

# **Newfound Area School District**

## **Budget Committee Meeting**

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### **Draft Minutes**

**November 19, 2015**

**6:30 pm**

**New Hampton Community School, Multi-purpose room**

Budget Committee Members: Harold "Skip" Reilly, Alexandria      Christen Dolloff, Bristol  
Jeff Bird, Bridgewater      John Jenness, New Hampton  
Gina Rescigno, Groton      Ruby Hill, Danbury  
Jeff Levesque, School Board Representative  
Absent: Stan Newton, Hebron  
District Staff: Michael Limanni, Business Administrator  
Stacy Buckley, Superintendent

Meeting called to order at 6:36 PM by John Jenness followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ruby Hill was sworn in as a member of the committee.

#### **Discussion of the budget**

John Jenness opened the floor for discussion on the budget. Gina stated that with the goal of cutting \$96,000 from the budget, she finds it difficult to see where it could come from in addition to understanding how the items are listed in the budget binder. Her concern is that there is no way to give each school their requests given the constraint. Michael Limanni offered to go over an example item with Gina to help her understand what goes into each budget line. Stacy Buckley acknowledged the challenges and further explained the budget process.

Skip Reilly brought attention to the guidance department. He suggested reducing district wide guidance staff from 6 to 4. Stacy reviewed the guidance cuts that were made two years ago and discussed the current staffing levels. Skip Reilly maintained that he believes the district is over loaded with staff. John Jenness added that the role of guidance has changed over the years to take on more roles supporting the students. Discussion continued about the role of schools in the community. Skip Reilly asked for a copy of job descriptions to be provided at the next meeting.

Jeff Levesque made a motion to reduce the budget by reducing the lines suggested by Stacy Buckley (Behavior Specialist to .5FTE \$37,711, IV Web Portal Set up Fee \$14,791, Work Order System \$15,000 and MS Tuition Placements \$30,000) for a total of a \$98,502 reduction. No second. Motion fails.

Jeff Bird asked for clarification on the Web Portal item. Michael Limanni explained that it is an administrative tool. He also asked about individual building budgets, specifically salary for media center.

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Ms. Buckley clarified that it is a librarian. Jeff Bird asked if librarians were subject to teacher contracts, to which she stated that they are and the raise noted in the budget is from the contract passed last year.

Christen Dolloff asked about field trips. She noted that Bristol Elementary field trips were not as specific as other schools. Mr. Limanni stated that it might be because of the school having a new principal and not being familiar with the full budget process.

Gina Rescigno asked about bus services. Mr. Limanni noted that the bus contract does go out to bid. This year regular in district bussing and special education bussing was split.

Skip Reilly asked about Jeff Levesque's motion. He asked for clarification on what was in the budget when the school board approved the budget. The items suggested were in the budget. Jeff Levesque stated that his motion was based on the suggestion of the superintendent.

Jeff Bird asked for clarification on the MS School placement. Ms. Buckley shared that a student at the middle school level no longer needs as intensive one-to-one services.

Ruby Hill asked about the building budget and a \$4,000 reduction in the new computers/equipment line. She asked for clarification and the justification. It was a request from a teacher that was cut from the budget which is why the budget line shows a reduction, but the description remained in the detail. She then asked about a \$68,000 teacher salary drop overall. Ms. Buckley shared that there were many positions that retired last year and were replaced with teachers at a lower tier of pay. Ruby then referred to the sand for the NHCS playground and stated that her in-laws have a sandpit and are willing to bring it to the school. Ms. Buckley said she will reach out to Alan, facilities manager, to make contact. Ruby then asked about a significant increase in profession development costs. Ms. Buckley shared that by teacher contract, \$30,000 needs to be set aside for PD. She also shared that in the past, each school had been budgeting for their own professional development and now the support staff and school level PD has been moved to central services rather than the school level. Ruby also made a comment on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade making duffle bags at the middle school and said that she loved the idea. Ruby asked about any strategy to replace furniture at the middle school. Ms. Buckley shared that last year the school purchased 150 chairs. This year, the rooms that are in need of the most attention are getting furniture first. Ruby concluded by asking about the cost per course for running start programs at the high school. She likes the program and agreed that students should be contributing towards the cost of the college credit they will be earning by taking the course, but she was curious how it was going to be determined what amount to retain the budget for students in need. Ms. Buckley stated that they used historical data as a starting off point and will adjust as necessary.

John Jenness stated that in looking at his recommendations, he felt it important to keep the behavioral specialist a full-time position. He asked about the computers at BHVS. Ms. Buckley shared that as of right now, there are two Chromebook carts budgeted for, but their destination in district has not yet

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been determined. He also asked about the ramp that was needed at NHCS, as he was confused why the front door isn't being used instead of a side ramp. Ms. Buckley said she would follow up with the principal as the cost for ramp replacement is \$2,265. He then asked about principals supplies at the high school. He felt it was high compared to the other schools and Ms. Buckley said that she believed the high school principal put all of his office supplies into this line rather than the general supplies. John then asked about contracted behavioral specialist's line, and Ms. Buckley clarified that this would be for specialized support for individual cases. He asked for further clarification on the athletic trainer position. Ms. Buckley shared that rather than having a first aide certified individual at sporting events, we have been advised, after a complaint, that we need a certified athletic trainer to handle injuries and attend all games. He asked if Ms. Buckley felt there was any way to retain the behavioral specialist position as full-time. Stacy said that we can start part-time with the potential to ramp up the position next school year if the budget allows.

Discussion about the lease fee to Kelley Park for the middle and BES. Currently NMMS pays the town of Bristol for use of the fields and BES pays for use of the park. Jeff Levesque pointed out that the children at BES are residents of Bristol and if they are entitled to use the park.

John asked about the next step for the committee. Stacy said that we have more meetings scheduled in December where she will be able to address some of the questions that came up tonight. Jeff asked for the deadline of petitioned warrant articles. Stacy advised that she will email the budget timeline tomorrow (November 20) to committee members. January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016 is the school board meeting to finalize warrant articles. The last day for petitioned articles is January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Therefore, with the budget hearing scheduled for the 15<sup>th</sup>, the committee should be ok.

Ruby Hill made a motion to accept the superintendent's recommendation to reduce the budget (Behavior Specialist to .5FTE \$37,711, IV Web Portal Set up Fee \$14,791, Work Order System \$15,000 and MS Tuition Placements \$30,000) for a total of a \$98,502 reduction. Seconded by Jeff Bird. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Next meeting is scheduled for December 1<sup>st</sup> at DES, 6:30pm.

### **Public input**

None

Skip Reilly made a motion to adjourn at 8:24pm. Seconded by Jeff Levesque. Motion passed 7-0-0.