

Newfound Area School District

Budget Committee Meeting

Draft Minutes

December 15, 2015

6:30 pm

Bridgewater-Hebron Village School, Library Media Center

Budget Committee Members: Christen Dolloff, Bristol
Ruby Hill, Danbury (6:34)
Gina Rescigno, Groton
Jeff Levesque, School Board Representative
John Jenness, New Hampton
Stan Newton, Hebron (6:36)
Harold "Skip" Reilly, Alexandria

Absent: Jeff Bird, Bridgewater

District Staff: Michael Limanni, Business Administrator
Stacy Buckley, Superintendent

Meeting called to order by John Jenness 6:30pm at followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes from 11/17/2015 and 11/19/2015

Harold "Skip" Reilly made a motion to accept minutes as submitted. Seconded Christen Dolloff. Motion passed, 5-0-0. (Ruby Hill and Stan Newton were absent for the vote)

Discussion of 2016-2017 School District Budget

Stacy Buckley noted that at the last meeting, November 19, the budget was reduced to meet the tax cap, but the board had asked what it would take to keep the Behavioral Specialist position full-time rather than reducing to part-time. She proposed some items for cut from the budget which could reduce the budget by about \$44,000 which will put the total budget about \$7,000 under the tax cap.

John Jenness shared that he agreed with the proposed cuts, but suggested that the furniture at the middle school be left in, at about \$1,600, and the high school new desks were reduced to \$4,758, thereby reducing the cut to a total of \$37,711. This ends up being the actual cost to keep the behavioral specialist full-time.

Jeff Levesque asked what the Running Start tuition is comprised of. Ms. Buckley explained that it is the tuition to the tech school for courses that are offered at the high school for college credit if the student successfully passes the course. Ruby Hill stated that she disagreed with cutting the tuition costs from the budget. She suggested that perhaps the courses should be operated with a minimum grade average. Ms. Buckley shared that if a student taking running start is on free or reduced lunch, then the school will help with the cost of the college credit. Gina Rescigno asked what the cost of a running start course was and Mike Limanni replied that the district pays half for students in need; otherwise it is \$150 per course.

Newfound Area School District

Budget Committee Meeting

Jeff Levesque asked about cutting a position in the budget from full-time to half-time in order to maintain the behavioral specialist position at full-time. Ruby Hill stated she felt it was important enough, but that there are more places in the budget to reach from.

In regards to paying for running start tuition, John Jenness stated that he feels there is a point where parental responsibility cuts in, and that the school pays for so much that there needs to be an assumption of responsibility by parents. Ruby stated that senior year expenses are high and that should be considered. Jeff Levesque stated his reservation is with cutting hardware (e.g. furniture) which directly impacts students.

By consensus the group decided that the first 3 items on the list are easy cuts to make. Also, Dues/Fees can be cut. Ruby Hill moved to reduce the budget by \$23,667 (\$10,167 staff salary benefit reduction, \$7,000 aide, \$1,500 stage lighting, \$5,000 dues/ fees). Seconded by Jeff Levesque. (\$8,823 remaining to cut to maintain behavior specialist position) Motion passed, 7-0-0.

Ruby Hill made another motion to also cut the recess cart at B-HVS for \$900. Seconded by Christen Dolloff. Motion passes 5-1-1.

Ruby Hill asked some questions she had prepared in advance of the meeting. What was the fund balance in June? Mike Limanni shared that fund balance was not used; the district used money remaining within the existing budget for additional purchases that were approved by the school board (phone system, re-wiring, shades, painting, front doors, and cameras). The surplus is also made of excess revenue. Last year, the district took the expected revenue and the expected expenses with staff turnover and experienced a significant "underage." Additional surplus came from energy usage and costs because of the price of oil.

Ruby asked about the all-day kindergarten petitioned article, how close have expenses been? Stacy Buckley shared that an aide was hired for every classroom, supplies and furniture, summer professional development. She also asked who the Behavioral Specialist report to, to which Stacy responded that he or she will report to the BES principal and Anne Holton.

Ruby moved on asking about the substitute pay of a proposed \$30,331, which is the same as last year, when flexible time off was needed last year for curriculum mapping. Stacy shared that the curriculum mapping is an on-going process and that is why the substitute pay is still needed at that level.

Ruby also noted the building level principal salary increases. Comparing year over year, 7.3% increase at BES but Stacy shared that the change was due to a staffing change. The principal salary increase across all schools was 2%.

Newfound Area School District

Budget Committee Meeting

Ruby also noted the special education budget salaries for special education support staff and that there has been a significant increase over the last two years. Stacy reminded the committee that this increase was due to correcting pay level steps for employees and reanalyzing the pay matrix.

Ruby Hill made a motion to cut the high school desk chairs in the amount of \$5,758 for desks and chairs and \$2,200 from running start, totaling \$7,958. Seconded by Gina Rescigno. During discussion, Stan Newton asked about the power point presentation which the principals made and specifically about facilities improvements that were on wish lists. Ruby withdrew her motion, and Gina withdrew her second.

Jeff Levesque asked about function 2318, board services, legal services, which is currently in the budget for \$13,000. Stacy stated that the figure was arrived at because they are anticipating negotiations this year. Jeff stated it would be more palliative to the public to cut attorney fees rather than cut supplies for students. Jeff made a motion to reduce legal fees line by \$3000. Seconded by Skip Reilly. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Mike Limanni suggested taking the remaining funds for the behavioral specialist position out of the oil fuel line. Jeff Levesque made a motion to reduce that line by \$1,500. Seconded by John Jenness. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Christen Dolloff made motion to restore the behavioral specialist position to full-time for the 2016-2017 school year. Seconded by John Jenness. Motion passed 6-1-0.

Stacy provided info on the remaining budget process. The budget committee needs to vote to accept the final budget. Once the warrant articles are finalized by the school board, the budget committee will meet again to discuss and plan for the budget hearing. Jeff noted that the board should not vote to recommend any petitioned articles.

Ruby Hill moved that the budget committee accept \$21,202,155, which is \$35 under the tax cap, as our final budget. Seconded by Jeff Levesque. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Jeff Levesque made a motion to accept \$647,605 for the food service budget. Seconded by John Jenness. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Ruby Hill made a motion to accept \$963,000 grant budget. Seconded by Stan Newton. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Mike Limanni informed the committee that the default budget has been calculated at \$23,285,714 and that \$22,812,760 is the total proposed budget. If the proposed budget does not pass and the default budget takes effect, then it raises the tax cap next year.

Newfound Area School District

Budget Committee Meeting

Next Steps

There will be another meeting January 13, 2016 at 6:30 at NRHS in room 106 to review final warrant articles and prepare for the budget hearing.

Public Input

None.

Motion to adjourn at 8:00 by Skip Reilly, seconded by Christen Dolloff. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Bliss

Budget Committee Clerk

DRAFT

Account	School	Item	Amount	Rationale
1100	District	Staff salary/benefit reduction	\$10,167	Reduction of staff member salary due to turnover
1200	District	Out of District Tuition	\$7,000	Remainder of funding in budget for 1:1 aide no longer needed
1100.731.1.100	NRHS	NRHS Stage lighting	\$1,500	This is more of a want than a need. Could do fundraising
1100.733.1.100	NRHS	NRHS Art table	\$4,644	Reduce to replace only 1 table
1100.735.1.100	NRHS	T1-84 calculators	\$3,000	Shouldn't students bring in their own calculators? District supported calculators can be used for those unable to purchase one.
1100.735.3.600	BHVS	Recess cart	\$900	Utilize current items. Do small purchase of necessary equipment
1100.737.1.100	NRHS	New desks/chairs	\$5,758	Continue to utilize current desks/chair combo's. Other furniture needs in district would be prioritized higher
1100.737.2.220	NMMS	Standing desk/chairs	\$1,600	Asking for 7- reduce to 4
1100.810.1.100	NRHS	Running start tuition	\$4,500	Leaves a balance of \$3,000 for students in need
2410.810.1.100	NRHS	Dues/Fees	\$5,000	Reduce as actual NEASC onsite is now scheduled for Fall 2017
			\$44,069	Total