

Minutes
Nottingham Budget Committee Meeting
November 12, 2015

Members Present: Anthony Dumas, Jeff Wheeler, Miska Hadik, Michael Koester, Jennifer Biron, Dawn Fernald, Carrie Lee, Mark Carpenter – BOS Rep, Susan Levenson – School Board Rep

Excused Absences: Gene Reed

Other in Attendance: Secretary Dawn Wirkkala, Deborah Gier, Chris Sousa, Heidi Maguire, Lorraine Petrini, Robert Gadomski, Suzanne Edin, Tim Jandebour, Arthur Stockus, Chris Mills, Gail Mills, Marjorie Whitmore, Scott Reuning, Bonnie Winona MacKinnon

Mr. Wheeler called the meeting to order and introductions were completed.

New Member Candidate: Ms. Maguire reviewed her budgeting experience.

Motion: Ms. Biron, second Ms. Lee to nominate Ms. Heidi Maguire as the new Budget Committee member.

Ms. Levenson stated she would have recommended Ms. Edin with her experience and background.

Ms. Biron and Ms. Lee withdrew their motion.

Mr. Carpenter recommended Mr. Stockus as he has the most experience creating budgets and has experience regarding Nottingham government.

The Committee Members voted by secret ballot in writing with the following results:

Heidi Maguire received 2 votes. Arthur Stockus received 2 votes. Suzanne Edin received 4 votes.

Ms. Edin was welcomed and it was stated she could sit as a member when her oath of office was signed with the Town Clerk.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: by Mr. Dumas, second by Mr. Hadik to approve the November 5, 2015 minutes as amended.

Vote: 7 in favor. 1 abstained.

SCHOOL 1ST DRAFT JULY 2016/JUNE 2017 BUDGET: Ms. Levenson introduced those in attendance and stated the school budget is just a 1st Draft, with more changes coming.

Dr. Gadomski stated additional materials will be presented, per the binder tabs, once the information is complete. A page by page review of larger changed and new requests in the presented budget, stating there are some accounts with estimated amounts as the information isn't available yet; the budget is a rough 1st draft and work will continue.

Mr. Sousa reviewed the recommendation for two new paraprofessionals, in the Reg Ed Paraprofessional Salaries account. These positions will address additional academic, social, and behavioral education needs of incoming kindergarten students, and student up to grade 4; skills that might not have been learned before entering school; getting students going on a good start.

Mr. Sousa stated positive results have been seen with the hiring of the new lunch room monitors, including the Lunch Room/Recess Monitors account. Monitors allow teachers needed time to participate in important data team meetings, when they wouldn't have been able to in the past.

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Ms. Whitmore stated Health Care Insurance premiums decreased by 1.5%. However, the account line did not decrease because fewer teachers took advantage of the insurance buyout, a higher number of employees requested insurance coverage, and the amount also includes proposed coverage of the two new requested paraprofessionals. Dr. Gadomski stated there are other health insurance lines throughout the budget which will account for the overall decrease in premiums.

Dr. Gadomski reviewed the proposed amounts for high school tuition, stating both Tuition-Dover & Other Public School and Tuition-Coe Brown amounts will be adjusted and notes corrected to reflect the current tuition rates. The current 2015/2016 Dover tuition rate is \$12,262.00 and with an estimated 4% increase the total 2016/2017 estimated amount will be \$1,121,544.00. The current Coe Brown tuition amount should be received early December and the increase is conservatively estimated at 4% after an initial discussion with the headmaster. The Anticipated Move-in's account is an estimate of four potential students moving into district.

Mr. Sousa stated the purchase of new text books listed in the Classroom Textbooks: Language Arts account will help improve reading and writing skills of students, following the curriculum of the Common Core standards program. The proposed estimated amount is currently for books for kindergarten through sixth grade students and is currently being reviewed. Ms. Levenson stated the School Board set a policy to review books on a five year cycle, but after discussion with school staff it was determined the language art text books could be reviewed after six years.

Mr. Reuning stated some of the prior single Special Education accounts have had expenses separated into two accounts, identifying the elementary versus high school accounts. Some of these accounts include Extended School Year Programs, Teacher of the Deaf, SpEd Tuition Non-Public Schools, and others.

Dr. Gadomski stated the amount for SpEd Tuition-Other Public High School includes the estimated tiered amount based on the new Dover High School/Nottingham contract. The SpEd Pre-School account will be adjusted; the amount should be received soon. All other special education accounts will be adjusted as details about individual education plans (IEP's) continue to be received.

Dr. Gadomski stated the Co-Curricular Salaries Athletic Salaries and Replace Equipment accounts will include the addition of two new volleyball teams, and all needed materials and equipment for the sport.

Mr. Sousa stated he is requesting additional funds in Guidance Salaries for an additional work day for the four-day-a-week guidance counselor, making the position a five-days-a-week. The guidance counselor positions are not just traditional counselors addressing behavioral needs. They have become teaching positions and their classes integrate with the regular student curriculum. These positions have important duties working with students, and they are also required to participate in with 504 special education planning.

Mr. Reuning stated the amount for Contracted Svcs Behavior Technician is an estimate as the contract hasn't been received. The Contracted Services accounts help reduce some special education expenses by contracting with an educator to work in-district versus sending the student out-of-district, which is typically more expensive and would also require transportation.

Mr. Sousa reviewed Improvement of Instruction, specifically Curriculum Development and In-Service training. The Curriculum Development increase will provide additional hours to teachers with training for the Common Core programming, Smarter-Balance Assessment Program,

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curriculum analysis, integration of technology, in addition to other areas. The increase will help provide 20 staff members a one week training. The increase for In-Service Training provides the necessary professional development and education to teachers as curriculums and programs change and new services are introduced, such as Common Core, technology, and the proposed new Reading/Language Arts program.

Mr. Hadik asked if the In-service Training was different than the continuing education, which provided reimbursement to teachers for courses they might take, but didn't appear to be used. Dr. Gadomski stated continuing education is the Staff Development account, is a contractual reimbursement. Mr. Sousa stated unspent money from the Staff Development accounts were used to offset the In-service Training expenditures.

Ms. Levenson asked for an explanation of how salary adjustments are calculated and shown in the budget reports, including how the salary merit pool and increases are included, per new contracts. Ms. Whitmore explained the 3% salary merit pool for administrative employees was previously lumped together in one account. This year the budget will reflect salary increases of 3% for each position; an adjustment will be made in the 2015/2016 budget amounts that will zero out the amount previously listed in the Principal's Office 2015/2016 Salary pool; Administrators account, and increasing each individual position that would have received a merit pool salary increase.

Mr. Carpenter asked for clarification on the proposed adjustments to salary amounts, expressing concern that adjustments to individual 2015/2016 accounts could change the 2015/2016 grand total budgeted amount. Dr. Gadomski stated the 2015/2016 approved grand total would not change, the merit pool amount would only be shifted to the individual salary accounts, but the total amount included in the individual accounts would not exceed the total amount from the approved merit pool budget.

Mr. Sousa reviewed the proposed increases in the Computer Assisted Instruction Software and New Equipment accounts. New Software changes will help implement the transition from paper education to technology education, reducing the amount of paper needed. These areas and proposed purchases are being studied to determine how to overlap curriculums, to find further cost savings. An example is the many previously purchased social studies magazines can now be viewed on-line for free. The New Equipment increase is based on the current technology plan and proposes two new chromebooks and tablet carts; the existing carts are used non-stop, often with a waiting list. Use of technology is not new, and is becoming part of the normal curriculum.

Chair Wheeler asked about a prior year proposal to make a bulk/multi district pooled purchase of needed equipment, trying to reduce the overall expense. Mr. Sousa reported the school is receiving discounts on equipment and software. Dr. Gadomski stated the Technology Directors of the three schools do meet to review if purchases can be made, sometimes it is advantageous and other times it doesn't fit.

Mr. Carpenter asked how the chromebooks are holding up with student use. Mr. Sousa stated they are holding up very well and if any issues are found the equipment is being repaired and/or replaced very quickly.

Dr. Gadomski reported School Board Services Contracted Services-Atty & Negotiator account is increasing because of expected legal expenses with teacher negotiations, tuition contracts, increased right to know requests, as well as other expectations.

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Dr. Gadomski stated the SAU Expense is from 2015/2016; the amount will change once the Joint School Board and SAU have completed contract review and negotiations.

Dr. Gadomski reviewed there is savings in the Office of the Principal Health Insurance account but an increase is seen in the Principal HealthIns Buyout account; the accounts cancel each other out.

Dr. Gadomski stated the Operation and Maintenance of Plant Lawn care account increase is based on a full year of service; the 2015/2016 lawn care work started late and the amount was only a partial year contract. However, the Repairs and Maint-Building and Repairs and Maintenance Grounds accounts have been decreased, based on the hard work of existing staff to try and keep expenses down. The Supplies-General Custodial is increasing based on an increased price of supplies.

Dr. Gadomski stated the propane and oil contracts are being reviewed and hopefully prices can be locked in at a lower amount.

Dr. Gadomski stated Replacement of Furniture has also been decreased.

Mr. Reuning reviewed the proposed budgets for Special Ed Transportation, is also being separated to show the expenses for the elementary versus high school grades.

Dr. Gadomski reported the School Board continues to work on the Food Services budget.

Dr. Gadomski reviewed the information the SAU made available to the Budget Committee members in the school budget binders and stated additional information would be coming.

Mr. Carpenter asked what was included in the benefit accounts. Ms. Whitmore stated it is health, dental, FICA, and NH Retirement; it could also include buyout amounts.

Ms. Fernald asked if alt ed still being offered at the SAU building. Mr. Reuning stated it was not, it is included in the tuition accounts; Nottingham does not currently have a student in the alt ed program.

Mr. Carpenter asked for an explanation of the abbreviations of the provided health and dental insurances. Dr. Gadomski reviewed each category is a different plan, the amounts include deductions and prescription cost amounts, in relation to the premium amount. Mr. Reuning explained the abbreviations: MTB5(07)-R\$3/15M\$1 is the Matthew Thornton Blue \$5.00 Co-pay, the R is a \$3.00 generic 30-day pharmacy prescription, \$15.00 brand name 30-day pharmacy prescription, and a \$1.00 mailed 90 day prescription.

Mr. Carpenter asked if the premiums listed were the full amount and what percentage of the premiums do employees pay. Mr. Reuning stated the percentage paid by the employee will depend on the classification of the employee. Ms. Whitmore explained the teachers have one set of percentages, paraprofessionals another; per contract for teachers the School Board pays 91% of a single person plan, 81% for a two person plan, and 81% for a family plan.

Chair Wheeler thanked the SAU members for attending.

SUB-COMMITTEE FOR SCHOOL 2016/2017 DEFAULT BUDGET: Mr. Wheeler reviewed the process for the default budget; which should include budget based on current budget in addition to any contractual increases.

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Ms. Levenson stated by law the School Board is required to prepare a default budget and a few years ago the Budget Committee chose to do their own, and it will be up to the committee to determine if they would like to have a special sub-committee again this year.

Mr. Koester reviewed why a prior Budget Committee decided to establish the default sub-committee. This helped give the Budget Committee a better understanding of the process and the ability to ask questions when something didn't appear correct. However, in the past couple of years, it has become a less necessary task for the Budget Committee.

Mr. Koester asked if the default budget would be presented at a future meeting. Ms. Levenson stated it would be created and worked on once the proposed regular budget is more finalized. Ms. Levenson stated the School Board does review the default budget line by line at a public meeting and anyone from the public is welcome to attend.

Chair Wheeler asked if there were any objections to not creating a default sub-committee; none were expressed and one would not be created.

SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATES:

MPEC: Mr. Hadik reviewed that the committee has selected three companies to interview, which will take place on three upcoming dates. After interviews the committee will present a final recommendation to the Selectmen.

Transportation: Mr. Dumas reported he was unable to attend the last meeting but would find out what took place and would report back to the committee.

Mr. Koester asked if there was a back up for Mr. Dumas on the Transportation Committee. Ms. Fernald stated she would be willing to be the back up.

ROUNDTABLE: Ms. Lee stated it was a great 1st draft.

Ms. Levenson thanked everyone and stated there is still a lot of work to do.

Chair Wheeler thanked those individuals who applied for and were willing to fill the vacant Budget Committee position.

ACTION ITEMS: **Town:** Forward dates of upcoming MPEC meetings.

ADJOURNMENT: Having no further business,

8:24 PM Motion: by Mr. Hadik, second by Mr. Koester.

Vote: 9 – 0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Wirkkala