

**Minutes  
Nottingham Budget Committee Meeting  
September 24, 2015**

**Present:** Anthony Dumas, Jackie Snow, Gene Reed, Jennifer Biron, Dawn Fernald, Carrie Lee, Donna Danis – BOS Rep, Susan Levenson – School Board Rep

**Excused Absences:** Mark Carpenter – BOS Rep, Jeff Wheeler, Miska Hadik, Michael Koester

**Other in Attendance:** Secretary Dawn Wirkkala,

Ms. Snow, as Vice Chair, called the meeting to order and introductions were completed. Mr. Wheeler was unable to attend the meeting due to a conflict.

**Approval of Minutes**

**Motion:** by Ms. Biron, second by Mr. Dumas to approve the September 10, 2015 minutes as amended.

**Vote:** 7 in favor, 1 abstained.

**BUDGET WORKSHOP REVIEW:** Discussion of the two NHMA budget workshops took place.

Mr. Reed and Ms. Levenson stated the morning and early afternoon portion of the workshop presented/reviewed information from the new budget book provided by the NHMA, an overview of the general budget process, and then there was a transition to information about the Affordable Care Act later in the afternoon. The book has been completely revised from prior years and is a great resource, provides good examples, calculations and wording samples for the budget process.

Ms. Levenson stated the Affordable Care Act information gave details about requirements and how it might impact the budget process. Ms. Levenson stated the speaker also reviewed information about state aid.

Ms. Biron stated she found the workshop helpful and it providing a lot of history. There was information about the Town, goals and challenges, but wished there was more for the schools.

Ms. Levenson stated the school has the School Board Association with similar types of information, but budget information applies for both, even though the town and school are separate entities.

Ms. Lee stated she also found the workshop interesting and helpful, pointing out things to focus on and other things that would need research. They also have webinars that could be helpful and asked if Budget Committee Members could participate. Ms. Danis stated she believed so and would look into it.

Ms. Fernald asked if the School Board Members still get access to the NH School Board Association, stating it had similar information if not webinars; a user name and password was needed. Ms. Levenson stated the School Board does have access, with similar information, webinars and books, as well as data about policies and statutes, contracts and other information.

Mr. Reed asked how someone could access the NH School Board Association website. Ms. Levenson stated she would determine an answer.

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Ms. Levenson stated information was provided regarding employers who offer insurance savings accounts to help offset higher deductibles, including health savings accounts that might be impacted negatively. Ms. Lee stated it referenced the “Cadillac Tax” even though it wasn’t technically part of the health insurance plan. Ms. Biron stated it appears there are still a lot of unanswered questions about how it might impact employers.

**SCHOOL/TOWN GENERAL UPDATES:**

**Town:** Ms. Danis reported the town will participate with the Town of Raymond in a Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Day on Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup> from 9 – 1 pm. The Selectmen created the Recreation Revolving Committee, as voted on during the 2015 Town Meeting, which will have the first meeting next week. The Selectmen will hold a hearing on Monday, October 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm to hear comments on implementing a Parking Ordinance Town Beach parking issues, which hopefully will empower the Police to address non-property owner use of the beach.

Ms. Snow asked who was appointed to the Recreation Revolving Committee. Ms. Danis reported it was Janet Horvath, Skip Seaverns, Dee Ann Decker, Bill Garnett, Andrew Martin, and Brian Dobson, with Mr. Sterndale representing the Selectmen.

Mr. Dumas asked about the Drug Take Back day where police departments take unused medication. It was stated it would be at the Nottingham Police Department on Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Reed asked about the total cost of the new Fire Truck and Ms. Danis replied she would determine the amount.

**School:** Ms. Levenson reviewed the School Board will continue review of possible use of the school impact fee, with an estimated available amount of \$114,000.00. The School Board will review possible future amounts and how fees can be used as they plan for future school changes. Monies have to be used in six years or are returned to the owner; the earliest date for return would take place in 2018.

Ms. Danis stated the Planning Board is reviewing if the town has enough funds to complete an impact fee study, to determine the fees are a benefit to the town with the associated management costs to monitor the program; the amount collected for the town is very small compared to the school. Ms. Levenson stated she would like to have the School Board kept informed about the impact fee process, as it is a lot of money for the school, and asked if there is a way to determine a more equitable method to distribute funds. Ms. Danis stated it is worth reviewing, but there are specific laws regarding the funds; they are specifically required for new capital improvements.

General discussion took place about impact fees and if additional information and/or a summary could be provided to committee members. Ms. Danis stated school funds must be spent on school property, town funds for town property, without the ability to share – such as school fields on the town owned Marston property.

Ms. Fernald asked if the funds to pay for the study would come from the impact fees or would it be a town expense. Ms. Danis stated it would be a town expense, and the Planning Board requested an estimate to review if it is cost effective and if funds are available to complete the study.

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Ms. Levenson stated the School Board is reviewing adequacy, as they have received a letter from the City of Dover who feels they are “owed” several million dollars with the current adequacy grant cap. Dover expressed towns with higher population growth, have not received their full adequacy funding, including Nottingham and several other towns. Dover has taken legal action and the School Board is seeking a legal opinion to better understand the issue and determine if action is needed.

Mr. Reed asked if the answer would come from the legislature. Ms. Levenson stated she isn’t sure and it could take several years before an answer is received.

Ms. Levenson asked if the student enrollment count was received; a negative response was expressed and Ms. Levenson would remind the SAU to email the data. The School Board will also review Strafford and Northwood high school attendances to see if there are shifting numbers of high school students into those towns.

The School Board Technology group met with a review of the changes that are actively taking place for the school website that should be completed within the next couple of months. Review also took place regarding the student technology plan and the desire to move to a 1 to 1 in technology for the kids. Grades 4 through 8 appear to work well with the laptop and/or chromebooks, but there is a question for grades K through 3 and further integration of technology into the classroom and how it will work with and adjust curriculum; what technology is needed for what ages, what type and what level of technology.

The school facility review continues by looking at possible solutions to the deficiencies listed in the report for the previously recommended school addition. Ms. Levenson reviewed what changes have been made to the school, such as moving actual class rooms, re-purposing existing rooms, and changing/integration of technology into curriculum. This provides for a truer K through 4 on the first floor and grades 5 through 8 on the second floor.

Ms. Snow asked about the 2015 Warrant Article #8 and tax payer impact. Ms. Levenson stated the School Board reviewed financial reports that need to be provided to the NH Department of Education and NH Department of Revenue. The School Board had the March warrant article that gave the board the ability to set aside up to 1.5% of the net assessed value for emergency purposes. After discussion the School Board decided based on the vote to use the default budget they would set aside \$60,000.00, which is less than the full 1.5%, and the remaining surplus amount, of approximately \$398,000.00 will be returned to offset the final 2015 property taxes.

Ms. Snow stated this issue was discussed in length to find a balance of setting aside enough funds for an emergency but returning enough to help reduce property taxes for taxpayers. Ms. Levenson stated the final reports would be received at the next School Board meeting.

**SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATES:**

**CIP:** Mr. Reed reported the group had their preliminary meeting with the Selectmen on September 14<sup>th</sup>. It was believed the next meeting was scheduled for October 12<sup>th</sup>, the Columbus Day Holiday.

Mr. Reed asked who the CIP Committee members were. Ms. Danis reported it is the full Board of Selectmen, John Morin from the Planning Board and Mr. Reed from the Budget Committee.

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Ms. Levenson asked if there was a member from the Building Committee, Tom Sweeney had participated in the past. No answer was given.

**Marston:** Ms. Danis reported an RFP was sent out to establish a conceptual design based on input received from public community sessions, the NH Listens report, and committee discussion. The response deadline is September 25<sup>th</sup>, which will hopefully provide the committee the ability to determine estimated amounts needed for development of the property and timelines.

Mr. Reed asked how the conceptual design phase would be funded. Ms. Danis stated there isn't a specific line item, but there has been discussion to determine if funds for the design phase could be found in the existing town budget or come from the Recreation Revolving Fund.

The Committee is looking to meet in early October. The meetings are held in Conference Room #1 at the Town Offices.

**Transportation:** Ms. Snow reported the committee spoke to Dr. Gadomski about transportation statutes. The question had been asked if high school transportation isn't required to be provided, but is provided, do the legal requirements regarding distance to a student's home and the bus stop apply. Mr. Gadomski replied the answer was "no" because you aren't required to provide high school transportation. Ms. Levenson asked if Mr. Gadomski checked with the school attorney and Ms. Snow stated she did not know, but this was his thought on the issue.

The most recent ridership counts have been received from Dale Transportation and a review will take place, especially with the previously received concern of Coe-Brown Bus 2 overcrowding. However, Dale Transportation indicates that is no longer the case.

The next meeting would be in a couple of weeks and the committee will continue review of high school buses for adjustments in routes and/or bus sizes – doing so to make sure ample time is given for public notification if changes are determined.

**School Default Budget Sub-Committee:** Ms. Levenson asked if the Default Budget Committee would be established. Ms. Snow stated it has not been discussed this year. Mr. Reed asked to have the item as a future agenda item. Ms. Snow agreed it would be appropriate.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** NONE

**ROUNDTABLE:**

Ms. Danis stated it was nice to be back with the Budget Committee.

Ms. Lee stated the school changes are fantastic, with a much better flow, and it is nice to have a Junior High School feel.

Ms. Fernald also felt the changes were positive, especially the OT/PT space.

Ms. Levenson stated the stage is an actual stage now; a theater / music room.

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**ACTION ITEMS:**

**Town:** What was the total cost of the new Fire Department truck purchased in 2015?

**School:** Can Budget Committee members access the NH School Board Association website.

Email the impact fees information received by the bookkeeper to committee members.

Email student enrollment counts.

**Future Agenda:** Budget Committee Default Budget Sub-Committee review.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Having no further business,

7:51 PM **Motion:** by Ms. Ferland, second by Mr. Dumas.

**Vote:** 8 – 0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Wirkkala