The meeting was held in the Superintendent’s Office, King Philip Regional Middle School, 18 King Street, Norfolk, MA 02056

Call to Order: The Meeting was called to order by Mr. Francomano, Chair at 7:35am

Committee Members Present: Patrick Francomano, Kenneth Dow, James Killion

Visitors Present: Dr. Elizabeth Zielinski, Superintendent of Schools
Larry Azer, Director of Finance & Operations
Mr. Gary Brown, Athletic Director
Audrey Lacher, Special Education Director
Mrs. Barbara Snead, community member from Norfolk MA
Mr. Bruce Cates Chair of the Plainville Finance Advisory Committee

Approval of Minutes: There were no minutes to approve

AGENDA:

Athletics Budget:
Mr. Francomano asked Gary Brown what he thought of the current fee structure. Mr. Brown discussed that the analysis presented indicated that the district had not raised its athletic fees in several years although the cost for running programs has gone up in specific sports. Mr. Brown noted that the current increase of 15% provides about 40K of funds into the athletic account. Mr. Francomano pointed out that for Track there is a huge difference in the cost difference between the district and the athlete. Mr. Francomano indicated that the split was a target of 75% for the district and 25% for the athlete. Mr. Brown pointed out that since the sports fall within a tiered structure, some sports income may offset the cost of other sports. Track is also a sport where there is a great amount of participation because it is a no cut sport with general lower overhead. Mr. Francomano commented that there may be a need to ret-tier the sport fees to make them more equitable. Mr. Francomano asked what type of analysis needs to be done to review the fee structure. Mr. Azer suggested that we back into the costs, removing uniforms because they are applied every few years and can spike the cost of a sport in the year the uniform is purchased. Mr. Brown noted that he was finding out the fee structure in other Hock leagues members. He noted that Foxboro has no sport fees because the Kraft family provides that support to the town for athletics. Mr. Francomano requested that the subcommittee receive an update on the fee structure in December. Mr. Dow asked if it was difficult to get coaching staff and if we used teachers as coaches. Mr. Brown indicated that whenever possible we hire teachers as coaches, that it is difficult to get people to coach, and in the Hock league we are 11th out of 12 for the lowest stipends paid for coaching.

Salary and Benefit structure:
Mr. Francomano reviewed the speedsheet provided which separates every IEC contract into its provided benefits. Mr. Dow asked if the accumulated sick leave could be bought back when an IEC member
retires. There is no sick leave buy back provision in the IEC contracts. Mr. Francomano commented that the subcommittee should have this breakdown from each of the three member towns. Dr. Zielinski said she could ask the elementary superintendents to complete the spread sheet. Mr. Francomano said it would be better coming from the School Committee and possibly as a request for the working groups.

**Mobile Devices:**
Mr. Francomano questioned the need for both a phone and a mifi device. Mr. Azer explained that the plan we have covers phone, text, and data and is at the state rate. That the basic plan does not cover “hot spot” and that is what a mifi device provides. Mr. Francomano asked that Mr. Azer look at the plan to see if there is a lower expense option. He also questioned providing a cell phone to custodians. Mrs. Snead commented that the cell phones used by the custodians do not work in the building and that they need the walkie-talkie to use during music events. Mrs. Snead also asked why staff could not just use their own phones and have the district pay their bill since many private plans may be less expensive. Mr. Francomano explained that the cell phones used by the district can be taken at any time and the data collected for legal purposes, that a person who is using their personal phone would also be subject to search. Mr. Francomano suggested that an examination for the use of the devices be provided for the next School committee meeting because he expected there would be questions. He also suggested that the policy subcommittee create a policy for who gets issued a cell phone in the district.

**Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB):**
Mr. Azer reviewed his memo about the districts liability related to retiree health insurance. He recommended that the School Committee adopt MGL 32B section 20, to create an OPEB Trust fund and place some dollars each year into that fund. Mr. Azer explained that the District could join a current trust, such as the Plymouth County OPEB Trust, instead of developing our own. Joining an already established trust would allow the district higher yields on any portion of dollars invested since our money would be joined with others allowing a higher interest to be paid. Mr. Francomano asked that Mr. Azer consider the options available for the district to join already established trusts.

A motion was made by Mr. Francomano to recommend to the full School Committee that they adopt section 32B sections 20, join a trust, and begin to place some portion of funds into a OPEB liability trust fund. Mr. Killion seconded the motion. All were in favor.

**Student Activities Audit:**
Mr. Azer recommended to the subcommittee that they consider an audit of the student activates account. The student Activities account is supposed to be audited every three years by state regulations. He also pointed out that the person who was running the student activities account has retired, and it is a good time to audit the books prior to a new person taking of the responsibility. The districts audit firm LMM has submitted a proposal to do this audit which would cost no more than $5000. The money to complete the audit could come from the student activities account.

A motion was made by Mr. Francomano and seconded by Ken Dow to recommend to the full school committee that they have the audit of the student activities account done by LLC and the funding come from the student activities account. All were in favor.

**FY 16 Audit Response:**
Mr. Azer reviewed the letter he submitted to the subcommittee about responding to the suggested management letter from the auditors for the FY 16 audit. Mr. Azer presented several changes in office management to align with the auditor’s suggestions. Discussion about how to best inform parents about
the timing of refunds from PayPal was brought up. Mrs. Snead mentioned that parents need to understand that the fees they pay, even if paying by check include the assessed cost for using PayPal. It was suggested that parents need to be made aware that payment includes a processing/handling fee, even if parents are not using the PayPal system.

**FY 17 Budget Update:**
Mr. Francomano asked why there was a $180,000 savings in the teacher line item from FY 17. Dr. Zielinski explained that although the salaries were encumbered there are changes which can occur during the year such as a teacher taking a maternity leave and a substitute teacher being paid in the teacher’s place. Mr. Azer pointed out that the substitute line was over by about the same amount as the teacher line was under. Mr. Francomano requested that the subcommittee get an update in October about where the teacher account line is for FY 18.

Mr. Azer noted that when things break in the buildings they need to be fixed. He recommended that an outside company come into the district to review the facilities and make recommendations which could help to inform the capital plan. Mr. Francomano asked Mr. Azer to get a price to have this type of work done and report back to the subcommittee in September.

Mr. Azer reviewed the current anticipated Excess and Deficiency dollars based on the closing out of FY 17 budget. Mr. Azer anticipates about $1.2 million in the E &D account once it is certified.

**FY 18 Budget Update:**
Mr. Azer reviewed his memo regarding FY 18 budget. He explained that there are new required codes for accounts so that budget codes and staff codes are better aligned for analysis. As such he has requested a transfer of funds from current accounts to newly created accounts with the adjusted codes. There is no net gain or loss to the budget just a shifting of dollars to align with the new codes.

*Mr. Francomano made a motion to recommend to the full School Committee the approval of the budget transfers. Jim Killion seconded. All were in favor.*

Mr. Killion asked if it was possible to rename the codes from the FY 17 budget for purposes of ensuring that when looking at the budget for FY 19 we would not see dips or spikes because of the new coding. Mr. Francomano suggested that maybe a footnote to explain the situation may be appropriate on the budget. Mr. Azer said he would see what makes the most sense as we move forward with the FY 19 budget, so that any dips or spikes can be understood by those looking at the budget.

Mr. Azer also requests that there be a transfer of funds from the OOD Special Education budget into the regular budget line item. He notes that the funds were all placed into a single OOD special education line item when they should have been placed in the other Special Education line item.

*Mr. Francomano made a motion to recommend to the full committee the suggested special education line item transfers per Mr. Azer’s memo. Ken Dow seconded. All were in favor.*

Mr. Azer presented the changes to the Town Assessments based on the final approved State budget. Plainville’s assessment was decreasing by approximately $2,771 while Norfolk and Wrentham’s Assessment was increasing by $1,336 and $1,435 respectively. It was suggested that the letter informing the three towns about their assessment changes should be sent out once we have a certified Excess and
Deficiency number. Mr. Azer said that the E & D information would be going out next week and he anticipates that DOR should schedule a visit within a few weeks. He also said that once the visit is completed, that certification of E & D usually takes about a week after the visit.

**Special Education Update:**
Audrey Lacher, Special Education Director, reviewed the current FY 18 OOD placements and anticipated FY 19 placements. She informed the subcommittee that the census would be going out and she would be asking for information relate to all Special Education students in grades 4-6, rather than just 5 and 6. She made note that the information presented for FY 19 budget is projected information, and better information will come as she has revised census information.