

Nottingham Budget Committee Meeting

12-2-21

Official Minutes as of 12-14-21

1 Call to Order

2 Members Present: Michelle King (Chair), John Decker (Vice Chair), Sandra Jones, Tom
3 Butkiewicz, Jeffrey Morrison, Bob Kelly, Donna Danis (Select Board rep), Karyl Martin (School
4 Board rep)

5 Absent: Michael Koester (excused absence), Michael Kelly (excused absence), Tom Leveille

6 Others: Lorraine Petrini, Chris Sousa, Susan Levenson

7 The Chair opened the meeting at 7pm.

8 Approve Minutes

9 **Mr. Decker made a motion to approve the public minutes from 11-18-21 as written. Ms.**
10 **Jones seconded. Unanimously approved by a vote of 7-1 with Ms. Danis abstaining.**

11 Presentation

12 *School Proposed Operating Budget Update*

13 Mr. Sousa, principal of Nottingham School, and Ms. Levenson, member of the School Board,
14 will be presenting the school proposed budget. Mr. Decker asked if Mr. Sousa can indicate if a
15 line is part of the default budget or not. Ms. Levenson said the School Board creates the default
16 budget, not the principal. There was discussion about what items would be included in the
17 default budget.

18 Regular Education total increases by 4.36%. Software costs are bought independently now
19 whereas they were shared in the past at the SAU.

20 Special Education total decreases by 1.03%. Dr. Butkiewicz asked if the number of special
21 education students changed. Mr. Sousa said they had an increase. Ms. Martin said there was a
22 reduction in the number of paras for the high school. Mr. Sousa said they are waiting for a few
23 numbers from the state. Ms. Levenson said there was an estimate for high school special
24 education costs in the budget. There are 3 tiers in Dover for special education and CBNA is a flat
25 rate. The cost that CBNA is providing is being applied for the rising freshmen in the budget
26 which is the highest number it would be; it will be adjusted once it is known where the students
27 will go.

28 Athletic total decreased by 0.58%.

29 Summer School total decreased by 1.52%. Summer Institute was not done for one year due to
30 COVID.

31 Guidance total increased by 12.80%. Ms. Martin said there was a staffing change which is why
32 there was an increase. Mr. Sousa said there was also a track increase for the following year.

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33 Nurse total decreased by 1.89%. Mr. Decker asked what the SNAP software is. Mr. Sousa said it
34 is the software on how they update information to the state.

35 Contracted Services total remained flat.

36 Speech total increased by 6.01%.

37 Contracted Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy total increased by 4.15%.

38 Improvement of Instruction total decreased by 3.79%.

39 Instruction and Curriculum Development total increased by 1.57%.

40 Library and Education Media total increased by 7.94%. There will be a track change. Dr.
41 Butkiewicz asked if the changes were union contract mandated raises. Mr. Sousa concurred. Dr.
42 Butkiewicz said the union contract warrant article told voters the increase for salaries and
43 benefits combined was only going to be \$95k, yet the increases in salaries alone are far higher
44 than that, and these increases have been significantly more than the estimates provided to voters
45 for many years in a row. Mr. Sousa said you can't predict the staff and the track changes. Dr.
46 Butkiewicz said the estimates are being lowballed. Mr. Sousa said they don't have a lot of
47 turnover at the school and the costs could be much higher. Ms. King said they can look at the
48 contract for next year. Dr. Butkiewicz asked if the contracts are done in secret. Ms. Levenson
49 said they are done in non-public. Dr. Butkiewicz asked if they would allow public. Ms. Martin
50 said they are confidential until it's ratified. Dr. Butkiewicz said some towns do allow the public
51 during negotiations. Dr. Butkiewicz said the negotiations are done in secret and it's the contract
52 that the union wants. The voters are given low-balled information and the contract is passed each
53 year. The negotiations are not done with the town payer's interest at heart. Ms. Levenson said the
54 School Board members meet with the union; proposals are made back and forth. Cost estimates
55 are given by the business office, and it's run through the legal department. Dr. Butkiewicz asked
56 if it's a legal requirement to have it non-public. Ms. Martin said she believes it should be done in
57 non-public. Dr. Butkiewicz asked if he can be included in the negotiations. Ms. King and Mr.
58 Decker said there could be more transparency if the meetings were done in public. Dr.
59 Butkiewicz said the formula needs to be changed for a worst-case scenario for the increases for
60 the teacher contract.

61 Mr. Kelly asked about the buyouts for health insurance. Ms. Levenson will get a total of the opt-
62 outs.

63 Computer Assisted Instruction total decreased by 1.02%.

64 School Board Services total decreased by 0.59%.

65 District Secretary/Clerk services remains flats.

66 Legal Services total remains flat.

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67 Office of the Superintendent Services total decreased by 16.15%. Ms. Levenson said for the first
68 presentation they are keeping the superintendent and preschool lines as lump sum amounts and
69 providing detailed spreadsheets to support those amounts.

70 Ms. Levenson said they are absorbing the preschool into our town for the next year for the SAU
71 withdrawal. They had not expected this while budgeting.

72 Principal's Office total increased by 3.7%. Mr. Sousa said the phones have been updated and it
73 will be a savings. Dr. Butkiewicz asked about the \$3k in postage. Mr. Sousa said mailers have
74 been done in the past but they are moving away from mailing report cards. Dr. Butkiewicz asked
75 if this money promotes the school addition. Mr. Sousa and Ms. Levenson said they don't use
76 public funds to advocate any warrant articles. Ms. Levenson said they sent out a flyer that
77 describes the warrant articles. Ms. Levenson said to get an addition approved, there needs to be a
78 grassroots campaign and it's not paid for by public funds.

79 Mr. Kelly asked what the total enrollment was at this time. Mr. Sousa said 476 is the total
80 enrollment. Ms. Levenson said they can get the capacity of the school building. Mr. Sousa said
81 the entire number of people in the school can be around 600. Ms. Levenson said the preschool
82 won't be a huge increase for the next year.

83 Mr. Decker asked about the pickup patrol software. Ms. Martin explained it was an electronic
84 program for where kids go after school.

85 School District Bookkeeper total decreased.

86 Dr. Butkiewicz asked if the town uses Waste Management. Ms. Danis said the cost for the
87 transportation between the school and the town may be prohibitive. Ms. Sousa said they have
88 spoken to the town about this. Ms. Danis said it seems like it would save money, but it doesn't.
89 She said the town and school do speak about how to work together.

90 Mr. Kelly asked about the capacity of the propane tank. Mr. Sousa will get that information.

91 Operation and Maintenance of Plant total increased by 0.24%.

92 Care of Grounds Services total increased by 1.74%.

93 Regular Education Transportation total increased by 2.25%. Ms. Martin said they received 1 bid
94 and the transportation costs will likely increase.

95 Special Education Transportation total decreased by 31%. Ms. Martin said there were 2 bids.

96 Athletic Transportation total increased by 3%.

97 Field Trip Transportation total decreased by 2.85%.

98 Homeless Transportation total decreased by 20%.

99 Food Service total increased by 1.44%.

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100 The proposed school budget will increase by 1.57%. Ms. Levenson said it will increase some
101 with firmer numbers that they are receiving.

102 Dr. Butkiewicz noted that the proposed per pupil cost is now over \$19k, up 13% over last year.
103 Dr. Butkiewicz said that national average is about \$13k.

104 Dr. Butkiewicz asked if the School Board would ask if Pinkerton Academy will take more of our
105 students. Ms. Levenson said if there is enough interest from townspeople for their kids to go to a
106 certain high school, the School Board will approach the high school. Dr. Butkiewicz asked if the
107 School Board can proactively ask the high schools if they can take some of Nottingham students.
108 He said they should regularly ask high schools and see how much each town would charge for
109 tuition. Ms. Danis asked if that would increase transportation. Dr. Butkiewicz said the
110 transportation would not be included and parents will be responsible for transportation. Dr.
111 Butkiewicz said he is suggesting only offer a particular high school if it is cheaper than the
112 current choices. Ms. Martin said they can't discriminate against the special education students
113 whose tuition costs will be higher. Ms. Martin said the projected tuition cost for Dover was
114 higher than the actual tuition cost and will be adjusted in the next budget draft.

115 The proposed SAU budget was presented.

116 Dr. Butkiewicz asked if the School Board put out an RFP with no site work needed for the
117 modulares. Ms. Levenson said they will have to have site work because they don't have a pad. No
118 one gave the School Board a bid. At least one vendor did come to the school and was interested.
119 They wanted an extension which was not granted at the time. The School Board put out the bid
120 again and there may be a bid coming. Ms. Levenson said that site work will need to be done. Ms.
121 Levenson said they have additional questions such as does the modular touch the school and
122 does the school need to be sprinkled.

123 Ms. King said they would be taking away the teacher's lounge due to preschool classroom. She
124 asked if they could have a modular for a teacher's room and perhaps a modular could be used for
125 the SAU. Ms. Levenson said she is not in favor of the modular for the SAU as it would be much
126 more expensive than what the town was told it would cost for the SAU.

127 Ms. King suggested speaking to Strafford as they got a modular recently. Ms. Levenson said they
128 are going to Strafford tomorrow. They are also speaking to Chester Academy as well.

129 Mr. Kelly asked how many classrooms are in the school. Ms. Levenson showed the proposed
130 building design. Mr. Sousa said there are 27 classrooms.

131 Mr. Kelly asked how many teachers they would hire for world language. Mr. Sousa said they
132 would have to discuss that.

133 Ms. Levenson said Nottingham property evaluation is higher than Lee and Chester.

134 Ms. Martin said the para contract is this year and teacher contract is next year. Dr. Butkiewicz
135 said the union negotiations are considered a non-meeting. He read the RSA. He said there is no

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136 legal barrier to have negotiations in public. Mr. Decker said the challenge could be that the
137 public remains quiet.

138 The preschool budget was presented. Ms. Levenson said they have to pay transportation for
139 preschool for identified students.

140 **Committee Reports**

141 *School Facilities*

142 Ms. Jones said there was no update.

143 *SAU Transition*

144 Mr. Decker said everything was discussed at that meeting was already in this meeting. Ms.
145 Martin asked if the BOS will be discussing the old town hall proposals. Ms. Danis said they will
146 likely be discussing at the next meeting. Ms. Martin said there may be someone from the SAU
147 Transition Committee coming to that BOS meeting. Ms. Martin said the school deliberative
148 session will be Feb. 8 at the school. Ms. Danis said the town has not picked their date yet.

149 *Capital Improvement Plan*

150 Ms. King said there was a meeting last week. There was discussion about what was on the CIP.

151 *Transportation Committee*

152 Transportation Committee will be scheduling a meeting to review the bids for regular and special
153 ed. transportation.

154 **Other**

155 *Parting Thoughts*

156 Ms. Martin said she thinks the school default budget will be higher than the proposed school
157 budget as it was last year. Mr. Kelly asked if there was a cap on budget increases. Ms. Martin
158 said that cities have caps, like Dover. Mr. Decker said there can be changes up to 10% of the
159 budget at the deliberative session. Ms. Martin said that if the town votes down the proposed
160 budget, the default is the budget and typically the default is lower than the proposed so that is a
161 cap. There was discussion about canceling one of the meetings the following week because the
162 school default budget will not be ready yet.

163 *Next Meeting:*

164 **Adjourn**

165 **Mr. Decker made a motion to adjourn at 9:21pm. Dr. Butkiewicz seconded. Unanimously**
166 **approved by a vote of 8-0.**

167