

Salem City Council
Committee on Administration and Finance
Minutes of Meeting
June 9, 2016

A meeting of the Salem City Council Committee on Administration and Finance, Co – Posted with the Committee of the Whole was held on Thursday, June 9, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Salem City Council Chambers, Salem City Hall, 93 Washington Street, Salem, Massachusetts.

Councillors Present: Chairman Councillor David Eppley, Councillor Beth Gerard, Councillor Thomas Furey and Councillor Elaine Milo, Councillor Stephen Dibble.

Also present were: Mayor Kimberley Driscoll, Finance Director Sarah Stanton, Mayors Chief of Staff, Dominic Pangallo, Superintendent of School Margarita Ruiz, Assistant Superintendent Kate Carbone, Assistant Superintendent Margaret Marotta, Finance Director Philip Littlehale, Chief of System Strategies Jill Conrad, and Kelley Rice, Director of Communications, IT Director Matt Killen

Councillor Eppley informed those present that this meeting is televised live on Salem Access Television. He reported that this is the fifth of five meetings of the Administration and Finance Committee to review the FY17 City of Salem budget.

Councillor Eppley reported that this evening the Committee will be reviewing the budgets for the City Clerk, City Council, Elections and Registration, Police Department and Harbormaster budgets.

Salem Public Schools Budget

Superintendent Margarita Ruiz addressed the Committee and explained that the School Department budget is driven by three things; the schools as a district, accelerated the system and trajectory that we are on and that resources are based on enrollment.

Ms. Ruiz reported that the budget process for the Salem Public Schools was a collaborative process with a focus on continuing the work to improve the school system through our Accelerated Improvement Plan (AIP). She explains that they prioritized the areas with the highest need and have added a full time academic STEM coach to support ELL students with the highest need.

Ms. Ruiz also reported that they have reinstated the College Bound course at Salem High School to support the junior class as they think about the college choices.

Councillor Furey welcomed Ms. Ruiz and wished her success as Superintendent of the Salem Public Schools. He states that the perception of the Salem Public Schools is critical and notes the popularity of the Salem Academy Charter Schools and asks Ms. Ruiz how we can reach out to parents and change their minds about the Salem Schools.

Ms. Ruiz stated that it is about changing and improving our schools and notes that people will begin to see the changes in our schools noting that we are a district on the move and we need to hone in on the quality of our schools. She explained that there are a lot of great things going on in our schools that people do not know about and we need make them known.

Ms. Ruiz also reported that the Schools have a great relationship with the Salem Academy Charter School and notes that they have collaborated with them on professional development this year.

Councillor Dibble stated that we should be recruiting families to stay in Salem and recalled that a former Superintendent send letter to the families that left informing them of the good things going on in the schools and it resulted in some families returning.

Ms. Ruiz reported that Collins Middle School Principal Glen Burns has been going around to the elementary schools and meeting with parents about Collins Middle School and he has been successful at increasing the enrollment for next year's 6th grade class. She also noted that they encourage parents to come and tour the schools when making their decisions on education.

Councillor Dibble stated that he is happy to see that some progress is being made on moving the Horace Mann School, noting that it has been discussed for years. Ms. Ruiz reported that she met with SSU President Messervey and Dean Gambone and they developed a MOU for the principalship of HMLS and the conversation included the challenges of the facility. She explains that they are developing a blueprint that will outline the needs of the HMLS. She also notes that they are looking at other opportunities for SSU to partner with HMLS.

Councillor Dibble reported that he attended a meeting at the school recently and notes that there is a lot of enthusiasm and support for the move from the parents.

Councillor Dibble asks Ms. Ruiz if she feels that anything is missing from the budget. Ms. Ruiz states that they can always use more money noting that if there were more money funds could be redirected to other things.

Councillor Eppley opens the meeting up for public comment at this time. There are no questions or comments.

There being no further questions or comments regarding the school department budget at this time, Councillor Eppley states that he would entertain a motion to approve the budgets.

Councillor Dibble moved to approve the Budget for the Salem Public Schools Budget in the amount of \$55,041,847.00 seconded by Councillor Furey. The motion carried.

There being no further business to come before the Committee on Administration and Finance this evening Councillor Gerard moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councillor Furey.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Eileen M. Sacco
Budget Clerk