A Public Hearing on the FY15 School Department Budget was held on April 28, 2014, at 7:00 PM at the Anne Kenneally Hynes Library in the East Bridgewater Jr/Sr High School followed by a Regular Meeting that began at 9:34 PM. Members present were: Chairperson George McCabe, Vice-Chairperson Jennifer Kitchenham, Secretary Ellen Pennington, Keith Boyle, Heather Graham, Gordon McKinnon, Superintendent of Schools John Moretti, and Recording Clerk Joanne Benner.

Also in attendance were: Principals Mr. Gentile, Mr. Vieira, and Mrs. Williams, Assistant Principals Mrs. Byrne and Mrs. Duprey, Business Manager Mrs. Lugo, District staff members- Mrs. Principe, Mr. Fass, Mrs. Seele, Mrs. Fernandes, Ms. Jaroche, Mr. Ponte, Town Clerk Mrs. Livingston, members of the Board of Selectman, members of the Finance Committee, Pupil Personnel Director Mrs. Grable, IT Director Mr. King, Facilities Manager Mr. Kiely, Town Assessor Mrs. Wolfe, and community members.

Chairperson George McCabe opened the meeting at 7:04 PM with The Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY15 SCHOOL DEPARTMENT BUDGET

Budget Chair, Mrs. Kitchenham, opened by thanking the employees and staff of the East Bridgewater School District for their dedication to the schools. Additionally she thanked the Board of Selectman, Finance Committee and Town Manager George Samia for working in partnership with the School Committee. Superintendent Moretti was hired with the daunting task of looking at the budget and has worked very hard and done a tremendous job connecting with the administration and their needs while making students the first priority.

Superintendent Moretti presented a Power Point outlining the FY14 Deficit, FY14 Challenges, class size projection, FY14/FY15 staffing level comparison, scheduling needs, FY13-FY15 budget comparison, FY15 reductions to date, and revenue questions to be investigated prior to town meeting. He informed the attendees that the budget process began in October by looking at the needs, enrollment and liabilities. Mr. Moretti told the School Committee that the administration is not comfortable with all of his recommendations and suggests they have an opportunity to voice their thoughts to the Committee.
EAST BRIDGEWATER SCHOOL COMMUNITY MISSION STATEMENT
The East Bridgewater Public Schools provides a comprehensive curriculum that prepares students to be critical thinkers, problem solvers, and effective communicators ready to assume their positions as responsible productive citizens.

FY14 Deficit

School Committee-There is a $29,000.00 deficit as a result of an incentive given to employees for increasing their health care benefit contribution by 10%. The town saved $86,000.00 in its budget from a reduction in the town’s health care contribution.

SPED Transportation-Non-reappointment letters were not given to teachers and staff prior to the beginning of the new fiscal year and the School Committee had no recourse but to reduce the budget creating a deficit of $29,000.00.

Custodial Supplies- Facilities Director, Brian Kiely said enough funds had not been appropriated to clean the school buildings creating a $20,000.00 deficit.

Utilities- The funds for electricity were taken from the School Department by the town as a result of the solar farm. There are still several meters not covered by the solar farm project that the District has to pay for out of the LEA budget which resulted in a deficit. The gas bills were higher than appropriated because of a bad winter and more heat was needed for the three schools. These two situations created a deficit of $99,000.00.

Athletics- While the Jr/Sr HS was being built all teams needed to play off sight and some areas remain not ready. Also there were not any gate receipts to offset the deficit of $63,000.00.

Personnel-Superintendent Moretti was charged with doing a personnel audit and in July and August identified where the deficits were. There is a deficit of $133,000.00 in the personnel area.

FY14 Challenges

- Jr/Sr class size is the highest Mr. Moretti has seen in his 16 years as a Superintendent.
- There is a lack of district wide curriculum leadership. Fortunately the administrative team has stepped up to align the curriculum.
- Instructional leadership- There isn’t an English or Math Department Chair and while the MCAS scores are competitive the SAT scores for the District are below average.
- Staffing is insufficient at the GWMMS for math, reading and music; the Jr/Sr HS needs music and custodial services.
- Negotiations with 6 bargaining units created a challenge; however, there was a net savings to the town because of the staff that volunteered to increase health care contributions by 10%.
- There is a $425,000.00 structural deficit.
- The search for a new superintendent will create a challenge.
On August 12, 2013 Superintendent Moretti sent the Finance Committee a memo:

- SPED transportation was underfunded by $425,000.00
- The personnel budget has a deficit of $52,000.00
- Funds had not appropriated for maternity leaves or catastrophic illness
- Funds had not appropriated for early retirement incentives in any of the contracts

To make the district solvent in FY15 it will require an increase of $1,314,000.00 in salaries.

- There is a need to add courses at the middle and high school levels and Superintendent Moretti is recommending that teachers, guidance counselors, a school psychologist, and the business administrator be dropped from the staff to provide the funding. Mr. Gentile and Mrs. Williams spoke to the Committee voicing their concern and wish that they retain their guidance counselor.

- Program of Studies - There are not enough AP courses or electives currently at the high school. Mrs. Williams will be offering district wide assistance by working 3 days in the Central Office and 3 days at Central School. Mrs. Byrne will be a Co-Principal at the Central School. An IEP leader is being added along with an English and Math Department Chair at a $50,000.00 salary and stipend.

- Revenue Questions - Superintendent Moretti has revenue questions he would like explored prior to Town Meeting. Such as: a $229,000.00 Southeast Regional tuition reduction, the GIC healthcare savings, how a $479,000.00 rebate from Southeaster Regional will be used, Chapter 70 funds, and the status of $250,000.00-$400,000.00 former Chairman Connors indicated was available for the school district.

On Friday, April 28th the School Committee met and the budget figure was $18,000,100. At this meeting they voted to cut $160,000.00 bringing it to $17,978,532. A number must be submitted to Mr. Samia on May 2nd and as the educational leader of the District Mr. Moretti feels this figure is the least amount of money we can have to sustain the District

NEW BUSINESS

- Action is required on an article warrant for the FY14 School Department deficit to be submitted for Special Town Meeting on Monday, June 2, 2014.  
  Motion: McKinnon/McCabe  Vote: 6 in favor
• Action is required on an article warrant for the FY15 School Department Budget to be submitted for the Annual Town Meeting on Monday, June 2, 2014.
  Motion: McKinnon/McCabe  Vote: 4 in favor, 2 no

• A motion was made by Mrs. Pennington to return the budget to $18,000,100 to keep the guidance counselors.
  Motion: Pennington/McCabe  Vote: zero in favor

• Action is required on placing an article warrant for the approval of the following revolving accounts to be submitted for the Annual Town Meeting on Monday, June 2, 2014:
  Motion: Graham/McKinnon  Vote: 6 in favor

  ❖ School Lunch Program  account #12-300-700
  ❖ Early Childhood Tuition  account #26-330-636
  ❖ H.S. Parking Sticker  account #26-330-637
  ❖ School Choice Ch. 76 S. 12B  account #26-330-660
  ❖ Circuit Breaker  account # 26-330-691
  ❖ School Building Rental  account #26-330-715
  ❖ Insurance Recovery  account # 26-330-720
  ❖ After School Program  account # 26-330-732
  ❖ Summer School Program  account #26-330-751
  ❖ School Bus Fees Ch. 71 Sec 68  account #26-330-762
  ❖ HS Student Exam Revolving  account #26-330-1073
  ❖ Scholarship Gifts & Donations  account # 26-330-1116
  ❖ Summer Day Care  account # 26-330-862
  ❖ Music Acct Parents Payments  account #26-330-865
  ❖ MS Summer of F & L Revenue  account # 26-330-866
  ❖ MS Misc. Donations for Supplies  account # 26-330-867
  ❖ After School Act/Revenue  account # 26-330-870
  ❖ MS Drama Club  account # 26-330-871
  ❖ HS Drama  account # 26-340-950

• Action is required on placing an article warrant for the approval of the following revolving accounts to be submitted for the Annual Town Meeting on Monday, June 2, 2014:
  Motion: Boyle/Graham  Vote: 5 in favor/McCabe abstained

  ❖ Athletic Fund  account # 26-330-705
  ❖ Grid Iron Donations  account # 26-330-873

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Motion to adjourn at: 9:57 McCabe/McKinnon    Vote: 6 in favor

Respectfully submitted by,

Joanne M. Benner
Recording Clerk