

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**REMOTE MEETING**  
**JUNE 8, 2021**

Present: Ms. Amy Checkoway, Chair  
Ms. Meghan Moriarty, Secretary  
Ms. Andrea Prestwich  
Ms. Catherine Bowen  
Mr. Michael Crowley  
Mr. Jamal Saeh  
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent  
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations

**1. Opening Business**

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 a.m.

*The Warrant Committee Education Subcommittee – Anne Helgen, Geoff Lubien, Liz Goss, Jack Weis, and Paul Rickter- joined the School Committee Finance Subcommittee meeting.*

**2. FY22 Budget Update/Out Of District Tuition 3yr plan**

Superintendent Phelan gave a brief synopsis of the budget situation; for FY23 there is a projected Town budget deficit of \$5.5M, not taking into consideration funding from the American Rescue Plan. It has not been determined if the Town and School Department will be using a 60/40 allocation split going forward. Free cash has been returned to the Town general fund from the schools in the past. The School Committee and School District need to determine the FY21 amount of Out Of District carryover between the ranges of \$1.1 - \$1.7M. This determination will affect the amount charged to the general fund, grants and the amount returned as free cash to the Town.

Director of Finance DiCologero presented nine (9) hypothetical scenarios for the Finance Subcommittee to review, based on a SPED tuition OOD projected deficit of \$640,161. The Warrant Subcommittee for Education and School Committee discussed the process, asked clarifying questions and made comments in determining what OOD balance to carry forward.

Many Warrant Subcommittee members asked about the difference in current deficit projections with the figure reflected in the April budget book and felt the district should leverage SPED reserves, drawing down those balances when needed and replenishing them when they are able. Director DiCologero explained the State/DESE were late with their budgets and communicating Circuit Breaker funding amount allocations to districts.

Superintendent Phelan confirmed the School Department is run conservatively as to not be short with OOD funding and necessitate the need to go into the general fund budget. The district would split the difference of \$1.1 - 1.7M carryover and would look at a 1-3 year review. Mr. Phelan's preference would be to meet with one partner in the Warrant Committee in order to streamline the process. Warrant Committee Chair Slap suggested

the School Department meet with the larger Warrant Committee group as the school budget feeds into the overall Town budget and School Committee member Moriarty was in favor of having a “policy” for these procedures and communications to the Town departments and community. The group agreed that \$1.3M is healthy balance to carryover and will help explain to community how volatile school budget is handled.

Warrant Committee member Epstein thanked the group for a productive meeting and suggested the group considers all three (3) volatile OOD lines - tuition, transportation and general expenses for future structural planning.

Finance Director DiCologero asked for a directive; if the SC decides on a carryover balance of \$1.3M, he will target that amount with any remaining fluctuations to FY21 budget.

Group agreed to use step 6 of the Special Education Tuition Allocation Hypothetical Scenarios chart (SC Document: Allocation of OOD Expenses FY21 6.8.21).

**On a motion offered by Kate Bowen and seconded by Jamal Saeh, the School Committee VOTED (5-0-1) to give guidance to close out the school year with the approved projected non-general fund OOD carryover balance of \$1,369,620.**

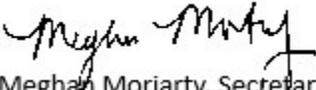
Bowen aye, Checkoway aye, Moriarty aye, Saeh aye, Crowley aye

*Further discussing ensued around using reserve funds for the OOD deficit and the proposed working group to help decide the process. Superintendent Phelan proposed looking at new guidelines along this train of thought in August.*

### **3. Adjourn**

On a motion offered by Meghan Moriarty and seconded by Kate Bowen, the School Committee approved to adjourn the meeting at 9:41 am.

Respectfully Submitted by:

  
Meghan Moriarty, Secretary