

School Board Budget Workshop Meeting Notes
November 30, 2016

In attendance: ORCSD School Board, SAU Administration and Directors, High School, Middle School, Mast Way and Moharimet Administration. Absent: Lisa Huppe

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

Manifest reviewed and signed.

Manifest Meeting ended at 6:50 PM.

Budget Workshop portion of meeting began at 7:00 PM with a reminder from Chair Newkirk that in a workshop no motions or decisions can be made. The purpose is to provide guidance to administration. Chair Newkirk turned the meeting over to Superintendent Morse.

The superintendent opened the meeting by answering outstanding questions of the Board from the Budget Workshop of November 10, 2016.

The first outstanding question related to the cost of retro-fitting ORCSD buses with seatbelts. The superintendent shared that only one state, California, requires seatbelts on buses that meet National Highway Administration guidelines. California requires three point seatbelts similar to what are in passenger cars. The estimated cost of retro-fitting a bus is estimated to be \$7,500 - \$10,000. ORCSD has 24 buses so the cost to the District would be \$175,000 to \$240,000. Maria noted the recent bus accident in Tennessee as an example of a significant accident on a bus.

The second question related to the use of plastic water bottles in the food service program and the revenue that sales raised. Doris Demers shared that the sale of water raised \$75,646 and sales from vending machines raised \$9,446 with profits of \$37,252 and \$3,778 respectively.

Maria let it be known in no uncertain terms that she feels that the sale of water in plastic bottles needs to stop. Water is a huge environmental issue. Plastic, even recycled plastic, is harmful to the environment. Kenny agreed that even recycled plastic should be eliminated. Al suggested reusable bottles not made of plastic. Denise Day thought that this issue should be directed to the Green Team and given to it as a charge.

Tom stated that we have a tried and true procedure when addressing issues and we should stick to it, not make long term decisions within the budget process.

The discussion on plastic bottles went on for some time.

Jim suggested that we've reduced taxpayer support for the food service program by \$40,000 over the past 4 years. If the Board wants to replace the 40+ thousand dollars made through selling water in plastic bottles it can restore those funds by increasing the taxpayer supported component back to \$95,000. Jim also stated that all the ideas shared are possible but they will require a plan and time to implement the plan.

The last unanswered question related to the base cost of the athletic fields as they existed in 2015-16 before the turf field.

Dan Klein felt it is important to articulate those costs we would have spent on maintenance for the old field as compared to what will be spent on turf so they can be used as a baseline comparison to future turf/track and field costs.

The discussion then went to the proposed 2017-18 budget draft.

Jim reviewed where we are with an overall cost of 5.06%. He reviewed the budget goal with focus on the “impact” of 3.25% and how we cut and use new revenue to achieve the Board goal.

Jim suggested cutting an additional \$200,000 by reducing one more elementary staff position and predicting a savings of three retirements not using the incentive.

Al was adamant that we do not violate class size policy. He asked High School Principal Filippone what her largest class size was now. Suzanne said 19-20 students in social studies and science. She also added that some classes would be higher while others lower. She also stated that without proposed yellow sheets new positions class size at the high school would begin violating Class size Policy IIB.

Maria raised the issue of future budgets with a new administrator in Washington and Concord. She expressed concern over future funding for public schools. She raised the concern about shrinking funds at the national and state levels and the impact it will have on ORCSD.

Kenny responded that the feds and the state give too little now.

The issue of retirement incentive came up next.

The Board discussed the pros and cons of the incentive.

Jim explained that he felt the incentive should go out without a limit on staff to see how many staff are actually interested. He said that there is a position he would not replace.

Maria took objection to that statement as she felt it was unfair to the taxpayer that we were keeping a staff member unnecessarily.

Jim explained that the reason he would not replace the position is because the university is no longer producing graduates with that particular degree.

The conversation moved on to the Extended Learning Opportunity position that is not in the budget.

Sarah asked for data from other Districts as to how many have ELO Coordinators, how many students they serve and how they were being used. She felt the focus of the position was monitoring internships and job shadowing opportunities, she felt VLAC's and college courses were secondary to that effort.

Kenny responded that all of the notes outlined were equally important. He went on for sometime explaining the need for the ELO position emphasizing all aspects of the position.

Tom asked Suzanne whether the high school was considering a CAPSTONE project for seniors.

Sarah asked for an updated memo on where we are on the current budget.

Tom summarized the meeting by asking the superintendent to articulate how we can.

1. Keep the budget impact to 3.25%
2. Reduce dependency on emergency funding
3. Include the ELO Coordinator position
4. Use retirement incentive to offset increase
5. Maintain effort on Capital Improvement

Workshop ended at 8:40 PM