletic field contractor were reduced as lines on the fields only need to be painted once per year. With less grass to mow, more field maintenance was brought back in-house without having to increase the number of staff.

Mr. Broadrick provided an overview of the technology infrastructure plan. Capital expenditures for technology was budgeted at \$160,000 for FY 2018, and \$240,000 for FY 2019. The next three years will not require the same kinds of expenses. The School purchased approximately 400 devices this year and has budgeted to replace 103 devices per year. The devices, which cost \$375 each, are a windows-based portable device with a touch screen, which also functions as a laptop. There are wireless projectors in approximately half of classrooms, and part of the infrastructure budget is to provide the other half with wireless projectors.

The cost of textbooks has decreased from \$120,000 from 4-5 years ago to \$85,000 this year. The Director of Academics plans to establish a committee to assess textbook needs whether to decide to purchase physical textbooks, digital licenses, or a combination. Digital licenses may continue to keep textbooks costs down.

Mr. Broadrick noted that labor under agreement with contracts through 2020 with all three unions: clerical employees (AFSCME), cafeteria employees (AFSCME), and teachers' association (MTA). Approximately 60% of the operating budget is for teaching labor, and the increase in teacher salaries is contractual. There is no change in the number of employees.

Mr. Broadrick stated that the School is adding a pilot program next year for students from participating school districts, which will essentially be a fifth year of high school. Students who have graduated and have yet to decide on a path following high school, can attend a year at Shawsheen Tech and learn trade skills. Funding for the program will consider these students just like any other student and be budgeted with the foundation budget. There are approximately 14 other vocational schools with similar programs already operating in the state. The School is also expanding its non-high school programs including: night school for adults and summer youth programs.

Mr. Broadrick explained how the assessment to Towns is calculated and outlined the three parts. The first part is the Town's required minimum contribution which is based on income and property wealth, plus an increasing factor each year on revenue growth as calculated by the State Department of Revenue (DOR) and Department of Education (DOE). The DOE then divides the number of students by the number of districts which serve the community, which for Wilmington is two: Wilmington Public Schools, and Shawsheen Technical High School. The minimum contribution is then divided by the number of students enrolled in each district. For FY 2019, Wilmington's minimum required contribution is \$2,801,193.

The second part is the capital budget assessment. Per the regional vocational agreement, each participating community is required to pay 10% of the capital budget assessment (Bedford and Burlington each account for less than 10% enrollment, however, they still must contribute 10%). The other 80% gets divided among the other communities based on percentage of students enrolled from each community. For FY 2019, Wilmington's capital assessment contribution is \$192,267.

The third part is the allocation by region. This is calculated by adding the operating budget and capital assessment, then deducting the minimum contributions, Chapter 70 State Aid, and State transportation aid. That number is then divided by the percentage of students enrolled from each community. For FY 2019, Wilmington's allocation by region is \$1,095,180. These three parts add up to Wilmington's FY 2019 total assessment of \$4,088,640, which is a 1.5% increase over FY 2018.

Mr. Broadrick explained that the cost for vocational education is high because of the nature of the programs offered and the cost of equipment. Chapter 70 State Aid accounts for the increased costs and factors in a 10:1 student to teacher ratio for proper supervision in the foundation budget.

Mr. Martinson asked what Shawsheen Tech students pursue following graduation. Mr. Broadrick stated that upon graduation, approximately one-third of students enroll in a four-year college, one-third go straight into the world of work, and one-third enroll in a two-year college or certificate program. He noted that many community college students in Massachusetts do not finish degree or certificate programs. The School has been working with Middlesex Community College, UMASS Lowell, and other local colleges, to create matriculation programs where students can apply credits, based on work they have already completed at Shawsheen Tech.

Ms. Gallezzo asked why there was a shift in the budget for the auto collision and repair program. Mr. Broadrick stated that there was a retirement, and the budgets for each department are also based on enrollment.

Ms. Gallezzo asked why there was a significant increase in the business office budget. Ms. Hagman stated that increase accounts for replacement of the fire alarm system for the entire building. Mr. Broadrick noted that everything in the capital budget is detailed in the equipment budget, and there can be significant changes by each department as capital expenditures vary each year.

Mr. Broadrick stated that the building is almost fifty-years old, but is very well maintained. Two other vocational schools, which opened the same year as Shawsheen Tech, are either being rebuilt or are scheduled to be rebuilt. Mr. Peterson noted that there are challenges with the current gymnasium and cafeteria spaces being too small, and it is important to decide how and when to spend money to make

improvements to a fifty-year-old building. Mr. Broadrick stated that Mr. Peterson and Mr. Gillis, along with Paul Gedick of Burlington, are part of a Facilities Subcommittee, which is going to assess the current and future needs of the building and campus. Next year's five-year capital plan will depend on the findings of this assessment.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Nally reminded the Committee of upcoming meetings and events leading up to the Town Meeting on May 5, 2018.

At the conclusion of the discussion, and there being no further business to come before the Committee, a motion was made by Mr. Doherty, seconded by Ms. Gallezzo, and by the affirmative vote of all, it was

VOTED: That the Finance Committee adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Recording Secretary