

*Oneonta City School District
Finance/Audit Committee Meeting Minutes
September 13, 2023*

The meeting began at 5:15pm.

Members Present: Lisa Weeks, Business Manager; Tom Brindley, Superintendent; Shawn Beckerink, Board of Education; Shari Johnson-Ploutz, Board of Education; Sue Kurkowski, Board of Education.

Others Present: Coleen Moore, Director of Curriculum & Instruction; Angela Brindley, Community Member; Rosa Brindley, Community Member; Priscilla Wightman, Community Member; Matthew Wightman

Review of Financial Memorandum-All 7 items on the Financial Memorandum were reviewed and discussed including contracts, meal modification procedures, electric bus grant and donations.

In order to obtain grant funding for state mandated electric bus purchases, we have to “scrap” very specific buses. Our bus vendor has located these scrap buses. We will need to purchase them for \$2,500 to \$4,500 each. If we do not purchase the electric buses, the vendor will buy these back from us.

Grants for 2023-24-Our amendment for our stimulus grant is still pending.

Mrs. Moore was also in attendance to review some ideas for the Stronger Connections Grant that the district will apply for. This is a competitive grant so there is no guarantee that we will receive funding. Our allocation is a maximum of approximately \$1.4M. Grant application deadline is September 15, 2023.

Audit Status-Audit is still underway. The auditor has all information needed to complete the audit which is due to NYS by October 15th. With the change in our Finance Committee meeting dates and times, he will be unable to attend in October but plans to address the audit with our committee on November 8, 2023.

Tax Levy-The committee was provided with details and discussed the 2022-2023 error, which resulted in an erroneous **decrease** in the 2022-23 taxes levied to Laurens residents and a large 2023-24 increase. The taxes were calculated based on the level of assessment rather than the equalization rate. Per direction from NYS Tax Department, the district had to correct the error in 2023-24, resulting in essentially an increase for two years worth of tax levy increases. Additionally, the equalization rate change in 2023-24 contributed to a larger than normal tax increase. This was the “perfect storm” which unfortunately resulted in a large 2023-24 tax increase. This situation is isolated to the portion of the Laurens municipality included in the Oneonta City School District due to the small size of the tax.

Community members (Wightman's) spoke about the financial impact that it has had on some who were not expecting or planning for a significant increase. The district acknowledged the 2022-23 error and the resulting 2023-24 impact. We will be making a recommendation to the board to allow those Laurens residents affected by this to pay by October 31st without penalty.

Other Discussion

Transportation CoSer- There is a new Transportation CoSer offered by BOCES, which is staffed by retired NYSED Transportation Department directors. The Co-Ser is approximately \$4,000 and is BOCES aidable. Our district could probably benefit from joining this as we have a unique transportation set up, where we own the garage and buses, but contract out the personnel services.

Extended Day-There was a question regarding child care subsidies for the Extended Day Program. We used to accept them but currently do not as there were some extensive training requirements for our staff to complete in order to comply with the subsidy acceptance. We will look into this again and report back to the committee.

Our meeting ended at 5:45pm.
Next meeting: October 11, 2023; 5:15pm
Location: Valleyview Cafeteria

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa J. Weeks

Business Manager