

2021-22 BUDGET ADVISORY COUNCIL

Wednesday, November 10, 2021

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

The meeting started at 7:05pm.

1. Thirteen members were present: Chuck Rush (Chair), Erik Sullivan (Vice-Chair) Melanie Bowen (Past-Chair), Juan Gordon, Julie Davis, Nellie Carr, Michael Lyons, Katherine Christensen, Bridget Obikoya, Sal Tajuddin, Andy Greenwood, Jennifer Wheelock, and Jennifer Wagener.
 - APS Assistant Superintendent Leslie Peterson, APS Board Chair Monique O'Grady
2. The October minutes were approved.
3. Public comment (from Josh Folb, representing the AEA)
 - Josh presented his annual salary comparison (Teachers with master's scale)
 - <http://www.tinyurl.com/compaps2018>
 - Arlington lagging across the region for starting salaries and ending salaries
 - AEA continues to stress a multi-pronged approach for compensation: observe the market, stay current with COLA (recommending 5.9%), keep the STEP
 - Supports \$1,000 bonus to staff (for full time staff; prorated for part-time and \$500 for hourly) from close out funds
4. School Board Update – Monique O'Grady
 - Dr Duran's proposal to honor staff with bonuses
 - Closing for winter/spring break – to help staff with more down time
 - School Board priorities to look at compensation and be better leaders in that area
 - Bond passed in recent election – primarily to fund upgrades to kitchens, security, attention to The Heights building
 - CIP direction approved by School Board– continued work on security, Career Center, and renovations to existing buildings
 - Amazon partnership
 - More information to come on close-out details
5. BAC Liaison Comments
 - ACTC: County working with ART to provide free bussing; starting with a pilot program
 - Goal for APS to flatline bus expenditures going forward
6. IT Efficiencies – Raj Adusumilli (APS Information Services)
 - Rad reviewed the main takeaways from the recent presentation to the Board on efficiencies
 - Been a challenging time for IT over the past 2 years
 - Instruction:
 - Standardized the model to replace Smartboards through a rotation program

- Infrastructure:
 - Wireless access points – replaces one-fifth each year; plus added outdoor wireless access at 35 school sites
 - Backbone - uses ConnectArlington
 - Network architecture/internet access
 - Any family needing connectivity is supported via Comcast and mifis – this was a partnership with the County
 - Switches still need to be addressed with a sustainable replacement plan
- Business Systems:
 - ERP upgrade – Oracle Financials since 2005 (for HR and Finance); version being discontinued so being forced to upgrade/reevaluate
 - 3-year timeline to move everything to the Cloud
 - If this is delayed there will be other costs incurred to keep the current systems running
 - There has not been a comprehensive comparison of IT spending against other jurisdictions – Raj assumes APS is at a lower cost level due to the strong support we have from the county via ConnectArlington

7. Evaluating Efficiencies Discussion

- Is there a framework to use to evaluate options?
- Benchmarking helpful – could it be feasible to bring in an outside expert to help with this?
- Can efficiencies drive more equitable outcomes?
 - Need to ensure standards of quality
- Historically most successful efficiency implementations have been ones with a process
- Level of flexibility each school has and how that creates complexities in running a school system (versus a system of schools) and being able to evaluate efficiencies

8. Policy Review – Erik Sullivan

- Will review BAC specific part of advisory committee policy in the spring
- Still waiting on dates for some policy reviews

9. Way Ahead – Chuck Rush

- Dec meeting: Choice schools – cost and benefit, and new equity officer
- Jan meeting: enrollment projections, planning factors
- Feb meeting: infrastructure, feedback from FAC/JFAC, plans for any permanent virtual program

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.