



City of Malden

Malden City Hall
215 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148

Meeting Minutes - Final Finance Committee

Councillor Murphy, Chair
Councillor Condon, Vice-Chair
Councillor-at-Large Karen Colon-Hayes
Councillor Jadeane Sica
Councillor Christopher Simonelli
Councillor Stephen Winslow

Tuesday, June 7, 2022

6:00 PM

City Hall, Rm#105
215 Pleasant Street

Roll Call

Councillor Condon-Vice Chair of Finance called the meeting to order at 6:35 P.M.

Present: 6 - Councillor Barbara Murphy, Councillor Paul Condon, Karen Colon Hayes, Jadeane Sica, Chris Simonelli and Stephen Winslow

Also Present: Councillors Linehan and O'Malley
Charles Ranaghan-CFO
Ron Hogan-Chief Strategy Innovation Officer
Superintendent Ligia Noriega-Murphy
Toni Mertz-Finance Director-Business Manager of the Schools
Adam Weldai-Budget Chair School Committee
Jennifer Spadafora-Vice Chair School Committee

Minutes to be Approved

[266-22](#) Minutes of May 24, 2022 to be approved.

A motion was made by Councillor at Large Colon Hayes, seconded by Councillor Condon, that the Committee Minutes of May 24, 2022 be tabled to the Finance Committee. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

[267-22](#) Minutes of May 31, 2022 to be approved.

A motion was made by Councillor at Large Colon Hayes, seconded by Councillor Condon, that the Committee Minutes of May 31, 2022 be tabled to the Finance Committee. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

Business

[236-22](#) Order: Annual appropriation for FY2023

Sponsors: Barbara Murphy

Attachments: [Proposed Budget](#)

[Final Paper: 236-22](#)

The Finance Committee will continue discussion of the Proposed F/Y23 Budget with the School Department.

Superintendent Ligia Noriega-Murphy, Toni Mertz, Finance Director-Business Manager of the Schools, Adam Weldai, Budget Chair-School Committee and Jennifer Spadafora, Vice-Chair-School Committee will be in attendance.

The committee begins discussion of the Schools F/Y 23 Budget. Toni Mertz begins by thanking the Mayor and the City Council for the generous 5% increase in the budget. We have huge costs increases that have ballooned and they also have had special Ed out of district tuition that have increased along with some of their substitutes and utility increases. She said as a whole, the School Committee last night passed the budget that was presented to them.

Adam Weldai-Budget Chair explained the Committee has gone through the rigorous process as usual going through public forums as a way to get feedback. We still have a \$1.2 mill hole to close. While we were intending to move as much off as possible from the ESSER grant into our operating expenses we were unable to do so. In essence, we are kicking a boulder down the road a bit. We did the best we could to provide as many services to our students.

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy wanted to highlight the staffing in the schools. There was an increase in staffing last year due to COVID but the staffing is going back to F/Y 2021 next year.

Councillor Winslow asked about the 5 teachers added at Beebe where other schools had only one or two. Is COVID one of the reasons?

Toni Mertz said this year we did a redistribution of our ELL students. At one point, Salemwood School was our newcomer school. As a result of the redistribution, both Beebe and Ferryway are at capacity in terms of student population. They can only accept kindergarten students for the 22/23 school year.

Councillor Colon-Hayes asked about the adjustment Councillors in Malden High School and heard the number 6. Last night we heard you were getting rid of a tech director and adding in two. one district wide for Ferryway and Salemwood and one was for the High School.

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said there is a total of eight social workers but six of them work in different houses. They are all licensed. One is a transition coordinator. Councillor Murphy mentions a presentation that was given at the school committee, and she explained it has been past practice that the Superintendent gives a little overview of the budget and she apologized where she is new to the game for not reaching out to give her a heads up. A presentation may be a little framework of what is going on in the schools.

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said she does have a presentation, but she has to leave soon to attend another meeting

Councillor Murphy said next week is a Committee of the Whole and would like to invite them all to come back next week to be able to give the presentation.

Superintendent Noriega-Murphy said she will forward the information to Lisa Cagno, Clerk of Committees to distribute to the Council and they would be happy to come before the committee next week.

Councillor Murphy said we are the overarching approval authority for the budget.

Ron Hogan explained the information he has will help with the discussion next week.

One of the challenges we face is the funding available to the schools. We struggle when comparing our numbers to our neighbors. The first is a chart which shows under the state formula what percentage of our revenue goes toward funding the minimum amount that we can fund towards the schools as compared to comparable communities.

Referring to the chart he says on the far left we are required to put 36% of our funds to the schools. This leaves no room when there are challenges to what other cities can do to solve some of the problems because it max's us out compared to any other

community. The average gateway city is required to put 23% into fund their schools. We are at 36% which is enormous when each percentage is equivalent to about \$1.3 mill. If you look at the bottom line when it manifests itself the difference in Chapter 70 funding over the course of time is disgusting when you compare it to other communities. As we sit here each year, we are in it together trying to solve some of the problems, but we are trying to divide a pie that is not big enough but that is the problem we need to solve. Every year the numbers gets grosser and grosser.

Other Business

Tabled Papers

[246-22](#)

Minutes of April 19, 2022 to be approved.

[248-22](#)

Minutes of May 17, 2022 to be approved.

Tabled Papers

Adjournment

Motion was made by Councillor Jadeane Sica, seconded by Councillor at Large Karen Colon Hayes, that this be adjourned at 6:56 P.M. The motion carried unanimously.