

AGENDA
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Location: School Committee Room

Zoom Link:

<https://auburn-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/86935934463?pwd=dUJMUU5ZSjRMbm82Q2o5MGQ4cXNoZz09>

December 9, 2020, 6:00 p.m.

FY 2022 Budget Presentations

CALL TO ORDER:

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

BUDGET PRESENTATIONS:

This evening we will open the budget discussion for FY'22. Schools and Departments will discuss their accomplishments for FY'21 and intended accomplishments for FY'22. As we are recommending level funding operational and supply line items for FY'22 those numbers will be included in packets released to the committee and public (via website) next Monday, but we will not be reading them out loud. On January 6th, I will provide a brief summation of this evening's presentation and will present our recommended draft budget number for FY'22 inclusive of all certainties and assumptions as we know them. Our draft budget must be sent to Town Hall by January 11th.

- 6:10 p.m. Dr. Handfield: FY '22 Opening/Overview
- 6:20 p.m. Dr. Chamberland: PreSchool/Teaching and Learning
- 6:30 p.m. Mrs. Reidy: Pupil Services
- 6:40 p.m. Mr. Fahey: Facilities and Maintenance
- 6:50 p.m. Mrs. Wirzbicki: Business Office
- 7:00 p.m. Mr. Bouvier: Technology
- 7:10 p.m. Ms. Bailey/Ms. Garrow: Fine Arts
- 7:20 p.m. Mr. Davis: Athletics
- 7:30 p.m. Mrs. Mahan/Mrs. Stanick: Bryn Mawr/Pakachoag
- 7:40 p.m. Dr. Lopez: Swanson Road Intermediate School
- 7:50 p.m. Mr. Desto: Auburn Middle School
- 8:00 p.m. Mr. Delongchamp: Auburn High School
- 8:10 p.m. Dr. Handfield: Summation of Presentations / Looking Ahead to January 6th

Winter Sports Update

Information

Included in your packets is a letter from Southern Worcester County Principals regarding the 2020 winter sports season that was drafted at the conclusion of our joint meeting of superintendents and principals on December 1st. Winter sports were scheduled to start December 14th, however, as a result of COVID transmission concerns with basketball and hockey, it was decided that IF winter sports happen they would not start in any form until January 4th. Although 8 of the 13 superintendents voted in a straw poll not to have winter athletics, we decided to push the final decision out a few weeks to watch the trajectory of the virus and to discuss this with our school committees.

At this time, I do not support a winter sports season due to serious safety concerns and the potential ramifications within the school community should one or more positive cases occur. There will be more information forthcoming once the final decision has been made in conjunction with Mr. Delongchamp, AHS principal, and Mr. Davis, APS Director of Athletics.

Acceptance of French River Oil Bid Award for FY22

Action

The French River Collaborative recently solicited a bid for Fuel Oil for FY22 for their collaborative members. Mr. Fahey attended the Bid opening which took place on Wednesday, November 19, 2020. The lone bidder was Peterson Oil with a bid of \$1.6999 per gallon. After careful review the bid was found to be acceptable to the group and Peterson Oil was awarded the Fuel Oil bid for FY22, pending each member town's vote to accept the bid. Auburn's current oil price for FY21 is \$2.0675 per gallon, and in calculating our current usage of oil, the District will see a savings of roughly \$13,900. Therefore, I ask that you accept the French River Oil Bid awarding Peterson Oil with the Contract for FY22.

Recommended Motion:...to accept the bid for Fuel Oil for FY 22 which was awarded to Peterson Oil at a bid of \$1.6999 per gallon.

Recommended Motion:...to adjourn for the evening.

SOUTHERN WORCESTER COUNTY LEAGUE

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December 1, 2020

To our Superintendent Colleagues:

The purpose of this letter is to summarize the recommendations regarding the winter athletic season, approved by the principals as part of a meeting held on December 1, 2020. Also present at this meeting were superintendents of our member districts of the Southern Worcester County League, including North Brookfield Junior-Senior High School as a “pod” member for the winter season. Bay Path was not able to attend and will also be a pod member this winter.

The purpose was to best inform the decision-making process regarding the winter sports season, particularly given the metrics and reality of the pandemic, set against the individual contexts of our communities and culture.

At a joint meeting of our principals and athletic directors held on November 24, we discussed the following challenges with respect to the winter season:

- Safely engaging in indoor sport activities, given the nature of an aerosol virus and potential close contacts for those in a closed indoor space
- Ventilation capacity of the sports facilities, gyms, etc.
- Concerns regarding close physical contact, compared to the safety guidelines required of the classroom
- Determining if the safety modifications required of each sport can be implemented with fidelity
- Identifying the opportunity cost and challenges should we not have sports, considering the desire to have safe physical activities for student-athletes
- Concerns about student-athletes transferring to other leagues, or caving to political pressure, should other schools and conferences sponsor athletics
- Working with non-school facilities and cooperative programs, particularly in hockey and swim
- Ironing out transportation guidelines, compared to school-day requirements
- Geographical POD structure for competitions
- Recommended to limit, if not deny spectators

Given all of our communities’ passion for sports, and reconciling that emotion with the reality of the pandemic, we are recommending the following, based on a unanimous vote of our league principals present at the December 1 meeting:

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- Delay the start of the winter season until January 4, including all practices
- Monitor pandemic data
- Work with our athletic directors and facilities staff to determine the extent of facility and sanitization needs
- Work with our respective business offices to determine transportation needs
- Make determinations regarding cooperative sports, including those with schools outside the schools herein represented
- Provide all requisite information for our superintendents to share with School Committees
- Partner with Boards of Health to ensure that sport guidelines can meet, with fidelity, any safety recommendations
- Provide all stakeholders with confidence in a best-faith effort to ensure that safety can be maintained
- Provide all stakeholders with confidence in a best-faith effort to advocate for extracurricular opportunities seen as critical to so many students

There remains the very strong likelihood that the winter season will be cancelled. The number of safety concerns and our ability to mitigate risk, while ensuring that schools can remain open for their primary purpose, remain daunting and may render the season an impossibility. In the meantime, we will begin winter registration procedures, particularly to work with our school nurses regarding physical examinations.

Our recommended time frame would be:

- December 2, 2020: Sharing of this document with superintendents
- December 2-3: Superintendents share this document with School Committees
- December 4: Uniform notification sent to all prospective winter student-athletes of the member schools listed herein
- December 9: Winter registration period will begin
- December 9-30: Monitor data

A decision on moving forward or cancellation of the season will be made in early January, which provides communities with time to socialize the messaging, communicate with stakeholders, and to provide the rationale with School Committees, families, coaches, and student-athletes. There remains the possibility that practices and registration procedures could be organized for the start of January, only to have games or further winter involvement cancelled, at the state, league, or individual school district level, particularly given the challenges we have identified. In full transparency, the majority of our athletic directors, principals, and superintendents, in straw polls, have supported cancellations.

To be specific, the following questions must be answered:

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- How have the metrics for COVID leveled, improved, or gotten worse, both within our individual communities and across the league?
- To what extent have we reviewed game and facility modifications, in order to pass muster with local Boards of Health (and do they do so)?
- Can we realistically support interscholastic activities, given the reality of the pandemic and the challenges faced by mixing cohorts?

We thank you for your time, energy, and steadfast support of these very challenging times and decisions that are so meaningful to our communities and students.

Sincerely yours,

The undersigned principals of the Southern Worcester County League, inclusive of North Brookfield Junior-Senior High School, as an affiliate member for the winter.

Daniel Delongchamp - Principal, Auburn High School

Fran Thomas - Principal, Bartlett High School

Elizabeth York - Principal, David Prouty High School

James Pignataro - Principal, Grafton High School

Tracey Kenny - Principal, Leicester High School

Christopher Lowe - Principal, Millbury Memorial Junior-Senior High School

Tim McCormick - Principal, Northbridge High School

David Nugent - Principal, Oxford High School

Steve Duff - Principal, Quaboag High School

Dawn Micco - Director of Operations for Secondary Schools, Southbridge Public Schools

Michael Lucas - Principal, Tantasqua Regional High School

Michael Rubin - Principal, Uxbridge High School

Richard Lind - Interim Principal, North Brookfield High School

Cc: SWCL Athletic Directors