

10 New Bond Street Worcester, MA 01606 Phone: (508) 854-8400 Fax: (508) 854-8484 www.akfcs.org

### Facilities and Finance Committee Meeting Agenda

### https://akfcs-org.zoom.us/j/98983268038?pwd=R1dyaGJwMEM5Q2M4cHJXUk5YNTc0UT09

### Friday, March 18, 2022, 8:00 a.m. DIGITAL MEETING

**Meeting ID**: 989 8326 8038 **Passcode**: 840857

**By phone**: +1 929 205 6099 **Meeting ID**: 989 8326 8038

I. Call to Order- Mr. Patrick Royce, Chair

APPROVED

3.15.22 3:30 pm City of Worcester, MA

- II. Introductions/Attendance Recorded
- III. Review of the February 18, 2022, Meeting Minutes
  - **a. Motion:** To approve the February 18, 2022, Meeting Minutes
- IV. Salary Scale Presentation- Mr. Benjamin Reilly & Ms. Alisha Carpino
- V. Flood Update
  - a. Insurance- Ms. Carpino
  - **b.** Renovations- Mr. Michael Grennon
  - c. Service Master- Ms. Heidi Paluk
- VI. Financial Reports- Ms. Alisha Carpino
- VII. Facilities Update- Mr. Michael Grennon (Time Permitting)
- VIII. IT Update- Mr. Gabriel Beltran (Time Permitting)
- IX. Upcoming Facilities & Finance/BOT Committee Meetings
  - a. Wednesday, April 13, 2022
  - **b.** Thursday, April 21, 2022- Board of Trustees Budget Presentation
  - c. Thursday, April 27, 2022- Board of Trustees Budget Approval
  - **d.** Friday, May 20, 2022
- X. Adjournment



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### Friday, February 18, 2022, 8:00 a.m. DIGITAL MEETING

https://akfcs-org.zoom.us/j/99598537554?pwd=cWFDUC9hQ2VlejZKc2RpUmhjTWZOZz09

**Meeting ID**: 995 9853 7554 **Passcode**: 798010

By phone: +1 929 205 6099 US (New York) Meeting ID: 995 9853 7554

- I. Call to Order- Mr. Patrick Royce, Chair
- II. Introductions/Attendance Recorded
- III. Review of the January 21, 2022, Meeting Minutes
  - **a. Motion**: To approve the January 21, 2022, Meeting Minutes
- IV. Financial Reports- Ms. Alisha Carpino
  - a. Salary Committee
  - **b.** Financials
- V. Facilities- Mr. Michael Grennon
  - a. Middle Schoool Flood Repairs
- VI. IT- Mr. Gabriel Beltran
- VII. SG/WBC- Ms. Heidi Paluk
- VIII. Topics at the discretion of the Committee Chair
- IX. Upcoming Facilities & Fiance Committee Meetings
  - **a.** Friday, March 18, 2022
  - **b.** Friday, April 15, 2022
- X. Adjournment



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# Facilities and Finance Committee Meeting Minutes- DRAFT Friday, February 18, 2022, 8:00 a.m. DIGITAL MEETING

https://akfcs-org.zoom.us/j/99598537554?pwd=cWFDUC9hQ2VlejZKc2RpUmhjTWZOZz09

**Meeting ID**: 995 9853 7554 **Passcode**: 798010

By phone: +1 929 205 6099 US (New York) Meeting ID: 995 9853 7554

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Patrick Royce, Treasurer. The attendance was recorded as follows:

Board/Committee Members: Bibiche Zagabe-Ndiku, Patrick Royce

**Board/Committee Members Not Present:** Celia J. Blue

Staff in attendance: Heidi Paluk, Michael Grennon, Alisha Carpino, Michelle Vigneux, Gabriel Beltran

Mr. Royce opened the meeting at 8:02 a.m. Mr. Royce asked the Committee to review the Meeting Minutes from January 21, 2022. Upon their review, Mr. Royce asked for a motion to approve the minutes from January 21, 2022, Facilities & Finance Meetings. Ms. Zagabe-Ndiku made the motion, it was seconded by Mr. Royce. The committee unanimously approved the minutes.

### **Salary Committee**

Ms. Carpino began by stating that the salary scale work has been completed and they were now working on creating a policy surrounding the salary scale budget and working to put a document in place. The plan is that 2 representatives from the salary scale will be presenting to Heidi and Alisha and the Finance committee next month and the BOT. The budget will be presented in April with this piece in it. Ms. Carpino stated that it went from 25 years to 15 years and provides everyone with a \$6,000 increase at each step which will allow for us to be competitive with Worcester. Mr. Royce inquired about the total increase to the budget to which Ms. Carpino stated that it was a million-dollar increase. Mr. Royce also inquired about the steps taken to set up the



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salary scale and how the increase was determined and Ms. Carpino explained that a projection was created before deciding on the amount. Ms. Zagabe-Ndiku inquired about whether an increase in revenue would be determined to sustain the million-dollar revenue to which Ms. Carpino stated that there was and stated that she will draft documents to show precisely how this will be done in the presentation next month. Ms. Carpino explained that the salary scale conversation began in 2019 and did not go further than that and the last time the salary was updated was in 2014. Ms. Carpino also explained that everyone would get a 3.5% increase every year allowing for some competition for the staff as we currently have a low salary scale.

Ms. Carpino explained that the interest rate is up for renewal next year and we offered the option to renew now at 3.35%. Ms. Caprino explained that this meant that if the rate next year was lower, we would not be able to use that as we are locked in. She also explained that if it is higher, we would be safe from that increase. There would also be a prepayment penalty of three years and they are currently looking at which direction to go. Ms. Carpino and Mr. Royce decided to continue to look into what this meant before making a decision. Ms. Zagabe-Ndiku inquired about the renewal date to which Mr. Royce stated it would be 2023.

Ms. Carpino provided an update on financials and began by stating that our actual revenue was \$46,000 below the budgeted amount and a large portion of this was due to not yet receiving the regional transportation payment which will not be received until the end of the year, totaling about \$50,000. Ms. Caprino also stated that 1.2% of the tuition was lost but this was budgeted even higher than the current loss. Transportation is below budget and is underspent with sports travel and field trips but we should see transportation pick up in the spring. Ms. Carpino stated that we have also received a significant amount of grants which caused the increase in that category and we have also put in for competitive grants. Ms. Carpino stated that a literacy grant that was applied for was received for \$200,000. Salaries continue to be under budget by 1% and there are not many open positions; 4 full-time positions are currently open and two of those positions are in the process of being filled.

Benefits will continue to stay under budget as it was overbudgeted originally and the debt-to-service coverage ratio continues to be at 1.66% with a required ratio of 1.15%. Ms. Carpino also stated that she has been meeting with ADP and is waiting for a full plan on pricing and she does plan on making a presentation as



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they offer more support than HR knowledge and if the change is made, it will be reflected in the budget for next year.

#### **Facilities**

Mr. Grennon began by explaining that both quotes have now come in for the work that is to be done in the ES, one for \$332,896 and \$280,152, with the lower price being Blue Sky. Mr. Grennon states that he is now waiting for a response on the best time to schedule a meeting to discuss the findings with Ms. Carpino and Ms. Paluk. Mr. Royce inquired about whether there would be mitigation work done to which Ms. Paluk stated that this cost did not include that.

Mr. Grennon explained that the main transformer in the ES was also being changed as it failed and it will be replaced next Tuesday. Mr. Grennon also explained that the break room is currently being worked on and they are looking to replace the roof in the MS as this is the cause of the constant leak. Mr. Royce also inquired about the trucking company that we use and about why we were being billed for 90 hours as this seemed excessive. Mr. Grennon explained that this falls along the same amount as last year.

Ms. Carpino also explained that liberty has raised their prices \$35,000-\$40,000/year. Mr. Royce inquired about whether we were informed of the markup we would experience from the donation and whether we can discuss it to which Ms. Carpino stated that she would reach out and ask for any details related to the snow removal.

#### IT

Mr. Beltran began by explaining that last month's IT request dealt with more common issues with the top request having to deal with Chromebooks and Wifi. 24 cameras were installed at the Middle School and a new server was also installed and 20 High school cameras will be online next week. Mr. Beltran also spoke on the current status of the network upgrade project and stated that the wiring for this will be done over the February break. He explained that there are still cameras that need to be changed as they are old and lose power intermittently.

Mr. Beltran also explained that with the recycling and decommissioning of devices, we received \$1,980.00 back. He also explained that 134 new Chromebooks were given to all 3rd graders and they are



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planning deployment for 2nd Grade next. They are also making sure that the servers can support the needs of the district. Mr. Beltran explained that there is a current need for teacher laptops and spare projectors.

#### SG/WBC

Mr. Royce stated that he would reach out to the necessary parties to have an additional meeting and there would be no update at the moment.

### **Topics at the Discretion of the Committee Chair**

Ms. Paluk stated that at the BOT meeting next week, she would like to have a sense from the Board of how to proceed as DESE has eliminated masks as of February 28, 2022. The decision is now in the hands of the local school but as of yet, the local Board of Health in Worcester has not removed the mask restriction yet so nothing can be done until they vote to keep or remove the restriction on March 7, 2022. The BOT would then need to decide the best course of action. Ms. Paluk stated that she did ask parents to provide feedback and has received split comments. Ms. Paluk stated that the recommendation she would have is to make the masks optional but address the peer pressure that may arise from whatever decision the student/staff takes and know that we reserve the right to place masks back if cases were to rise.

Ms. Paluk then spoke on comments received about the BOT meeting in person as restrictions are lifted. Ms. Paluk explained that at this moment, there is an expectation that we are to provide the same level of accessibility as we have done over the last two years, meaning that if we were to return in person, the meetings would have to be broadcasted and a production team would need to be hired and we would have to buy equipment. This was not done before the pandemic and this does not appear to be an option at the moment, and the open meeting law that allows for only zoom meetings is set to expire April 1, 2022. Ms. Paluk stated that Mr. Beltran would look into costs for potentially having to take this route and would send the information to the Committee and Mr. Royce would speak to this at the next Board meeting this month.

Mr. Royce asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Zagabe-Ndiku provided the motion and was seconded by Mr. Royce. The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 a.m.



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## F&F Meeting 3-18-22

## ES

We have a meeting scheduled for Monday 3-21-22 with the contractor Blusky to discuss the rebuild of the Elementary basement. We will have a timeline in place by the next meeting.

## **MS**

We installed the outside cameras on the building last week. We now have 12 different angles of the Middle school property.

## HS

We have one camera installed that is in place and ready to plug in to adjust. The other 2 cameras will be complete next week. All the cables are run and they just need the tips install and the units mounted.

## IT Updates 3/2022

- Last Month more common Issues
  - o 367 Resolved tasks
  - Top 3 categories
    - Chromebooks (Updates, New chromebooks and Break fix)
    - Support (accounts, projectors and printing)
    - Accounts and Email
- Infrastructure
  - 12 Exterior video feeds are now live at the MS
  - Network upgrade Project
    - More wiring was installed over the break.
  - Server and Network Planning
    - Servers On premises Vs Cloud
    - Firewall and Security services
    - Wi-Fi Inventory
- Other Projects / tasks / completed
  - o All district Chromebook were updated to Chrome OS 97
    - Progress on Inventory
    - Android Apps
  - Clever Beta test for future implementation started
    - Small group testing
    - Login with Badge
- Issues with our Copier Vendor
  - Toner shortages



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Friday, March 18, 2022, 8:00 a.m. DIGITAL MEETING

**Meeting ID**: 989 8326 8038 **Passcode**: 840857

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Mr. Royce opened the meeting at 8:02 a.m. Mr. Royce asked the Committee to review the Meeting Minutes from February 18, 2022. Upon their review, Mr. Royce asked for a motion to approve the minutes from February 18, 2022, Facilities & Finance Meetings. Ms. Zagabe-Ndiku made the motion, it was seconded by Ms. Blue. A roll call vote was taken to which Ms. Blue abstained as she was not present for that meeting. The meeting notes were approved.

### Flood Update

Ms. Carpino began by explaining that Abby Kelley has the national flood program which is costly and does not provide the best coverage possible. The research was done and it was determined that while the new possible coverage does not add additional coverage than what we currently have, it is significantly cheaper. Information has been shared with that company and they are currently reviewing past claims of the school and will decide. Mr. Grennon provided an update on the meeting that is scheduled for BlueSky for Monday, March 21, 2022, which will begin the process of the ES basement renovations.

Mr. Royce inquired about any flood mitigation work that would be done to which Ms. Paluk explained that a company has not been brought in to discuss that at the moment. Ms. Paluk explained that in the meeting, she would discuss how the basement was going to be rebuilt to avoid further damage from future flooding.

Service Master provided no documentation to inform the school of the scope of work that was going to be done, according to Ms. Paluk. it was also noted that many conversations took place between August to



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October that did not involve anyone from Anny Kelley and because all of the work is not covered under the insurance, there is a very significant bill left under the responsibility of Abby Kelley. Mr. Royce inquired about whether it would be feasible to involve counsel at this step to which Ms. Paluk agreed.

While the amount that is the responsibility of Abby Kelley has not fully been determined, it was noted that even with the policy of \$500,000, only \$180,000 of it was covered for both the demolition and rebuild. The lack of communication between the agents, adjuster, and the school caused further confusion and it was determined that counsel would be the next step along with the potential of a letter being sent to the claims department head informing them this claims process was not done in good faith.

### **Salary Scale Presentation**

Ms. Carpino provided a brief overview of the work that has been taking place since November. The co-chair of the committee, Mr. Benjamin Reilly, worked with a committee composed of different teachers from each school to come up with a salary scale that will be a stepping stone for future discussions. Ms. Carpino noted that this would be presented again during the budget meeting to demonstrate how this will work within the budget.

Mr. Reilly began by informing the committee members that the salary has not been adjusted in at least 6 years while the industry standard has been to update the salary scale every year by about 2% to account for inflation. With the standard increase of 2%, it was noted that teachers with a bachelor's degree would be paid about 13% more, while teachers with a master's degree would be paid about 14.5% more. This has also caused many people to accept jobs and then turn them down for a position that is paying them more, placing Abby Kelley in the difficult position of not being able to be competitive enough to retain teachers.

Mr. Reilly explained that every K-12 school in the district was compared to Abby Kelley based on enrollment, number of teachers, and population data, of which 100 out of the 220 distinct districts were researched. 84/100 had teacher contracts available online and 22 out of 84 were deemed recent enough to use. Based on that comparison that was done, it was noted that the cost of living averaged 1.85% and the average number of steps was 13.36, while Abby Kelley currently has 25 steps, and the average starting salary was 20% higher than our starting salary for the bachelors. The salary scale committee determined that based on the research, several actions would need to take place such as an increase in the starting salary, reducing the number



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of steps, and increasing the difference between each step, resulting in more significant yearly raises. The current salary scale for Abby Kelley was at \$40,000 when the average was \$50,000 and yearly increases were small, between 2%-3%.

With this information in hand, the suggestions from the salary scale committee were to increase the starting salary to \$47,000, which is still below standard but a step forward. It was also determined that the number of steps should be decreased from 25 to 15, which is also above standard and each step increase would come with a 3.5% raise. There would be a 6% increase for the first 2 lane changes and any lane changes after the masters is a 3% increase. With these new proposals, we would still be behind the average amounts by 5%. The budget would be reviewed yearly and a salary scale committee would meet yearly while reviewing the schools' competitiveness every 3 years.

Ms. Carpino explained that a ten-year trend of information was used to create the three-year projection and that was done to ensure that the salary scale could be sustained. Because of this, Ms.Carpino explained that no one-time funds were used in building the scale and the salary scale was forecasted with no retirements and no turnover so the projection would be higher. There were also no changes to federal or state grants going forward and kept them the state every year. Ms. Carpino noted that the budget advisory committee would consist of two instructional staff from each school which the Faculty council would nominate. At the end of the scale where the staff would max out on their raises, there would be a longevity bonus that would allow for staff to be able to stay current with the cost of living challenges.

Based on the budget calculations from Ms. Carpino, each year would be about a \$700,000 increase to teachers' salaries and this was done to make sure that we did not outpace ourselves with this projection. The salary scale update would allow our teachers to be paid a salary that is much closer to the industry standard, making Abby Kelley more competitive in attracting qualified teachers and staff. The salary scale would also have predictable and significant raises every year, allowing for better retention of staff.

Mr. Royce inquired about obtaining a list of the 22 schools that were used for comparison as he wanted to use that to compare the cost of living, stating that it would be more expensive to live in Boston as opposed to Worcester. Mr. Royce also asked for clarification on teachers not receiving a salary scale adjustment in 6 years,



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to which it was explained that there was an adjustment two years ago in which everyone skipped one level and there was a 1% adjustment through all the levels but an actual standard increase was not done in the past 6 years. It was also noted that while teachers do receive step increases, it does not include the cost of living changes.

Ms. Blue inquired about the current longevity bonus and whether there was a plan in place for it to which Ms. Carpino explained that while there was no document in place, this has been something that has been done even by her predecessor once the teacher no longer qualifies for the yearly raises. Mr. Royce also inquired about where the teachers reside and it was noted that there were not many teachers with bachelor's degrees due to not having a competitive salary scale among other institutions. Ms. Zagabe-Ndiku also inquired about whether there would be space to increase the starting scale as it is still below standard and the hiring of teachers has become difficult but is critical to which Ms. Carpino explained that while she agrees that this is not enough, it is currently what fits. She also explained that this is just a starting point and would be looking at other ways to increase the lines of revenue, which would allow for more salary increases. Ms.Zagabe-Ndiku then inquire about finding grants that support a hiring bonus which would allow for the budget to remain the same to which Ms. Carpino explained that a bonus was provided last year and there would also be a 2% bonus being given in May.

Ms. Paluk stated that there is money available for teacher diversification that does go towards helping to pay for classes and other items but it is focused on diverse teachers but the application was not submitted this year due to the lack of structure in place that would have supported that. She explained that there were systemic changes that needed to take place for the recruitment of teachers who may not have had a traditional path into education and to also support them with additional financial compensation. Ms. Blue also inquire about the current grants and whether any of them could be influenced in terms of requesting it on our end from a proposal standpoint to which Ms. Carpino explained that Ms. Vigneux has done an incredible job of finding grants for budget items that were included so it allows for the grant monies to open space in the budget.



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Mr. Royce inquired about whether the incentives were properly aligned with the needs of the school to which Ms. Caprino explained that the first three lanes were the ones that had the most increase and that more steps allowed for staff to have the incentive to advance their education. It was also noted that the longevity bonus was a great way to retain staff. Ms. Blue also noted that it would be a good idea to see a grid to see where all the salaries land and create an overall district goal of receiving incentives.

### **Financial Report**

Ms. Carpino began by stating that we are under the budget for the revenue from state sources. It was also noted by Ms. Carpino that the revenue was reduced by 7% and she is in touch with DESE to figure out the mistake if there was one. The Regional Transportation payment has also not been received yet so there is a difference showing as it comes later in the year. The in-district transportation is also reporting under budget by \$94,000 due to issues such as snow days and the lack of education outings due to the pandemic. The cost of gas has also increased so gas adjustment invoices have been sent, costing about \$4000.00 and it is currently being watched. The federal grant funding is also above the budgeted number and a \$200,000 ELA curriculum was received, along with a grant for \$61,000 for social, emotional, and mental health. Staffing costs and salaries are under budget by 2% and there are 3 open full-time positions at the moment.

The current benefits are under budget at 9% and based on a meeting with Ken, it was advised to budget at 9% again to be safe. A \$60,000 refund was received for HRA due to our funding of 25%, which was \$111,000 but any monies not used would be refunded. Ms. Carpino explained that this all put the debt ratio at 1.76%, compared to the required ratio of 1.15%.

Mr. Royce exited the meeting at 9:28 a.m. and Ms. Blue headed the remaining portion of the meeting.

#### **Facilities Update**

Mr. Grennon noted that there were outside cameras added outside of the middle school and the warehouse cameras are being completed at the high school. Ms. Blue inquired about having a document put together providing an overview of the different projects being completed.



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IT Update

Mr. Beltran began by stating that the main issues are still the Chromebooks and new Chromebooks are being rolled out to the students and staff. The exterior cameras that were placed are now being backed up in case something were to happen to the server. Mr. Beltran also noted that updates have been done on many of the Chromebooks as they were not up-to-date and they have also been working on implementing an inventory

system by next month. It was also explained that there was still a nationwide toner shortage and they were

reviewing if the number of copier machines and printers were necessary for terms of cost and supply shortages.

Mr. Beltran implored everyone to think about the supplies that the teachers may need and use that information to strategically plan the devices that would be needed such as the projectors and Chromebooks as it is impacting how the students are expected to do their work.

Ms. Blue asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Ms. Zagabe-Ndiku and seconded by Ms. Blue. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

List of Documents Provided:

Facilities Report IT Report