

**Uxbridge School Committee Meeting  
January 23, 2024  
Uxbridge High School Library and Remote Participation**

**School Committee Members in Attendance:**

	Present	Absent
Mr. Barry Desruisseaux, Chair	X	
Ms. Arlene Liscinsky, Vice-Chair	X	
Mr. Ed Maharay, Clerk (via Zoom)	X	
Mr. Ben Casper	X	
Mr. David Shinnick	X	
Mr. Aaron Lenart	X	
Mr. Michael Dion	X	

● **Call to order (6:00)**

Mr. Desruisseaux called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

● **Public Comment (6:00- 6:05)**

Tina Ryan shared her feedback regarding the superintendent's evaluation that the Committee approved at the last meeting.

**Motion:** *Mr. Desruisseaux entertained a motion to move grant approvals and the job description to the beginning. Mr. Dion moved the motion. Mr. Shinnick seconded the motion. The Committee voted 6-0 to approve the motion. The motion passed.*

● **Grant Approvals (Fund Codes 240, 262, and 274) (6:07-6:08)**

**Motion:** *Mr. Desruisseaux entertained a motion to approve the grant 240 fund code and the 262. Ms. Liscinsky moved the motion. Mr. Casper seconded the motion. The Committee voted 7-0 to approve the motion. Mr. Maharay voted remotely. The motion passed.*

● **Data Migration Job Description (6:08-6:11)**

Dr. Baldassarre gave the Committee copies of the job description. He explained the \$10k requested for the position already exists in the technology budget. He said the Technology Director is confident she can find someone in-house to fill this position. The position will run until June 30, 2024.

**Motion:** *Mr. Dion made a motion to approve the stipend job description as presented. Mr. Casper seconded the motion. The Committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion. Mr. Maharay voted remotely. The motion passed.*

### ● **FY24 Budget to Actual Report (6:13-7:28)**

Ms. Sheridan shared a slideshow presentation with the Committee that included summary information on the FY24 budget, to date, as well as areas of concern she has for the current and FY25 budgets.

She shared that the current projected school budget end-of-year balance (including payroll encumbrances) is -\$2,090,309. If she includes the amounts of FY24 budget offsets from circuit breaker and school choice funding the current projected balance is +\$913, 587.

The slideshow included the following topics:

- a. Breakdown of FY24 budget amounts by DESE codes
- b. Each DESE code section and their YTD available balances—she also included notes she considered relevant for certain codes
- c. Payroll and expenditures to date
- d. Number of staff by category—currently the total number of staff is estimated to be 285.2
- e. Circuit breaker data points including the amount budgeted, actual to date, and current projected end-of-year balance of \$862,981. 26 students were budgeted and the district currently has 23 students in placement with three other students in evaluation.
- f. Circuit breaker reimbursement and offset amounts for years FY21-FY24—she recommended that the district maintain one full year of circuit breaker reimbursement in the account. She currently believes her recommendation for circuit breaker offset for FY25 will be \$1.8M.
- g. FY24 budget update on the 12/31/23 balances for the revolving accounts
- h. Total amount of the FY24 grants
- i. Chart showing the Medicaid reimbursement amounts from FY19 through the first 2 quarters of FY24
- j. FY24 positions currently funded through ESSER3 funding
- k. List of FY25 budget challenges
- l. Circuit breaker and school choice FY25 end-of-year projected balances if the same offset from those accounts that were used in FY24 are used for FY25
- m. She said she has spoken to Dr. Baldassarre and they are in agreement about creating a budget transfer policy. She will bring her recommendation for the policy to the February 6 school committee meeting.

Ms. Sheridan highlighted several financial red flags throughout her presentation. The red flags included the following:

- a. Substitute teacher salaries are coming in higher than expected for FY24
- b. Transportation costs for FY24
- c. Cost of utilities—she sees fluctuations that concern her when studying the 3-year utilities history
- d. Projected end-of-year balance in the circuit breaker account
- e. Various revolving accounts that have been used to offset past budgets. These include school choice, circuit breaker, PreK, athletics, facility rentals, and community school tuition. She is also concerned about the funding given through the FY24 warrant article that provided funding for PreK expenses and how that might affect the FY25 budget.

Subsequent discussions from the Committee included:

Mr. Shinnick asked if there were other areas of unknown left for FY24, outside of the three potential OOD placements. Ms. Sheridan said utilities are an area she is currently focused on.

Mr. Maharay asked the administration to verify with the town the impact of the PreK warrant article for future budgets since the town had voted to raise and appropriate the funding approved at the fall town meeting.

Mr. Maharay asked if the town manager had given the administration guidelines for FY25 in terms of cost increases. Dr. Baldassarre said they have not. Dr. Baldassarre said he had a meeting scheduled for the following day with the town manager and town accountant.

Dr. Baldassarre shared that the following week the budget subcommittee will be meeting for the first time to discuss the preliminary FY25 budget.

### ● **Capital Plan FY2025 - FY2029 (7:28-8:51)**

Dr. Baldassarre shared a new version of the capital plan with the Committee. The capital plan includes projects for FY25-29 with 5-year projected costs. The list has also been prioritized.

Dr. Baldassarre said all capital requests connect to the district goals of:

Advancing teaching and learning

Family and community engagement

Safety and wellness

Mr. Shaw presented alongside the principals regarding the projects connected to their buildings. Dr. Baldassarre spoke to the technology request.

**Priority 1 capital requests that were discussed:**

**Taft:**

Fire panel

Library furniture

**Whitin:**

Fire panel

Gym floor resurfacing

Classroom furniture

Automated indoor basketball hoops

Bathroom planning and refurbishment

**High School:**

New multipurpose field

2nd egress additional funding

Artificial turf and track replacement

**District:**

Technology surrounding the PowerSchool implementation and system-wide network updates

Multiple requests had discussions on cost and cost predictions. Discussion on the bathrooms centered on estimate accuracy, scope, and realistic timeline. In two cases, Whitin bathrooms and turf replacement, the Committee suggested raising the capital request amounts higher.

After discussion, Mr. Maharay suggested the Committee might want to consider rolling the large capital items into a debt service, funded over 10-20 years. Mr. Desruisseaux said that they needed to consider the life expectancy of projects when determining the length of a potential long-term debt exclusion to fund the projects.

Mr. Dion suggested proposing a debt exclusion for fire panels, Whitin bathrooms, egress, multipurpose field, and school security which he said totaled @\$5.2M, and asking for the rest of the list to be funded through capital (@1.5M). Mr. Maharay suggested they review this topic at the next meeting. He also suggested that Dr. Baldassarre meet with the town to see how they feel about a proposed debt exclusion.

**● Playground Update (8:51-8:54)**

Dr. Baldassarre shared that the core playground group was unanimous in selecting Ultiplay as their preferred bid on the playground project. The bid amount is for \$173, 685. Since the district

currently has \$220K in appropriations for the project, he shared that this gives the district wiggle room to work with the vendor, parents, and the community on enhancing the project beyond what is currently proposed in the bid.

**Motion:** *Mr. Maharay made a motion that we accept the bid. Mr. Dion seconded the motion. By roll call vote: Dave: YES; Ben: YES; Arlene: YES; Aaron: YES; Mike: YES; Barry: YES. The Committee voted 6-0 in favor of the motion. The motion passed.*

● **Appointment for Negotiations Unit B (fill Ed's appointment) (8:54-8:56)**

**Motion:** *Mr. Dion made a motion to nominate Aaron. Mr. Casper seconded the motion. By roll call vote: Dave: YES; Ben: YES; Arlene: YES; Aaron: YES; Mike: YES; Barry: YES; Ed: YES. The Committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion. The motion passed.*

**Motion:** *Mr. Desruisseaux entertained a motion to move minutes up ahead of executive session. Mr. Casper moved the motion. Mr. Dion seconded the motion. By roll call vote: Dave: YES; Ben: YES; Arlene: YES; Aaron: YES; Mike: YES; Barry: YES; Ed: YES. The Committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion. The motion passed.*

● **Minutes (8:56)**

**Motion:** *Mr. Casper made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Shinnick seconded the motion. By roll call vote: Dave: YES; Ben: YES; Arlene: YES; Aaron: YES; Mike: YES; Barry: YES; Ed: YES. The Committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion. The motion passed.*

● **Executive Session (8:57-8:58)**

o "Executive session pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, section 21(a)(2) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel (Superintendent Michael Baldassarre)."

o Executive session pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, section 21(a)(To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares (Unit C)

**Motion:** *Mr. Desruisseaux entertained a motion to move into executive session pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, section 21(a)(2) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel, Superintendent Michael Baldassarre, to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares, Unit C with no new business to follow and we will adjourn from executive session. By roll call vote: Dave: YES; Ben: YES; Arlene: YES;*

*Aaron: YES; Mike: YES; Barry: YES; Ed: YES. The Committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.  
The motion passed.*

● **Adjournment (8:58)**

The meeting adjourned at @8:58PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debbie Stark

Uxbridge School Committee Recording Secretary

School Committee Members:

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Mr. Barry Desruisseaux, Chair

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Ms. Arlene Liscinsky, Vice-Chair

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Mr. Ed Maharay, Clerk

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Mr. David Shinnick, Member

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Mr. Ben Casper, Member

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Mr. Aaron Lenart, Member

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Mr. Michael Dion, Member