



BUDGET COMMITTEE
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MINUTES OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARING

Wednesday, November 30, 2016 – 6:30 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Alyson Baryames, James Connelly, Mark Connelly, Bob Krasko, Sharon McLaughlin, Patty Porter, Kristen Syphers, Pat Walsh – School Board Rep, Paul Sanderson – Selectmen’s Rep

Members Absent: Chair Mary McDonough, Steve McKenzie

Also Present: Jim Katkin – Business Administrator; Salvatore Petralia – Superintendent of Schools; Peter Smith – Principal, Greenland School

Vice Chair Krasko opened the Budget Committee meeting at 6:30 p.m. A roll call was taken by the Vice Chair; he announced a quorum was present and the meeting was being recorded.

1. Review: Right-to-Know Law

P. Sanderson reviewed the Right-to-Know Law, reminding members they were under the same requirements of the statute as were all other Boards and Committees in Town. There were several important parts they needed to be aware of: (1) the public meeting: when a quorum of the Board discusses issues, it must be done in a public forum where the public has an opportunity to observe; (2) an illegal meeting through email: if a member does “Reply All” in response to an email, a meeting is convened. He suggested there be no discussions through email; hold all information for the public meeting. Agenda items should be sent to the Chair or Board Secretary; (3) governmental records: every piece of paper and electronic communication to members is subject to disclosure. Not only could a meeting be convened through email, but all discussions through email are subject to disclosure even if it’s with one other member. Emails at home, or done at work, could be subject to disclosure. P. Sanderson recommended members not have discussions through email or create documents that could be subject to disclosure.

2. Review: Proposed School Budget

J. Katkin reviewed the School budget, referring members to the Executive Summary (copy on file). The overall budget increase, including the School District Assessment, impacts the tax rate by \$.97. Three warrant articles will be submitted, and are not included in the \$.97. The proposed Greenland School District gross budget is \$10,086,123; an increase of \$416,013 or 4.3%.

Included in the summary were the ten largest increases to the budget as well as the major decreases. J. Katkin noted that Portsmouth has voted to change to a later start and end time; this will have an impact on transportation costs for Greenland School. Additional staffing is being proposed. J. Katkin stated that they are anticipating a decrease in revenues and credits (copy on file).

Three warrant articles will be submitted. Included are increasing kindergarten to full day, hiring staff, and purchasing supplies and necessary equipment (the figure submitted was inaccurate; an accurate

number will be given to the Budget Committee after the December School Board meeting); adding \$25,000 to the Special Education Expendable Trust Fund; and transferring the rental property income from SAU 50 to the School Building and Grounds Expendable Trust Fund (\$20,400). Although no other warrant articles are expected, there is always the possibility of resident petition warrant articles. J. Katkin also noted that the ratification of the Collective Bargaining Agreement was incorrect; that contract was ratified last year (a correct page will be given to the Committee).

The Greenland School District Warrant was also reviewed. If the proposed budget is defeated, the default budget will be \$9,913,985. The difference between the default and proposed budgets is \$172,138 or 1.71%.

Vice Chair Krasko noted that the School returned \$364,000 to the Town this year. J. Katkin explained that a large portion of the money was earmarked for student tuitions, but not utilized. He further explained that the fund balance was not only from unexpended appropriations; any additional revenue and the unexpended appropriations determine the fund balance.

The largest increase is tuition to Portsmouth High School, which the SAU has no control over. They are anticipating the need for a new Grade 4 teacher in 2017-2018, and proposing a new position. This year there are 397 students, and don't expect that to change next year. P. Walsh added that while the enrollment may not change, the demographics of the classroom may; that would necessitate the need for additional staffing.

A Board Certified Behavioral Analyst has also been proposed. A BCBA will focus on students whose disabilities require very comprehensive data tracking and comprehensive behavior programs. Currently, there are 16 students who require that service. They are typically students with an educational disability such as autism or developmental delay—something that impacts how they interact as well as their behavior. In addition to cost savings, the benefit of a staff member is that there will be someone in the building on a regular basis and the consistency of the same person. J. Katkin added that they would like to have a full-time BCBA that would be shared within the SAU. The BCBA can also do the various evaluations that are required.

P. Sanderson stated that the Selectmen are estimating the value of the Town will increase approximately \$10 million by April 01, 2017, based on known building permits. At the current tax rate of \$16.65, the Town will have \$165,000 to \$170,000 in additional tax revenue based on growth. The Town's Unreserved Fund Balance is approximately \$1.63 million; DRA recommends there be approximately 10% of overall Town appropriations in the Unreserved Fund Balance. Based on the School and Town, there should be \$1.4 million in the Unreserved Fund Balance. That would leave \$250,000 on the Town side that could be appropriated elsewhere. He continued that next week, when the Town budget is scheduled to be reviewed, there would be discussions about public safety. In addition to the request for one additional police officer, there will be a discussion about the fire department and the need for staffing. P. Sanderson added that the Library will be requesting to add to their Capital Reserve Fund and moving forward with a new Library. The Selectmen are trying to keep the proposed budget and default budget as close as possible.

3. Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

4. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, December 08, 2016 – 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room, Review of Town Budget

Respectfully Submitted – Charlotte Hussey, Secretary to the Boards

Approved: Thursday, December 08, 2016