

<p style="text-align: center;">BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL Meeting Minutes - Monday, March 27, 2023</p>

Members Present: Chuck Allan, Sarah Boonstra, Levi Byrd, Andrea Catena, William Hall, Maria Hamilton, Dan Hentschel, Paul Hoak, Carolyn Lewis, Brad Malone, Jessica Mattice, Ken Nelson, Jim Schultz, Millie Sefranek

Members Absent: Karen Arthmann, Peter Caikauskas, Clay Harris, Nancy Kula, Nichole LaPlaca, Alex Musso, Lauren Purvee, Pamela Reinhardt, Dina Stathopoulos, Lindsey Van Vilet

Ex-Officio Members: Scott Adair, Mary Ann Exler, Andy Whitmore and Dr. Pamela Kissel

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDED BUDGET

Andy Whitmore, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and School Operations, reviewed the Superintendent's Recommended Budget as it will be presented to the Board of Education. He noted that \$400,000 has been added since the council's last meeting. The dynamic formula for calculating NYS State Aid has been updated with the most recent data making the increased revenue a reasonable expectation. Budgeted expenses have been increased for security enhancements at the high school, a new position of CTE Director, a new position of a district-level administrator, support for the review of special education services and strategic planning/continuous improvement.

The recommended budget is \$161,779,198, an increase of \$10.1 million (6.7%) over the prior year. The drivers of the increase are the areas that make up the majority of the budget - instructional salaries (31.6%), support staff salaries (12.4%), employee benefits (24.7%) and BOCES costs (13.3%). Andy noted that while revenues from state aid, sales tax and interest are projected to increase for 2023-24, the increase in state aid (\$9 million) is driven by a one-time foundation aid increase. This is also the last year the federal stimulus funds are available as an additional source of revenue.

TAX RATE IMPACT AND COUNTY COMPARISON

Andy explained that to fund the budget the property tax levy is projected to increase \$2.3 million (2.7%) and the tax rate will remain under the 2% tax cap at no more than 1.98%. For a homeowner with a home valued at \$200,000, the tax increase will be about \$70 per year. Rush-Henrietta will continue to have one of the lowest tax rates in the county while spending more per student than 13 of the other 18 districts.

FIVE-YEAR BUDGET PROJECTION

Andy presented a five-year financial forecast. Based on current known factors, the forecast shows the use of reserves will become necessary to balance the budget for 2024-25. Beginning in 2026-27, anticipated expense growth will exceed anticipated revenue growth by more than our available reserves and reducing positions may become necessary to balance the budget.

BUDGET COMMUNICATION PLAN

Andy laid out the multiple ways the budget will be shared with the community prior to the budget vote. The budget information will be posted in advance thru various print and electronic channels, shared with the media and presented publicly at several meetings of the board of education and local organizations. On the day of the budget vote, outdoor signage will also be used to remind the community to vote. Andy provided the members of the council with a handout they can use to share the budget information with the groups they represent.

FOUNDATION AID AND FEDERAL STIMULUS FUNDING PLANS

Andy presented a breakdown of the additional foundation aid and remaining federal stimulus funds. He included a breakdown of the planned uses of the funds that include high-impact tutoring, special education services, social-emotional health supports, career and technical education, learning recovery, security enhancements, innovative learning spaces, and hourly rate increases. He asked the members of the council for their input on these plans.

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Andy asked the members of the council for their thoughts on the number and format of the meetings to be held by the council next year. Everyone agreed that three meetings was sufficient. Most members prefer to meet virtually but some suggested meeting in-person at least once to foster more discussion.

Members of the council expressed the following during the meeting:

Who is currently responsible for overseeing the CTE programs?

The Town of Henrietta has announced they will be putting a referendum to the community in the fall proposing a 7% increase in their tax levy. This may influence community members when they vote on the school budget.

Are modified sports being cut in this budget?

District needs to re-engage families and students to improve participation levels in sports and music programs.

How are we going to fund the additional expenditures that we have funded with federal stimulus funds and the foundation aid increase in the future?

Tell NYS we need the funds to keep coming on a consistent basis in future years.

Appreciation for added security at the high school and for allowing student participation on the council.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Ann Exler, Budget Technician