



**BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
**Town of Greenland • Greenland, NH 03840**  
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**MINUTES OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARING**

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Wednesday, December 09, 2020 – 6:30 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room, Zoom

Members Present: Mike Bilodeau, Todd Cadle, Mark Connelly, Frank Hansler, Bob Krasko, Sharon Hussey-McLaughlin (Zoom), Don Miller, Zack Pike, Paul Sanderson, Jamie Connelly – Selectmen's Rep, Pat Walsh – School Board Rep, Steve McKenzie - Alternate (Zoom)

Present – Zoom: Mindy Ryan – SAU 50 Business Administrator, Sal Petralia – SAU 50 Superintendent of Schools, Tamara Hallee – Greenland Central School Principal, Sarah Reinhardt – Special Education Director, Brian Grattan – Director of Technology, Maria Emory – School Board Chairman

Present – In Person: Talley Westerberg – School Board

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Chair Krasko opened the Budget Committee meeting at 6:30 p.m. A checklist to ensure meetings were compliant with the Right-to-Know Law during the State of Emergency was read into the record by Vice Chair P. Sanderson. A roll call was taken; it was announced a quorum was present and the meeting was being held virtually through Zoom and recorded by video and audio.

Attendance was taken by roll call: M. Bilodeau - present, T. Cadle – present, M. Connelly – present, F. Hansler - present, S. Hussey-McLaughlin - present, D. Miller – present, Z. Pike – present, P. Sanderson - present, J. Connelly – present, P. Walsh – present, S. McKenzie – present, B. Krasko - present.

1. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: D. Miller moved to approve the minutes of Tuesday, November 10, 2020. Second – P. Walsh; roll call vote: M. Bilodeau - yes, T. Cadle – yes, M. Connelly – yes, F. Hansler - yes, S. Hussey-McLaughlin - yes, D. Miller – yes, Z. Pike – yes, P. Sanderson - yes, J. Connelly – yes, P. Walsh – yes, S. McKenzie – yes, B. Krasko - yes. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED

2. Review of the School Budget

Mindy Ryan, SAU Business Administrator, reviewed the budget with the Board. A copy of the Power Point presentation is on file. NH Retirement increased from 11.17% to 14.06% for support staff. The teacher rate increased from 17.08% to 21.02%. HealthTrust rates for medical and dental have been guaranteed to increase by no more than 4.3%. The operating budget is \$12,144,531, a 4.6% increase (\$530,828 increase). The default budget is \$11,965,350 (\$179,181 less than the proposed budget).

M. Ryan stated that the school administration did a phenomenal job with the budget. They made sure they had efficiencies in the budget, and they are maintaining a high quality of education for the students. They were impressed when Principal Hallee and her staff presented the budget and a detailed budget binder.

## DRAFT: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

There will be a warrant article in the amount of \$136,892 for the negotiated teacher's contract. A permanent substitute position has been included in the 2021-2022 budget that was voted in by the School Board after Town Meeting. It is not in the default budget because it was not included in last year's approved budget.

Sarah Reinhardt, Special Education Director, joined the meeting by Zoom and reviewed several sections of the budget. Brian Grattan, Director of Technology, joined the meeting via Zoom. B. Grattan stated a portion of the increase was due to NH House Bill 1612, Student and Data Privacy Laws. Their current library software did not have a data privacy agreement. All SAU 50 schools, with the exception of New Castle, will join a combined district library system will allow inter-library loading and look-up. There is a \$10,000 placeholder included in the budget; \$6,850 can be deducted from that line for year one for the software: the cost will be \$3,150. The current budget is \$1,320. The increase includes importing the data into the new system. The year two cost will be \$1,045, which will be a decrease over what had been paid.

B. Grattan reviewed new technology initiatives. One of the big increases is the wide area network. He explained the wide area network is fiber internet. Comcast is the current internet provider. B. Grattan explained the difference between Comcast Cable copper internet and fiber internet. Fiber internet to the School will need to be brought from the Portsmouth Avenue/Rt. 33 intersection (approximately a \$72,000 buildout). The agreement term is five years. Fiber internet is not affected by weather, electromagnetic signals, or distance from the network operations center. Fiber internet also complies with HB 1612.

To increase Comcast service to the highest rate possible, the cost would be \$6,299 annually. The cost of fiber internet is \$21,600. They have filed for e-rate reimbursement through the government based on their free and reduced numbers; a 40% discount can be applied, bringing the estimated annual rate to \$12,960. The fiber internet system is a much better service, it is instantaneous, symmetrical and supports the wide area network initiative. B. Grattan continued with the benefits of the new initiative. The SAU is working with First Light. Responding to comments from S. McKenzie, B. Grattan stated that they have been doing what they can with what they have; the existing system is not satisfactory to teaching and learning needs.

Tamara Hallee, Principal, joined the meeting via Zoom. Her concerns were that their current system causes delays and kicks people off, pixelating also occurs. Videos being streamed in the classroom cannot be viewed. There are many issues, especially when a number of people are using the internet at the same time. This was a concern when remote learning is being done. B. Grattan added that the many years ago the State recommended that at least 1MB per student should be provided. This does not include staff needs.

Responding to a question from P. Walsh, B. Grattan stated it will not be dark fiber capacity; it is leased lit fiber. The cost will be allocated over a five-year agreement. At the end of five years, the cost should decrease because the infrastructure buildout should have been paid and the only cost would be the leased lit fiber service.

J. Connelly questioned if the \$72,000 was negotiable; they could gain more customers by the School laying the spine down the road. B. Grattan responded "theoretically, yes". They were only running the fiber to Greenland Central School. The businesses between the intersection of Portsmouth Avenue/Rt. 33 and Greenland Central School would have the fiber internet available to them through First Light. There was a discussion about the possibility of the Weeks Library connecting to the fiber internet system. The Weeks Library would not have to pay for any buildout; the only cost would be their internet

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needs. B. Grattan offered to begin discussions with First Light about including the Weeks Library and suggested the buildout cost be divided between the Town and the School. F. Hansler stated he could not speak for the Library but felt it was an interesting opportunity.

M. Ryan continued review of the budget. SAU expenses included are a .8 Facilities Manager to manage all 50 SAU buildings and a Financial Assistant in the Business Office as recommended by their auditors. The SAU budget may change after the SAU Joint Board votes on their budget.

F. Hansler asked for an explanation of the boiler/water treatment, the HVAC repairs, the increase in pest control, the carpet and mats, snowplowing (consider the possibility of the Town acquiring a Facilities Manager who could assist with snow removal), lawn care and buildings and grounds upkeep (handled in the same manner). F. Hansler suggested some of the expenses could be incorporated with a Town Facilities Manager. There was also a discussion about the chair lift and its age: would it be advantageous to replace the chair lift? T. Hallee responded that the replacement cost would be \$41,647. Maria Emory, School Board Chairman, stated that the School Board did not want to put it on a warrant article; if the warrant article failed, they would be non-compliant with ADA requirements. Their plan is to use the Buildings and Grounds Trust Fund when it was necessary to replace the chair lift; they would hold a public hearing to expend those funds. F. Hansler suggested it be included in the budget now; he would be in support. P. Walsh stated using the Trust Fund would not have a budgetary impact. There was a discussion about the grants received by the School.

Chair Krasko asked Budget Committee members to review the School budget for the meeting on Monday, December 14, 2020. P. Walsh suggested any questions be submitted to the Administrative Assistant; she will forward them to P. Walsh. Responding to a question from P. Sanderson, Sal Petralia, Superintendent of Schools, stated that the current five-year agreement between the School Board and Association of Coastal Teachers – Greenland will expire in June 2021. Both parties agreed to a one-year extension of the current contract for wages only for the period of July 01, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

### 3. Public Hearing

Chair Krasko recommended holding the public hearing by Zoom due to COVID exposure and the possibility the School may not be available. P. Walsh stated he had spoken to the Town Clerk; there are weekly Zoom meetings to discuss how it will be handled by the State. The Budget Committee decides the public hearing. The Town, Board of Selectmen, School Board and Moderator decide the Deliberative Session. The School will hold their meeting the safest way possible. T. Westerberg noted many of the elderly in Town may struggle with the Zoom meetings and asked if there was some way to assist them. P. Sanderson stated the Town website could be used to provide instructions on how to access the meetings and posting Power Point presentations.

### 4. Adjournment

MOTION: D. Miller moved to adjourn at 8:33 p.m. Second – Z. Pike; roll call vote: M. Bilodeau - yes, T. Cadle – yes, M. Connelly – yes, F. Hansler - yes, S. Hussey-McLaughlin - yes, D. Miller – yes, Z. Pike – yes, P. Sanderson - yes, J. Connelly – yes, P. Walsh – yes, S. McKenzie – yes, B. Krasko - yes. All in favor. MOTION CARRIED

### NEXT MEETING

Monday, December 10, 2020 - 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room and Zoom (School Budget)

Submitted By: Charlotte Hussey, Administrative Assistant