



Board of Trustees
Budget and Finance Committee
Lincoln Campus
And via Microsoft Teams
Tuesday, January 9th, 2024
12:00pm

MINUTES

ATTENDEES

Trustees:
Janet Armstrong, Committee Chair
Kay Satre, Committee Member
Terry Beaver, Committee Member
Jeff Hindoien, Committee Member

Others:
Rex Weltz, Superintendent
Jane Shawn, HEA President
Keri Mizell, Human Resources Director
Candice Delvaux, Executive Assistant
Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff
Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager
Gary Myers, Director of Educational Technology
Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent
Kaitlyn Hess, Assessment & Federal Programs
Lona Carter, Student Health
Joslyn Davidson, Curriculum Director
Tim McMahon, Activities Director
Todd Verrill, Facilities Director
Karen Ogden, Communications Officer
Several Guests of the Public

I. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Janet Armstrong called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

II. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no general public comment.

III. REVIEW OF AGENDA

No changes were made to the agenda.

IV. REVIEW OF MINUTES

The committee reviewed and approved the 12.12.23 Budget and Finance Committee Meeting Minutes.

V. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

A. Budget to Actual Reports

Mrs. Janelle Mickelson, Business Manager and District Clerk for Helena Public Schools, reviewed the budget to actual reports for the elementary general fund and high school general fund with the Budget and Finance Committee. Mrs. Mickelson stated that we have had quite a bit of movement in secretarial positions so there are some savings there that wasn't anticipated and the same is true, particularly in the elementary, for paraprofessionals. If that trend continues, we should have a budget surplus in those areas. Mrs. Mickelson stated that we have about one to one and a half percent more of our budget remaining now than we did at this same time last year, however we have not settled negotiations yet so that number could change. Mrs. Mickelson stated everything else is trending as expected. Mrs. Mickelson stated that the Business Office is in the process of being audited by the company Wipfli LLP. The results of the audit will be presented before the full Board of Trustees at a future board meeting.

B. Levies Discussion

The Budget and Finance Committee had a robust conversation about levies. At the full Board of Trustees meeting this evening the trustees will be presented with the action items for the elementary trustee resolution calling for the annual regular election and the high school trustee resolution calling for the annual regular election.

Superintendent Wertz mentioned that the specific amounts for the five levies we are requesting will not be listed tonight as we are still identifying what those amounts will be, and we hope to have those amounts by February. The District will be requesting an increase in the technology mill levy for both the elementary and the high school districts for the purpose of purchasing, renting, repairing and maintaining technological equipment, including computers and computer network access, cloud computing services for technology infrastructure, platforms, software, network, storage, security, data, database, test environment curriculum, or desktop virtualization purposes, including any subscription or any license-based or pay-per-use service that is accessed over the internet or other remote network to meet the district's information technology and other needs, and the associated technical training for school district personnel. If approved, the increased levies will be for a term of 10 years and will take effect July 1, 2024, and expire June 30, 2034. In addition to the initiatives mentioned above, the District will be requesting a school and student safety and security building reserve fund levy for the purpose of planning for improvements to and maintenance of school and student safety; programs to support school and student safety and security; installing or updating security-related facility improvements; and installing or updating response systems using contemporary technologies. The District will also be requesting an operational levy for the general fund specifically.

The Budget and Finance Committee discussed that the next enrollment count will take place on Monday, February 5th. We were down around 145 students when we did the fall enrollment count. Neither the ability to run a general fund mill levy nor the amount of the levy will be known until after the spring enrollment count is finalized and the issuance of preliminary budget data sheets. However, due to the statutory requirement to call for the election no later than 70 days before the election, the recommendation is to include the general fund mill levy request in the resolution. If the Board later determines that the mill levy cannot be requested or is not desired, that portion of the election can be cancelled. Based on fall enrollment counts, the District could run an elementary levy for approximately \$143,293. Fall enrollment counts indicate that a high school levy cannot be requested.

The Budget and Finance Committee discussed the progress of the Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee. The Budget Consensus Committee is still meeting and brainstorming ideas, but there have been zero recommendations to the full Board of Trustees from the Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee thus far; those recommendations will come before the board at a future date.

VI. BOARD COMMENT

Trustee Janet Armstrong stated she appreciates that the Budget Consensus Recommendation Committee is comprised of teachers, administrators, parents, and members of local businesses

and the community. Trustee Armstrong appreciates the opportunity to listen to different perspectives to see if someone has input that maybe the administration has not thought of.

Superintendent Weltz concluded the meeting by stating that Business Manager Janelle Mickelson is working on building the five-year budget forecast which will be presented to the Budget and Finance Committee at a future meeting.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Janet Armstrong adjourned the meeting at 12:35 p.m.