



To: Jeannine Durkin, Superintendent
From: Billie Jo Turner, Assistant Superintendent of Finance
RE: School Committee – Business Office Update (2/13/19 Meeting)
Date: February 7, 2019

The following are the finance and operations updates from the Business Office:

Budget

- Mid-year increases have all been done.
- The Creegan Studio experienced system failures. The replacements cost approximately \$100k. We have reached out to the City to request PEG funds in next year's budget

Projections

Use of Facilities - My last projection of the Use of Facilities revenue was alarming. As discussed, one of the key reasons budgets should not include revolving fund revenue is that it is not guaranteed. The original budget was built with approximately \$500k in Use of Facility offsets. During our budget review, we reduced the budget to only include the "historical" net amount of \$300k. The original year end projection prepared last month predicted less than \$200k in revenue which would cause a deficit. This projection was updated and now projects \$265,869. Please see attached.

Human Resources

Please see attached memo that outlines the key findings from the HR Audit and the implemented/suggested solutions.

Miscellaneous

Food Service bid was posted. The mandatory pre-bid conference is February 12th. The bid deadline and open date is February 25, 2019.

Download Date - Time: February 04 2019 - 11:13		Organization Name	Invoice Date	Current Balance
Invoice	School			
130378	Bailey Elementary School	Stop Northeast Pipeline Expansion	11/19/2018	140
127697	Bartlett Community Partnership School	Ecumenical Athletic Association	6/12/2018	4575
127832	Butler Middle School	Boston Church of Christ	6/20/2018	7415
128659	Butler Middle School	Boston Church of Christ	9/4/2018	4500
130972	Butler Middle School	Boston Church of Christ	1/3/2019	9450
130929	Butler Middle School	Boston Church of Christ	12/31/2018	25875
129248	Daley Middle School	Ecumenical Athletic Association	9/21/2018	600
130573	Daley Middle School	The Life Center	12/3/2018	6375
131002	Daley Middle School	Marian Silk	1/4/2019	200
131162	Daley Middle School	Marian Silk	1/14/2019	100
130379	Greenhalge Elementary School	Lowell Youth Soccer	1/7/2019	450
127518	Lincoln Elementary School	Angle Hollow Condominium Trust	5/30/2018	50
128491	Lincoln Elementary School	Lowell Youth Soccer	8/20/2018	2000
127700	Lowell High School	Ecumenical Athletic Association	6/19/2018	922.5
127855	McAuliffe Elementary School	kids in disability sports inc.	6/27/2018	350
127767	Pawtucketville Memorial Elementary School	St. Louis School	6/28/2018	382.48
128479	Pawtucketville Memorial Elementary School	Lowell Youth Soccer	8/27/2018	800
127761	Pyne Arts Magnet School	Lowell Catholic School	6/19/2018	1757.5
127762	Pyne Arts Magnet School	Lowell Catholic School	6/20/2018	450
129100	Pyne Arts Magnet School	Massachusetts Youth Soccer	9/26/2018	100
127706	Reilly Elementary School	Ecumenical Athletic Association	6/13/2018	3185
127701	Reilly Elementary School	Ste Jeanne d'Arc School	6/12/2018	1200
127705	Reilly Elementary School	Ste Jeanne d'Arc School	6/13/2018	1400
127758	Shaughnessy Elementary School	Lowell Catholic School	6/19/2018	1087.5
127698	STEM Academy @ Rogers School	Ecumenical Athletic Association	6/28/2018	9517.5
127699	STEM Academy @ Rogers School	Ecumenical Athletic Association	6/28/2018	9400
131217	STEM Academy @ Rogers School	JROTC Lowell High School	1/29/2019	525
131453	Stoklosa Middle School	LHS Band & ColorGuard	1/30/2019	210
128478	Stoklosa Middle School	Lowell Youth Soccer	9/27/2018	1200
129094	Sullivan Middle School	Granite United Church	10/15/2018	14405.15
115527	Wang Middle School	Swaminarayan World Organisation USA Inc	8/28/2017	4869
127704	Wang Middle School	Ste Jeanne d'Arc School	6/12/2018	1487.5
Total Outstanding Invoices				114,979.13
Use of Facilities Fees collected to date				102,445.71
Monthly rents from CTI and Greater Lowell YMCA through June				48,445.00
Grand Total				265,869.84



Response to HR Audit Findings

To: Jeannine Durkin, Superintendent
From: Billie Jo Turner, Assistant Superintendent
RE: Response to HR Audit Findings
Date: February 7, 2019 (2-13-19 meeting)

The Human Resource Audit was conducted by Human Resource Services, Inc. The report shared multiple findings or shortcomings. Solutions are listed below as either already in progress or proposed:

1. Proposed HR Organizational Structure

The suggestion of adding several individuals to the HR Department is a luxury that is unlikely. Interviews for the HR Clerk will be conducted the week of 2/11/19 with final interviews the following week. Leap Net, Inc. has been selected and contacted to begin work on the HR Director search. Since funding is too limited to add the other positions, we have started to cross train staff (e.g. retirement) and implement other checks and balances. For instance, rather than have HR staff at each school, we are going to use Google Docs to have a weekly reconciliation of staff rosters by school. The Principal/Administrative Assistant can note maternity leaves, excessive absences, known retirements, resignations, etc. on the sheet weekly. Both HR and Payroll will have access to these files and can see all of the noted issues that would affect HR or Payroll. Rosters can be updated at the Central Office level with approved information such as FMLAs. If additional funding was available, we would suggest staff that served as a cross between HR and Finance to assist with backlogged functions such as coding, reconciling staff on databases, retirement applications, MyMTRS deduction reporting.

2. Communications

Communication practices have improved and will improve further once we have the two hires in place. Currently, we are improving communication with frustrated groups such as retirees. We are sending frequent informational blasts. The applications were coordinated and prioritized according to deadlines. The status of each applicant has been summarized and the "retirement team" is now reaching out to those that need action to proceed. We have been actively trying to respond to all emails even if to say that we have to research. The "mindset" we have adopted is it is better for the employee to hear about the problems rather than not get an answer. As for timing of the hiring process, this will be a project assigned to the new HR Director to analyze the current system and make improvements accordingly. Other improvements to communication over the last few months include:

- offering professional development to School Clerks/Administrative Assistants to inform them of changes and updates relevant to their positions,
- hold budget meetings for Principals allowing them to know what the proposed changes were and encouraging input,
- sending schools summaries of Student Activity spending to allow for reconciliations,
- and working with City Hall HR Department to provide employees with assistance (e.g. retirement workshops) from both the school and city departments.

3. Workflow and Technology

Our current databases are disjointed. Employees are tracked in one system but paid from another. This allows errors and discrepancies between the systems. The current job posting platforms have been criticized about the reliability and ease of use. It was obvious immediately that the accounting system does not reconcile to the X2 platform with employee data which tracks attendance and licensure. Rather than purchase new platforms that would solve partial problems and continue the “piecemeal” issues, we recommend using the functions already available to us in Munis. An Investment Analysis has been arranged with Munis to conduct a review of our current systems and compare to the available functions currently not used in Munis. After which, a report with recommendations will be provided. Since all functions in Munis have been purchased, the suggestions would offer the platform improvements without additional costs.

- Munis offers “Time and Attendance” which would solve the problem of tracking attendance on different databases (attendance in X2 while payroll is in Munis).
- Munis offers “HR Management – Applicant Tracking” which will allow us to post jobs, allow online applications that can be converted into employee data if hired, applicant (and diversity) tracking, scheduling of interviews, follow up letters, etc.
- Munis offers “Employee Self Service” which allows online onboarding and numerous other functions will be available to the employee regarding their own personnel requirements such as deductions, health insurance, etc..
- Munis offers “Evaluation/Grievance” functions.
- Munis has a licensure/certification function.

4. Hiring Diversity

The recruitment firm selected specializes in diversity staffing. The goal is to hire an HR Director that is skilled in recruitment of a diverse applicant pool.

5. Conduct Exit Interviews

This is another project that the new HR Director can spearhead. If it is not feasible to do in person exit interviews, the online exit survey option will be implemented.