

WEST BOYLSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Public Hearing on the Budget  
Meeting of Wednesday, March 13, 2024  
Middle/High School Library-Media Center  
Along with live stream @ <https://youtube.com/@wblive125>

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

James Pedone, Jr., Chairman  
Jason Ponticelli, Vice Chairman  
Jennifer Breen  
Nancy Hubbard  
Emily Lehman Miller

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT

Richard A. Meagher, Superintendent of Schools  
Alex Audette, Principal, Major Edwards Elementary School  
Cristy Morrison, Business Administrator

ADMINISTRATORS NOT PRESENT

Christopher Fournier, Principal Middle/High School  
Sherri Traina, Director of Special Education

ALSO PRESENT

Press and public

Mr. Pedone called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

1. Budget Presentation

Mr. Meagher presented the FY25 budget proposal for the West Boylston Public Schools.

Below comments made on the FY25 Budget Presentation:

Mr. Pedone – Pointed out that the District was able to prepay some of the Special Education expenses for FY25. If the District was not able to do that then the million dollar deficit would be worse.

Ms. Breen – The new guidance on School Choice money requires us to spend it down completely every year?

Mr. Meagher – We cannot spend it down the way we have been in the past. There will be a shift with some of the appropriations this year.

Ms. Breen – In the past we have gone to that money on emergencies that have come up or unanticipated. Where we didn't have money in the budget to cover some things. Are we no longer spending that money to cover things of that nature?

Mr. Meagher – We're not spending it down immediately. We are spending it down on some of the ESSER things that have faded out that we feel should be prioritized.

Mr. Pedone – We are using more than we are taking in correct?

Mr. Meagher – Yes, due to the structural deficit.

Mr. Pedone – It is a revolving account, we will have less at the end of the year than we started out with.

Ms. Breen – We can't count on the money year to year because we don't know what the numbers are going to be.

Mr. Pedone – Right. When I first came onto the Committee we use to pay certain expenses out of School Choice like oil and electric and those are expenses that should not come out of School Choice and now they are general budget. Now we are back to paying expenses back out of School Choice funds which we really shouldn't. With the new guidelines in place we don't have that option.

Mr. Meagher – Agreed. This has also become the norm this fiscal year with other districts, we are not alone in this situation.

Mr. Berglund – 140 Worcester Street, West Boylston: How are you going to make up the million dollar differential?

Mr. Meagher - We are going to rely heavily on anticipated circuit breaker. Through categories of circuit breaker relief. Then assess of our priorities as well.

## 2. Adjournment

Mr. Ponticelli made a motion to adjourn the Public Hearing Meeting at 6:44 p.m., seconded by Ms. Hubbard.

A roll count vote was taken.

Ms. Hubbard – Yes

Mr. Ponticelli – Yes

Ms. Breen - Yes

Ms. Lehman Miller – Yes

Mr. Pedone - Yes

Respectfully submitted,

Anita Pratt, Recoding Secretary