

Town of Northbridge
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2022 at 6:30PM

Committee Members in Attendance: Plato Adams, Jim Barron, Steve Gogolinski and David Graham

Finance Committee Member(s) not in Attendance: Chris Pilla and Robert Dearborn

Town of Northbridge Administration in Attendance:

Adam Gaudette, Town Manager - Town of Northbridge, MA

Neil Vaidya, Town Accountant, Town of Northbridge, MA

Amy McKinstry, Superintendent, Town of Northbridge, MA - Northbridge Public Schools (NPS)

Melissa Walker, Director of Business and Finance, Town of Northbridge, MA – Northbridge Public Schools (NPS)

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent – Director, Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District

Other Attendees:

Sean Ferry

Finance Committee Meeting Called to Order

At 6:31 PM, Plato Adams, Finance Committee Chair for the Town of Northbridge, called the meeting to order.

Northbridge Public Schools – (NPS) presented the following FY 2023' Department Budget:

Superintendent Amy McKinstry and Melissa Walker, NPS Director of Business and Finance from the Town of Northbridge, MA Public Schools – (NPS) presented the following FY 2023' NPS Department Budget:

- The proposed FY 2023 Northbridge Public School budget totaled \$30,634,354 which is an increase of \$1,381,410 or 4.72% from FY 2022 which totaled \$29,252,944.
- The proposed FY 2023 Northbridge Public School budget total FTE increased to 355.3 from the 354.7 FTE in FY 2022 and increase of .6 FTE.

Total Budgeted From Grants FY 23': \$ 2,033,469 versus FY 22': \$ 1,735,261

Total Budgeted From Revolvers FY 23': \$ 3,331,773 versus FY 22': \$ 2,778,571

Total Budgeted from Appropriation FY 23': \$25,269,112 versus FY 22': \$24,739,112

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Overview – Northbridge Public Schools

Per Melissa Walker the following expenditures are being requested via an ARPA Funding Application:

Project Student Chrome books Requested Amount: \$78,750

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American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Overview – Northbridge Public Schools – Continued

Eligible Use Category: Responding to Negative Economic Impacts / Addressing Educational Disparities.

ARPA Request Summary:

Over the course of the past several years, through various circumstances and sources of funding (capital articles, COVID grants, building project for the new NES, etc.), NPS has been fortunate to acquire enough chrome books to cover the total number of students enrolled in the district. Chrome books receive Chrome updates for five (5) years, and once a chrome book reaches five years of age, it will no longer receive important updates, including but not limited to security updates. Chrome books that cannot be updated cannot be used for state testing (MCAS.) Between June of 2022 and December of 2024, there will be 210 chrome books that will reach their five (5) year life span, and therefore, they will no longer be able to update. In order to ensure we are able to maintain a 1:1 ratio of chrome books to students, these 210 chrome books will need to be replaced.

Capital Plan Item - Middle School Cafeteria Tables

Per Melissa Walker the following expenditures in the amount of \$49,920 are being requested via the Town of Northbridge Capital Plan:

The Northbridge Middle School is looking to replace its cafeteria tables. Currently, the Middle School has round cafeteria tables with separate stackable chairs. The school would like to replace these tables with rectangular tables with attached stools.

The Middle School cafeteria tables/chairs are approaching 35 years of age. The current tables are round and are accompanied by separate stackable chairs. The school would like to replace these tables with rectangular tables with attached stools.

Additionally, guidelines and recommendations for health protocols and social distancing of students have changed over the course of the pandemic. Therefore, should we need to return to more stringent protocols again, rectangular tables will help us support those changes. For example, if students need to return to sitting all facing one direction or stagger every other seat, the rectangular tables will allow us to seat more students safely at a table than the round tables. Tables with affixed stools will also help us ensure there are only a specific number of students at each table. With a circular table with detached stackable chairs, while eight (8) seats may be set up around the table, students will pull seats from one table to the next and crowd together to sit with their friends.

Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District FY 2023' Proposed Budget Presentation

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent – Director, Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District presented the FY 2023' Proposed Budget Presentation

Total FY 2023' Proposed All Revenues / Expenditures increased from \$26,396,702 to \$27,690,140 an increase of \$1,293,438 or 4.90% increase over FY 2022'.

The Town of Northbridge's Operational Ratio is 12.48% with an enrollment of 156 students for a total FY 2023' assessment in the amount of \$1,899,148.

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Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District FY 2023' Proposed Budget Presentation – Continued

- This represents a reduction of minus \$103,931 in relation to FY 2022'.
- The per pupil assessment is \$12,176 for 156 students

The proposed debt increase totaled \$64,511

- This represents a reduction of minus \$3,405 in relation to FY 2022'.

Of the 4.90% increase, 88% is attributed to wages, health insurance, capital assets and transportation.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Overview - Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District

LPFK Protomat Milling System - \$28,320

A request has been submitted via an ARPA funding request to Adam Gaudette, Town Manager for the Town of Northbridge, MA for a LPFK Protomat Milling System in the amount of \$28,320.

The milling system will allow BVT students to take their electronic designs from concept to reality. The LPKF Protomat machine represents the state-of-the-art industry standard of circuit board production. This equipment produces circuit board in both fast and precise manner given the high speed milling spindle. In addition, this machinery incorporates the newest software technology into BVT's Electronics curriculum preparing BVT students for post-graduation placement in the field.

Approval of Previous Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

None

Next Scheduled Finance Committee Meetings

The next scheduled Finance Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 16, 2022 at 6:30PM at the Northbridge Town Hall, 7 Main Street, Whitinsville, MA 01588. The following will be the presentation topics:

- Public Hearing per Code of Bylaws
- Town Manager Budget Update
 - o Budget Calendar
 - o Preliminary FY 2023 Operating Budget
 - o Spring Annual Town Meeting Warrant
 - o Capital Funding Plan
 - o Questions from the Public
- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Overview
 - o Town Manager Introduction of ARPA
 - o Project Discussions
 - o Questions from the Public

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Next Scheduled Finance Committee Meetings – Continued

- Approve prior Finance Committee Meeting Minute(s)
- Other

Adjournment

Since no further business was to be transacted, a motion to adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting at 8:15PM was made by Steve Gogolinski, seconded by David Graham and unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ James P. Barron, Clerk, Town of Northbridge Finance Committee