

**SANBORN REGIONAL BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
**APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**  
**THURSDAY, December 22, 2016**

A meeting of the Sanborn Regional Budget Committee was held on Thursday, December 22, 2016. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm. The following were recorded as present:

**SRSB BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**Annie Collyer, Chairperson**  
**Charlton Swasey, Vice-Chairman**  
**Cheryl Gannon**  
**Sandi Rogers-Osterloh**  
**Jack Kozec**  
**Tammy Gluck, School Committee Representative**  
**James Doggett**  
**Ami Faria**

The meeting began with a salute to the flag.

Ms. Collyer welcomed the administration and members of the public.

Ms. Gluck updated the Committee on the budget discussion of the School Board meeting last night. They will be keeping the current year budget flat for the general fund of \$33,265,865. There were discussions around reductions in areas that will have no impact to positions, curriculum, instruction or educational instruction programs. The total budget is \$34,539,366 after adding in special revenue amount, it results in a \$26,500 decrease of this year's current budget.

Ms. Collyer explained the special revenues amount we need to prefund, which we eventually get back from food service or the federal government, so that number stays the same. She said the general fund amount is what we are concentrating on.

Ms. Gannon reviewed her recommendations with the Committee. She stated she still has some questions so she does not have final numbers. In general, she is recommending reducing administrative increases from 3% down to 1%. She had a question about the Business Administrator. She could not find what we currently have in the budget for a business administrator.

Ms. Collyer explained the new person would cost \$160,000 vs. \$130,000 now. Dr. Blake confirmed that to be about right.

Ms. Gannon had a question regarding the Director of Facilities. This position is divided by locations and she couldn't figure out where it was and how to add it up so she just applied the 1% increase. Her recommendation is \$15,175 to that. There were some additional things she looked at to reduce. The P.R. person, the NECC courses and explained why. She made some

reductions in some professional development recommending reducing that by \$3,000. She did that for all the professional development travel to various locations. She explained these are things we need to save some money on and can because there are a lot of resources on line now. Memorial Grade 3 to 4 had 44 students enrolled 10/1/16 which could reduce a teacher at approximately \$45,000 (\$65,000 with benefits). She reduced athletic equipment in the Middle and High School. She is trying to reduce some things we could put off. She reduced music equipment which are also things to put off and do not need to do at \$2,000. She made some reductions to library books because of online subscriptions. Ms. Gannon's total reductions amounted to \$223,364. This brings the total budget to \$33,165,292 and the recommended operating budget to \$34,438,792.

Ms. Faria is proposing reducing the salaries off the top and the P.R. position. She doesn't see a lot of support for that and can take that off. Her total recommended reductions are \$199,430,800 with a proposed reduction of \$33,511,566 to the general fund. She explained she is trying to be supportive of warrant articles that are coming.

Ms. Rogers-Osterloh explained she started with the proposed budget and referred to the CIP and professional agreements. She wants to defer administrative pay increases to show support to the taxpayers and the contracts. She supports a 1.5% pay increase this year to staff not covered by the bargaining agreement. The P.R. position (\$102,900) is not funded or supported. She suggests reducing administrative staff at the high school by removing the Counseling Director position based on declining enrollments and the reduction in discipline. She doesn't believe there is still as much need for administrative involvement. She suggests reducing the French teacher to .5 and reducing the Family and Consumer Science position to .5. The math coordinator position should be eliminated and has proven to be ineffective. She recommends reducing other employee benefits and postage with the increase in electronic mail. She proposes guidance services reduction, and maintenance service reduction. She sees a big increase in supplies so she looked at the actual and what is budgeted and this year and also referred to the master schedule provided. She looked at the low number of students in core curriculum areas. The enrollment is decreasing at the high school. She took a lot of things into consideration and she values education but needs to look at the real numbers.

Ms. Collyer explained they are here tonight with a preliminary budget number. We are still getting information in. This is still a work in progress and not a completed number. They added up Ms. Rogers-Osterloh's reductions.

Ms. Rogers-Osterloh's recommended reduction is \$825,924. Her recommended budget including special revenues is \$33,859,076.

Mr. Swasey explained his biggest disappointment and concerns he observed during this budget season was the total lack of concern for the taxpayers. His total budget proposal is \$33,000,000. He commented we don't have an income or revenue problem, we have a money management problem.

Mr. Kozec stated he took a different approach to cutting costs. He wanted to reduce costs which are beneficial to the taxpayers. His proposed reductions are:

- 1) Administrative salaries should be zero
- 2) The balance of non-union employees from 3% down to 1.5%
- 3) Reduction of \$105,000 by removing P.R. person and he said the minutes should be in the paper each week
- 4) Health care of \$291,000 for waivers - he proposes to reduce for non-union from \$3,600 to \$1,600 (\$60,000 in total).
- 5) Eliminate math coordinator position
- 6) Healthcare costs are only taking 10% from staff. He proposes an increase to support staff, non-union, administrative increase from 10% to 15% and for non-union staff from 10% to 15%
- 7) Reduction in enrollment is about 2% so he took 2% off the Superintendent's budget for a total reduction of \$1,037,000 reducing the operating budget by \$33,533,557.

Mr. Doggett used the same methodology as Mr. Kozec. The general fund number he proposes is \$32,429,499 which ends up with a total proposed budget of \$33,703,000. The areas of proposed savings are from the math coordinator, P.R. position, stipends for travel and PDA pay raises for administrators. He proposes a \$690,000 reduction due to a decline in enrollment which is a 2% reduction.

Ms. Collyer explained she went through primarily on pages 95-97 looking at the line item groupings. She determined the fixed costs and looked at all other expenses in those line items. Her concerns are with enrollments declining and failed budgets and the divisiveness. There is a lot of angst and concern over backlash when it comes to approving the contracts. She explained another thing she has asked for is regarding the decline in high school enrollment. There are a large percentage of kids they are losing and looked at a projected 3.5% decline in enrollment. She went through line by line. She added 5% to the substitute teaching line. She proposes a decrease in custodial staff from 3% down to 1.5%. She came up with \$17,994,808 in proposed other expenses and added \$14,601,173 in what she determined to be fixed expenses. Her proposed reductions total \$32,600,000. Her proposed reductions include:

- 1) Eliminating the guidance director position
- 2) Added \$20,000 for an additional supervisory stipend for the current guidance position to take on the roll for eliminated guidance director position.
- 3) Remove supervisory raises
- 4) Remove math coordinator
- 5) She suggests the School Board forgo their stipends
- 6) Legal bills should be cut by \$10,000
- 7) Remove P.R. position and suggests it be a warrant article

Ms. Collyer's bottom line suggestion for the operating budget is \$32,346,081.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Jay Ash, a resident of Kingston addressed the Committee. He asked how many of them have kids currently in the school district. He reminded them they are not only investing in the school system, but investing in home values. He said the better the school system, the more houses are worth. He said if they reduce sports, they will see an increase in the police budget because without sports to keep the kids involved, they will see an increase in them getting into trouble. He also said he doesn't see the school district challenging the overachiever and they only cater to the average or below average student.

Mr. Michael DiGiordano, a resident of Newton reminded the Committee that their discussions are affecting students, administrators and teachers. He stated this is just as much his building as is yours. He said everything they say and do is heard and watched by everybody.

Ms. Faria read a letter from Rachel Burt, a resident in Newton, which was sent to the School Board and Budget Committee. Ms. Burt asked her letter to be read because she was not able to attend the meeting. Her letter spoke in support of the school system and described the importance of members of the School Board and Budget Committee to model behavior.

No further public comment.

Ms. Collyer stated she would entertain a motion by the Committee of a proposed budget figure so they could discuss it.

**Mr. Doggett made a motion to accept the figure of \$32,429,499 as the median of all the numbers for the general fund. Seconded by Ms. Rogers-Osterloh.**

Ms. Gluck said she finds it interesting that all the members had similar suggestions for the math coordinator, the P.R. person and the 2% off the top. She found some of the comments made by members to be offensive.

Ms. Rogers-Osterloh said she agrees with the comments made by Mr. Ash and she does not have mistrust. She explained we have to look at resources and what it takes to give them what they need. She is committed to looking at data and coming up with what is the best for Newton and Kingston, the students and the taxpayers, not just a number that is lower.

Mr. Doggett explained his support for 2% off the top and referenced the decline in enrollment as the reason.

Ms. Gannon said we need to justify every number we reduce the budget by. This Committee has over 3,000 pages of information provided by the administration for over five months. She doesn't agree with 2% off the top and said we could have just done 2% off the top on day one. She said it is highly disrespectful of all who have been involved. Our job is to look at what has been proposed and if it makes sense and to ask if it is reasonable. We need to look at this in

the big picture and what is driving this budget up with enrollments declining. She provided some examples of what has driven up the budget. She explained the cost of kindergarten, they are dependent of technology and computers and the personnel needed for that. These are some expenses that are here to stay regardless of enrollment. Also, the bond on the high school building, the larger building and the costs associated with it, are costs regardless of enrollment. There is a trend in New Hampshire and it is a graying state which we have no control over. The School Board and administration needs to look at the big picture. We need to work together and not just say a percent off here and a percent off there and be done.

Ms. Collyer explained her proposal is lower than what is currently on the floor. She agrees with many things Ms. Gannon has said and agrees this is about balance between need and affordability in the community. She believes her proposed number is a responsible number. She described the research and work she has done to come up with her number. She said this is not a cut and explained this is an increase of about \$700,000 in the general fund over last year what was spent six months ago.

Mr. Doggett said he can provide the numbers to justify his \$690,000 in proposed cuts.

Mr. Swasey offered an amendment to the motion on the floor. He would like to amend the total general fund budget as \$32,376,499 with \$33,650,000 as the total budget. Mr. Doggett accepted his friendly amendment.

**VOTE: 5-3 (Faria, Gannon, Gluck opposed) motion carries**

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Ms. Faria made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 15, 2016 meeting as written. Seconded by Mr. Doggett. VOTE: 8-0 motion carries**

#### NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting will be held on December 29, 2016 at the Newton Town Hall at 7:30 pm.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Mr. Doggett made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Ms. Rogers-Osterloh. VOTE: 8-0 motion carries**

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 pm.

Minutes submitted by,  
Linda Mahoney