



The Town of Barnstable

Comprehensive Financial Advisory Committee (CFAC)
367 Main Street, Village of Hyannis, MA 02601

v. 508.862.4654 • f. 508.862.4717

www.town.barnstable.ma.us

Email: cfac@town.barnstable.ma.us

CFAC Committee:

Chair:

Laura Cronin

Members:

Robert Ciolek
Cynthia Crossman
Ralph Krau
Gregory Plunkett
Lillian Woo
John Schoenherr
Joseph Mladinich

Staff Liaison:

Mark Milne

Councilor Liaison:

John T. Norman

MEETING MINUTES

04.25.16

7:00 PM

Growth Management Conference Room

CFAC Members Present: Laura Cronin, Lillian Woo, Ralph Krau, John Schoenherr, Joseph Mladinich, Cynthia Crossman, and Gregory Plunkett

CFAC Members Absent: Robert Ciolek

Councilors Present: None

Staff Present: Mark Milne, Director of Finance, Nathan Empey, Finance/Budget Analyst

1. Call to Order

Laura Cronin called the CFAC meeting to order at 7:00 PM in the Growth Management Conference Room of Town Hall.

2. Act on Minutes

The following minutes were approved by unanimous vote:

04.11.2016

3. New Business

Bill Butler-Interim Superintendent and Gareth Markwell-Assistant Finance Director reviewed the school departments FY17 budget.

The Department of Education (DOE) requires local school districts to submit enrolment figures to the state. Currently, Barnstable's School Department is projecting total enrolment of 5,146 in FY17 compared to 5,267 in FY12. There are several metrics used to project future enrolment, but just to name a few such as, current enrolment, trends on how many students the school system gains or loses annually, and birth rates in the community. Using birth rates can help determine kindergarten enrolment. The School Department seeks a classroom size ratio of twenty-five students for every one teacher. This ratio can vary greatly depending on type of class. For example, there can be thirty students in English, but eight students in Art.

Estimated classroom sizes

Kindergarten: 18 to 1

Grade 1-5: 22 to 1

Grade 6-7: 24 to 1

High school: 25 to 1

Laura C. asked how this compares to other school districts. Gareth M. commented that Barnstable's classroom ratio sizes are comparable to middle of the Cape. Ralph K. asked how many students are leaving the district to attend other schools. Barnstable sent 155 students out of district in FY16. Gareth M. noted that there is increased competition from abutting school systems such as, Falmouth, Sandwich, and Yarmouth. John S. asked if there was a standard way of measuring students leaving Barnstable's school system. Gareth M. indicated that receiving districts must submit data to the DOE, which provides student enrolment as well as net spending data.

On page 6 of the Barnstable Public Schools FY17 Budget provides a percentage of Function Spending by Cost Center chart. The DOE requires local school districts to provide function spending by cost center.

The School Department's FY17 Budget of \$66,050,000 is an increase of \$1,800,000 or 2.8% from FY16. The budget includes additional 6.25 full-time employees. There is \$153,411 in retirement savings included within the FY17 budget, which is used to offset budget increases. The School Department anticipates 15 teachers will be retiring in FY17. The budget includes increases in Crossroads program \$195,000 for 3.5 FTE, and \$183,475 English Language Learners (ELL) for 2.55 FTE.

The Crossroads Program is a labor-intensive program, so there becomes a need for Special Education Classroom Assistants (SECA) to focus on 7 to 8 students. The town works with Cape Cod Collaborative to support special education, however, for every student that moves back into the local school district from Cape Cod Collaborative the district is saving \$45,000 per student. It was noted a need for autism programs seem to be on the rise. The school district prepays Cape Cod Collaborative \$592,500 for 15 slots at the beginning of every year. Lillian W. asked how many students attend the collaborative program or other out of district programs. Gareth M. replied 47 students, but not all Cape Cod Collaborative. Bill B. commented that it's extremely expensive for the school district to place students out of district, that is, FY13 it cost the school \$4,900,000 for 61 students. Joseph M. asked what these costs include. Bill B. replied it includes both Cape Cod Collaborative and off-Cape services for transportation and

program costs. Some of these programs may also include medical cost such as nurses. These programs can also extend into the summer. The New England Center for Children is an example of off-Cape services.

Gregory P. asked what the acronym IEP means. Bill B. replied Individual Education Program.

ELL has seen an increase from 272 students in FY12 to 455 students in FY16. This is more than an entire grade level not speaking English within the school district. This demographic is expected to continue to increase to 508 in FY17 and 548 in FY18.

Athletics budget is increasing \$92,215 largely to cover current expenses. There are savings in utilities of \$50,000 and \$220,000 from one-time expenditures in FY16. Contractual obligations are up \$1,600,000 from FY16 based on similar contractual agreements with the teachers union from the prior contract. Bill B. commented there is not much room for program growth due to the majority of cost supporting contractual obligations. There is \$304,000 for program enhancements and \$50,000 for preventive maintenance (savings from utilities). Bill B. commented that the school tries to increase the maintenance budget each year. The entire school districts estimated annual preventative maintenance budget based upon the industries replacement cost formula should equal \$3,400,000; however, the current budget is \$1,900,000. The school plans to add \$24,000 for textbook replacement in FY17 in addition to \$36,000 in FY16. Many of these textbooks are dated in the 1990 era. Joseph M. asked what books are being replaced. Gareth M. replied only the high school textbooks. The school district has a 6-year textbook replacement cycle. John S. asked how much do these books cost. Bill B. replied it could range from \$36 to \$100.

Circuit Breaker threshold is tied to four-times the state average foundation budget per pupil. The state will reimburse a school district 75% of the difference spent over four-times the state average foundation budget per pupil. Bill B. noted the school has to spend over the state requirement in order to get any reimbursement, and that reimbursements are always subject to state appropriation.

The FY17 school budget includes \$230,000 to support a Reading Program for students K-5. Currently, the district does not have a consistent reading program at all K-5 sites. The purpose of this program is to provide consistency across the entire school district because of a decline in student reading skills. When students move up a level, it becomes a significant challenge for teachers because of the inconsistency in reading skills amongst students. Laura C. asked why the school does not have a reading program. Bill B. replied the school does not use a published curriculum; however, teachers create their own reading materials. This current system has shown to be ineffective. In addition, research has shown students who lack-reading skills are more likely to struggle throughout the rest of their life. The new Reading Program is a 6-year license over three installments of \$230,000 for a combined cost of \$700,000. Lillian W. asked if this program could be monitored for performance. Bill B. commented this program can be evaluated for performance, and that it is a standardized program across all grades. This program also provides professional training for teachers. The program is expected to affect 2,400 students.

John S. commented that 10% of student enrolment is English Language Learners, and that it's going to be a challenge on these test.

Roughly, 46% of Barnstable's students are considered high needs students that is compared to 42% statewide average. The ELL is a contributing factor to Barnstable's above average high

needs students. Lillian W. asked how this compared to other Cape school districts. Bill B. commented that Yarmouth has a higher percentage, and that we are the two highest school districts on Cape for high need students.

Bill B. commented that more students are leaving the school district by about net 40 students. There are 140 students going out versus 100 students coming in. Gareth M. noted there are about 30 applications for students coming into the school districts each year, however, the school wants to hold true to the classroom ratio of 25 students to 1 teacher. This constrains the schools ability to take in more students from other school districts. Gareth M. also commented that those students who start early in the school district are less likely to move out of district in the future. Joseph M. asked how much reimbursement the school district receives for students coming from other districts. Bill B. commented the town would receive about \$5,000 per student.

Gareth M. noted the school district is concerned regarding the contractual cost associated with the bus transportation. This is a Cape wide concern given the bus transportation company is the only provider in the region. The contract is expiring next year and future cost estimates are between 20-30% increase. The school was considering providing the transportations themselves, however, this would require large personnel and capital cost. Joseph M. asked the mileage requirements for students to provide their own transportation to schools. Bill B. commented the school is required to provide transportation for students outside 2 miles. Lillian W. asked if students are required to take the bus to school. Bill B replied it is not required, and that some buses are only 25% full because students find other means of transportation. Ralph K. asked is there opportunity to collaborate with other school districts to share transportation cost. Bill B. noted that some transportation is shared with Cape Cod Collaborative. There are several school districts on Cape that do collaborate on transportations cost.

Bill B. commented the state is encouraging regionalization of school districts, but no longer provide state aid to help support the regionalization. Gareth M. commented that there is potential for Cape wide regionalization for auxiliary services like food services, transportation and building maintenance.

Laura C. noted the Gregory P., Cynthia C., and Lillian W. terms will expire in June, however, they have confirmed their interest to remain on the committee for another term. Mark M. commented there are no applications for the vacant position on the committee.

Laura C. commented on CFAC conducting a workshop with Water Resource Advisory Committee (WRAC) asking the WRAC what it would like CFAC to prepare. Department of Public Works (DPW) is required to submit to the state by July 1 an updated 208 plan, so CFAC could ask DPW what their parameters are for the 208 Plan to help stimulate conversation with WRAC.

FY17 Operating Budget Review Assignments

John S. Airport
Lillian W. General Fund
Joseph M. School
Laura C. Enterprises

4. Other matters not reasonably anticipated by the chair

5. Discussion of topics for the next meeting

The next meeting is May 9, 2016, and topic of discussion will include review of the Water Resource Advisory Committee presentation.

6. Adjournment

List of documents handed out

1. 04.11.16 Draft Minutes
2. School Budget
3. School Handouts