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TOWN OF AYER
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Shaun C. Copeland

Town of Ayer
Ayer Board of Selectmen
Ayer Town Hall – 1st Floor Meeting Room
Ayer, MA 01432



Special Joint Meeting of the Ayer Board of Selectmen and Ayer Finance Committee

Broadcast and Recorded by APAC

Tuesday February 25, 2020
Open Session Meeting Minutes

BOS Present: Scott A. Houde, Chair; Jannice L. Livingston, Vice-Chair; Shaun C. Copeland, Clerk

Fin Com Present: Patrick Diamond, Chair; Mark Smith, Vice-Chair; Lou Conrad

Also Present: Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager; Carly M. Antonellis, Assistant Town Manager
Dr. Mary Malone, ASRSD Superintendent; William Plunkett, ASRSD Business Manager;
Lisa Gabree, Finance Manager; Barbara Tierney, Treasurer/Tax Collector; Jim Quinty,
ASRSD School Committee Member (Shirley)

Call to Order: S. Houde called the BOS to order at 6:00 PM. P. Diamond called the Fin Com to order at 6:01pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: BOS/Fin Com members and meeting attendees stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ayer Shirley Regional School District FY 2021 Budget Presentation:

Dr. Mary Malone, Superintendent of Schools and Mr. William Plunkett, School Business Manager presented the Ayer Shirley Regional School District's FY 2021 Budget to the Special Joint Meeting of the Ayer Board of Selectmen and the Ayer Finance Committee.

Dr. Malone state that schools are not just schools, but they are the hub of a community. The quality of schools is a key metric in measuring the vitality of a community; therefore, there is an important partnership between schools and towns. Dr. Malone provided some of the key highlights for the ASRSD student enrollment as follows:

The District is down 30 students.

Most students lost have gone to Nashoba Valley Technical High School or Parker Charter.

Special education student enrollment is projected at 366 for FY 2021.

In terms of Foundation Enrollment for FY 2021, the ASRSD will be down 47 students with a decrease of 18 students from Ayer and a decrease of 29 students from Shirley.

Dr. Malone reviewed the various FY 2021 Budget Enhancements in the presentation and highlighted the following enhancements:

Director of School Counseling/coordinator of Social Emotional Learning

Adjustment/School Counselor at Page Hilltop in the amount of \$62,500

Implementation of Kindergarten through Grade 12 computer science with a Digital Literacy Integration Specialist in the amount of \$62,500 (from School Choice funds) and a High School Computer Science Teacher in the amount of \$62,500.

130 new Chromebooks for Teachers in the amount of \$40,000 (current Chromebooks are over 5 years old)

Eureka (new elementary math program) in the amount of \$70,000 and Newsela (social studies resources) in the amount of \$20,000

Mr. Plunkett reviewed the various FY 2021 Budget drivers, assumptions, and projections in the budget presentation.

Mr. Plunkett further stated that the overall/total ASRSD Budget Assessment will increase by \$600,081 over FY 2020 or a 3.2% increase.

Mr. Plunkett stated that the proposed ASRSD FY 2021 Assessments and Debt to Ayer and Shirley will be as follows:

Ayer: \$12,459,325 (represents a \$393,928 increase or 3.3% increase from FY 2020)

Shirley: \$8,015,123 (represents a \$207,452 increase or 2.6% from FY 2020)

S. Houde thanked Dr. Malone and Mr. Plunkett for their presentation.

S. Copeland asked that with the high school track currently closed what are the estimated costs to transport athletes to the Broomfield School for track meets and events?

Mr. Plunkett advised that there would be a slight increase in transportation costs which would be absorbed by the FY 2020 ASRSD Budget.

S. Houde asked how the ASRSD was doing in terms of funding their poste employment benefits (OPEB) liabilities?

Mr. Plunkett advised that \$10,000 is budgeted for OPEB for FY 2021 and that the ASRSD continues to make progress.

S. Houde asked how much longer are the payments for the Middle School debt?

Mr. Plunkett advised until the year 2026.

P. Diamond asked for clarification on the increases on Central Office Costs from FY 2019 to FY 2020.

S. Houde asked for further explanation regarding the security requirement and camera system for the Middle School.

Dr. Malone advised that the Middle School has an external security camera system which is the most important. We would like to now have an internal camera system which was also requested by the school principal.

S. Copeland asked if there are similar systems in the other schools.

Dr. Malone advised that the high school has a similar system, the elementary schools do not.

S. Houde stated that it is in the best interests of the Towns and the District if the District has a capital budget plan. The Field Project is important, and Ayer is looking forward at a new elementary school. It would be ideal over the next year if the ASRSD put together a three to five-year Capital Plan.

Dr. Malone stated that she would work with the Ayer Town Manager over the next year to put this together.

P. Diamond thanked Dr. Malone and Mr. Plunkett for a very professional presentation.

S. Houde also thanked Dr. Malone, Mr. Plunkett and the ASRSD for a very in-depth presentation and for all that they do for the schools and the students.

Motion: S. Houde made a motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen at 6:52pm which was seconded by J. Livingston. **Motion passed 3-0.**

The Board of Selectmen adjourned at 6:52pm.

Motion: M. Smith made a motion to adjourn the Finance Committee at 6:53pm which was seconded by L. Conrad. **Motion passed 3-0.**

The Finance Committee adjourned at 6:53pm.

Minutes Recorded and Submitted by Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager

Date Minutes Approved by BOS: 06/10/20

Signature Indicating Approval: 