

Winthrop Finance Commission Minutes

Date: Thursday, May 1, 2025, at 6:00pm
Attendees: TOW: Sarah Johnson (SJ), Robbie Powers (RP), Dylan Cook (DC), Lori Gallivan (LG), Lisa Howard (LH)
FC: Brent Farrell (BF), Karin Chavis (KC), William Gault (WG), Matt Gorzkowicz (MG), Hannah Belcher (HB), Joe Hanlon (JH), John Macero (JM), Max Tassinari (MT), John DaRos (JD), Shannon Poulos (SP)
Absent: None

Meeting called to order at 6:06 pm by MG.

Rollcall vote completed by KC. All present except individuals noted above. All present members that attended prior meetings approved minutes from 4/16 and 4/24.

The focus of the meeting will be on the discussion and review of the proposed school budget.

- FY 2026 budget was presented, changes occurred from what was approved by school committee.
- Total budget expenses were approximately \$44MM, less grants are \$40.5MM requested from the town (~60% of total town budget)
- \$22MM in expenses were related to salaries.
- 323 total staff count, degree and step status impacts total amount expected, which shifts throughout the year.
- All seven unions are at the end of contract and any increases (COLA) from negotiations **are not** included, all non-union employees projected increases **are** included.
- 198 staff are in the teachers union.
- 321 are eligible for insurance, 217 utilize the insurance – LH is concerned about potential for additional covered bodies due to macroeconomic conditions, etc.
- Special education concerns
- 2,009 students are currently in school system, which continues to increase year over year.
- Certain pre-paid expenses from 2025 totaled ~\$1.3MM
- Attributing less dollars to grant allocations because of funding threats, especially federal grants
- SPED and transportation costs were increased by 3.5%, but potential for being higher.
- Amount held in contingency for unknown expenses and salary increases is \$640K.
- Transportation expenses (athletics - \$170K, SPED / homeless - \$150K and in-district - \$35K) are the primary components.
- SPED enrollment is increasing but not as much as other communities – saving money by having quality in-town program because child is not sent to another community.
- \$2MM in out of district costs in the budget, funding occurs via “circuit breaker.”
- Full-year tuition is \$16K for international students, roughly 20 students in the system annually.
- Improved steps and lanes processes so anticipated expense increases are budgeted for.
- Class sizes are average, maybe a “little bit better” than statewide averages.
- 7% of students were multi-lingual ~8 years ago, currently 25%.

Various discussion points amongst the members included:

- FC members will review materials provided for second meeting with LH on May 22nd

MG motioned to adjourn; JD seconded. Approved by all present members.

Meeting adjourned at 7:42 pm.