

SANBORN REGIONAL BUDGET COMMITTEE

APPROVED – MEETING MINUTES

DECEMBER 17, 2015

A meeting of the Sanborn Regional Budget Committee was held on Thursday, December 17, 2015. The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm. The following were recorded as present:

SRSD BUDGET COMMITTEE Cheryl Gannon, Chairperson
Barry Gluck
Patricia Stephan
Ami Faria
Beth Scanlon
Annie Collyer
James Doggett
Nancy Ross, School Committee Representative

ADMINISTRATOR: Carol Coppola

The meeting began with a salute to the flag.

REVIEW AGENDA/ADDITIONS:

There were no additions to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jim Baker, Newton, presented the committee with a document he titled “School Tax Rate Comparison with Neighboring Towns” from 2105-16 data on the NH Department of Revenue website. He used this data as the basis for opinion that it is possible to have a budget below the default budget and stated it is essential that it be done due to rate of taxes. He stated that the current tax rates of Newton and Kingston are higher than the average of 7 neighboring towns. He also stated that the Superintendent of Belknap has kept budget at 1% growth. He understands that BudComm does not want to hurt schools; he said “we don’t either”. He recommended looking at class sizes in the high school.

COMMITTEE COMMENT:

Ms. Gannon announced that Dr. Blake was AWARDED the New Hampshire Superintendent of the Year.

PRIOR MEETING MINUTES:

MOTION made by Mr. Gluck to approve the minutes of December 10, 2015 as amended. Seconded by Ms. Collyer.

VOTE: Unanimous

OLD BUSINESS:

Ms. Gannon asked Ms. Faria if there were further responses from the BudCom survey. Ms. Faria said there was one new response, no discussion warranted.

Ms. Gannon received email response from Ms. Coppola pertaining to unanswered questions from members.

Question: What years were the health insurance holiday refunds?

Response: The prior year (2014) refund was \$715,344. Current year refund to school \$144,831 versus staff, \$37,883.

Question: How many sections does a Full Time Employee at the high school teach?

Response: 6 sessions in a 7 period day. One session is for preparation.

Question: How will \$100,000 award from Nellie Mai Foundation be used?

Response: It is final and will be used in current fiscal year for grading initiatives.

Question: What is included in Other Revenue? P. 65

Response: Fremont Tuition, Preschool tuition, food service sales, rents from use of buildings, income earned on investments, adult education activities and other misc. local sources. Return of unreserved fund balance. P. 64

Question: Are we losing money without lease from Seacoast Charter School?

Response: Fiscal year 2015, we will lose money. Utilities were just separated from Seminary Building, Swasey gym and school.

Question: What makes up the "Substitute" salaries increase? P. 121

Response: It includes teachers, custodial staff, support staff and nurse substitutes.

Ms. Ross explained that the budget proposes the same amount in each building then funds are transferred amongst locations if the needs arises.

Question: What was biggest factor for decrease of budgeted costs for special education?

Response: Decreases often occur when individual students move to another district or reach the age of 21 and are no longer eligible for services. Also, when a student who had been in out-of-district placement returns to the district, costs are reduced. Specialized services (Speech, PT, OT, etc.) are difficult to budget because they are determined on individual need and can change from year to year. Transportation costs are included.

SCHOOL BOARD REPORT:

Ms. Ross reported the School Board met and discussed budget. The BudCom list of questions and their own questions led to a lively discussion. Mr. Ramey made the point that when looking at the history of increases to revenue coming from local property taxes, it has averaged approximately 3.5% in the past 5 years. He felt that this level was unsustainable. However, considering the school board's stated objectives to fund capital improvements, enrichment, and drug awareness programs, there does not appear to be any proposed budget costs that could be reduced. The school board would also like to see a slowing in the growth of salaries and benefits.

The Board Voted 5 – 1 to decrease the budget by \$10,070 (representing inclusion of partial funding for high school boys' varsity ice hockey team)

NEW BUSINESS:

Ms. Gannon asked committee members to present individual proposed budget cuts and to please hold questions until the end. She asked to keep presentations to 10 minutes each.

The Superintendent's proposed 2016-17 budget is \$35,407,950

This represents a 3.46% increase over the 2015-16 budget.

Each committee member proposed a budget amount along with specific suggested items to justify the proposed reductions.

Ms. Stephan – \$35,203,055

Ms. Scanlon – \$35,038,214

Mr. Doggett – \$34,383,576

Ms. Faria –\$35,357,880

Ms. Gannon –\$34,902,117

Mr. Gluck –\$35,248,226

Ms. Collyer –\$34,363,649

Ms. Ross – \$35,397,880 (School Board voted to decrease budget by \$10,070, the proposed amount for ice hockey)

Ms. Gannon proposed discussing commonalities between areas of cuts put forward. The committee did not wish to proceed in that manner but proposed amounts as motions to be discussed and voted on.

MOTION:

Mr. Gluck made a MOTION to decrease Superintendent’s budget by \$300,000. Seconded by Ms. Ross.

VOTE: 3 – 5 – 0 (In favor – Faria, Gluck, Ross)

MOTION FAILED

MOTION:

Mr. Doggett made a MOTION to decrease Superintendent’s budget by \$1,350,000. Seconded by Ms. Collyer.

VOTE: 2 – 6 – 0 (In favor: Doggett, Collyer)

MOTION FAILED

MOTION:

Ms. Stephan made a MOTION to decrease Superintendent’s budget by \$500,000. Seconded by Ms. Scanlon.

VOTE: 3 – 5 – 0 (In favor: Gannon, Scanlon, Stephan)

MOTION FAILED

MOTION:

Ms. Faria made a MOTION to decrease Superintendent’s budget by \$400,000. Seconded by Ms. Stephan.

VOTE: 4 – 4 – 0 (Favor – Faria, Gluck, Scanlon, Stephan)

MOTION FAILED

The committee agreed by consensus, to take a 10 minute break.

The deliberations reconvened and Ms. Gannon noted that during break Ms. Bamforth mentioned that Math Curriculum Coordinator brought in \$200,000 in grants. Ms. Coppola stated position is included in the collective bargaining agreement.

MOTION:

Ms. Ross made a MOTION to decrease Superintendent’s budget by \$350,000. Seconded by Ms. Stephan.

VOTE: 5 – 3 (in Favor Faria, Gluck, Ross, Scanlon, Stephan)

MOTION CARRIED

The budget that the Budget Committee will present to the public at the hearing on January 14 will be \$35,057,950.

Ms. Gannon indicated the next required step in the budget process is for the committee to conduct a Public Hearing which will include a slideshow presentation and a comment/question and answer period from the public. The committee will hold a brief meeting after the public hearing to discuss the public’s comments presented at the hearing. This information could cause the committee to reconsider the dollar amount of its proposed budget. Reconsideration would require a motion, second and vote by the committee. If a different budget amount were to be approved by the committee, that would be the amount presented at the first deliberative session.

Ms. Stephan proposed that she and Ms. Gannon schedule a work session to create a draft slideshow presentation for Public Hearing. The committee agreed by consensus that this was acceptable give a public notice will be posted and the session be held in a public location.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jim Baker, Newton - commented that the Budget Committee was given a tough job. There was hard work put in, however, he was disappointed at the number.

Carlton Swasey, Kingston - commented that while the budget amount approved by the committee was a reduction in the Superintendent's proposed budget, it was, in fact, an increase in the current year's budget.

COMMITTEE COMMENT:

Ms. Ross thanked members for a respectful process.

Ms. Gannon thanked members for their time, effort and thoughtfulness in carrying out their responsibilities of serving on the committee. She stated she appreciated patience through her own learning curve as Chairperson as well as that of the new members.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Next meeting January 7, 2016, 7:30 pm, High School library

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Mr. Doggett and seconded by Ms. Faria.

VOTE: unanimous

The meeting adjourned at 10:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Ann Scanlon