

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 303
District Budget Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: February 24, 2009

Place: Bainbridge High School Library

Information

2008/2009 Budget Status Report

Director of Business Services Peggy Paige provided a brief overview of the district's Monthly Financial Reports for January. She noted the district is on track with the 2008/2009 budget. Related to revenues, the year-to-date tax collections are now on par with the 3-year average. State revenue increases are consistent with state funding estimates for the 2008/2009 school year based on budgeted enrollment. Current enrollment is down 9 FTE from the budgeted enrollment. Related to expenditures, the year-to-date compared to budget are in line with the 3-year average. Ms. Paige noted that the current budgeted percentage of Support Services is both below last year and the expected average for the month. This was attributed to Transportation/Motor Pool expenditures that were lower because of a partial payment of insurance, lower gas costs and no capital outlay. Utilities are close to last year but currently above the 3-year average (the district is waiting for reimbursement of propane costs from the Park District). Net cash outflow during January was just below 600K and the end-of-year projection remains 1 million. Ms. Paige noted she looks for trends in the monthly reports.

State and Federal Budget Information Updates

Superintendent Faith Chapel observed the first K-12 Video Conference from OSPI regarding the federal stimulus package and the impact on K-12 education. This was noted to be a very preliminary overview. On the state level, there is not a great deal of new information. When the DBAC committee met in January, they reviewed the Governor's budget, which was built on an assumption of a 6 billion budget gap over the next biennium. The latest economic forecast would suggest that the state budget gap has grown to 8 billion. It was noted that the state legislators have been waiting for information about the federal stimulus package and the impact it will have on state budget planning. There are several elements to the federal stimulus package, with portions of it designated to specific purposes and portions targeted for "fiscal stabilization." The fiscal stabilization portion of the stimulus package is approximately 1B with 82% of that, 820M, intended to support K-12 and post-secondary education. The remaining 18% is for other government uses. It will be the legislature that determines the use of the stimulus funds based on the standards set by the federal government. One of the uses for K-12 could be to supplement state cuts in the I-728 funds, which statewide is about 900M. Another political variable could be a reduction in the area of levy equalization, which is currently approximately 450M statewide. (Bainbridge Island School District does not qualify for levy equalization.) Ms. Chapel noted that special education funding in the stimulus package was the largest allocation yet to date and will be distributed based on current formulas. Bainbridge has approximately 500 students that qualify for special education funding, and has received Safety Net funds in the past. It is unclear if there will be reductions in state Safety Net funding and it may be that the federal monies may supplant reductions in state special education funding. Regarding the district's budget planning process, Ms. Chapel noted that planning scenarios should be based on an assumed reduction of 1 million to 1.5 million.

Information/Discussion

Budget Development Process Updates

Ms. Chapel shared copies of her Budget Realities document, which she has presented to school staff and PTOs over the past few weeks. Comment was made that the presentation had been appreciated and it was hoped that the information would be offered to community groups, particularly the piece that explains the difference between the General Fund (operational) and the Capital Funds. The group briefly discussed how the Capital Funds could help support the General Fund.

Subcommittee Updates

Custodial & Maintenance

Director of Facilities and Capital Projects Tamela Van Winkle and members of the Custodial and Maintenance Subcommittee provided an overview of their work to date. The group was provided with a sample of the current custodial service levels in the district. The ranking of service levels range from Level 1 (spotless buildings) to Level 5 (minimal cleaning). It was noted that most school buildings currently receive custodial services in the Level 2 – 3 range. Other district facilities (Transportation, Maintenance, District Office) receive custodial service generally in the Level 4 range. One of the areas that has been reviewed is coordination of custodial services with community users and possible cost savings through that partnership. It was also noted that suggestions should be reviewed to determine if any contractual obligations apply. Other areas reviewed for possible cost savings were centralizing purchasing for custodial supplies, implementation of energy conservation practices, replacement of lighting ballasts, and possible installation of new hand dryers that would save on paper products. Ms. Van Winkle noted the committee is working well and being thoughtful in their process.

School Educational Programs -- K-6 & 7-12

Associate Superintendent Julie Goldsmith reported that the subcommittee(s) had met for an all-day session with others already scheduled. She was impressed with the groups' willingness and openness when talking about the budget. The committee reviewed Ms. Chapel's "Budget Realities" presentation to make sure there was a common understanding of current conditions. Then, within program areas, brainstormed the areas that should be reviewed. Those areas were then divided into categories to determine what was mandated, what was in bargaining agreements, what was not mandated that could be considered for reduction. An example of a mandated area is the length of the school year, and an example of a bargained item was class size. It was noted that the subcommittee(s) came up with three pages of possible items budget consideration. At the next meeting they will prioritize those items and more thoroughly analyze them based on the values and guidelines that have come from the District Budget Advisory Committee.

Instructional Support Services (Special Ed., Title I, Gifted, ELL)

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Clayton Mork reported on the Instructional Support Services (Special Ed., Title I, Gifted, ELL) subcommittee work, which includes awareness building about the budget conditions, answering questions and offering the opportunity for input. This subcommittee will also apply the same categories used by the school educational programs subcommittee, and will review the pros and cons of considering individual areas/items for possible reductions.

Transportation

Director of Personnel & Transportation Cami Dombkowski reported that the Transportation committee met to review the budget and discussed a variety of different scenarios. The committee is in the process of gathering research and information about the scenarios that had been proposed. Suggested scenarios range from a change in the way dispatching is handled to outsourcing of transportation services. The committee is scheduled to meet again on Thursday.

Central Administration Subcommittee

Ms. Chapel reported the Central Administration Subcommittee was scheduled to begin meeting next week. District staff have been involved in gathering salary data from other districts. The group discussed central office staffing ratios and it was noted that Bainbridge has one of the lowest ratios amongst similar sized districts for percentage of funding allocated to central office staffing.

Communication with Staff, Parents, Community

Ms. Chapel noted that she continues to do presentations regarding the budget planning process to community and parent groups. The district will also send out information about the budget planning process on a bi-weekly basis. This ongoing communication will be critical throughout the process.

Facilities Bond Information

Ms. Chapel stated the Board received a resolution for a 42 million capital bond in their materials packet for the February 26th meeting. One of the key elements within the bond resolution is the inclusion of 9 million designated for essential renovations for all district facilities. Those essential renovations include such things as HVAC systems and roofs, things that have impacted the General Fund. Another key element is the replacement of Wilkes Elementary School, which faces a variety of serious facility issues. The group also discussed the topic of school consolidation and it was noted that, while that is not currently a consideration, there is not enough classroom space at any one school to accommodate that change.

March and April Meetings

Ms. Chapel noted the vast majority of the work would be around subcommittees and processing the information provided by those groups. The next DBAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 17th. Ms. Chapel suggested an additional DBAC meeting be added right after spring break on Tuesday, April 7th. The group agreed.

Next DBAC Meetings

March 17th – 5:30 – 7:30 pm. @ BHS Library

April 7th – 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. @ BHS Library

April 21st – 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. @ BHS Library