

**Newfound Area School District
Budget Hearing
Friday, January 13, 2017
Newfound Regional High School, Auditorium**

Present: John Jenness, New Hampton, Christen Dolloff, Bristol, Gina Rescigno, Groton, Ruby Hill, Danbury,

Absent: Jeff Bird, Skip Jenness, Stan Newton

School board: Jeff Levesque, Chair, Vincent Paul Migliore, Sharon Klapyk, Jason Robert, Sue Cheney, Don Franklin, Christine Duvoll

Staff: Michael Limanni, Stacy Buckley

Called to order at 6:34

Followed by the pledge

John opened the meeting and introduced the present members of the budget committee, school board and administration.

He clarified the format of the hearing and started the presentation with an overview of Warrant article 1:

(Paste text here)

Bristol/New Hampton

Moderator

Opened the floor for questions on warrant 1:

Paul Manginiello stated that the voting for the town of Bristol will not be at the Marian Center as stated in the pamphlet. Stacy responded that she is waiting for final confirmation from the town of Bristol.

Warrant article 2:

Petition (Paste text here)

Lucille Keegan, petitioner, Bristol. She wrote the petition not because she wants spending to be out of the control but because she felt that removing items such as building maintenance, that the tax cap needs to be reviewed.

Warrant article 3:

(petition) (paste text here)

((Stan Newton arrived at 6:41))

John Sellers, Bristol, asked who the officer will report to if the article is passed. Stacy responded that it would be an employee of the Bristol Police Department, and would report to both the pd and the school district.

Don Franklin, Hebron, stated that as with all day kindergarten, the funding may not be available after the first year if the tax cap remains in place.

Paul Manginiello, Bristol, curious where the amount of \$72,000 came from in. He stated that this amount will not cover the cost of a new employee. Stacy stated that the Bristol Police Chief provided the petitioner with the dollar figure.

Warrant article 4:

Trust Fund Maintenance (copy and paste text)

John Sellers, Bristol, stated that 100k does not seem like enough given that pending projects are currently valued at about 2 million dollars.

Vincent Paul Migliore, Bridgewater stated that this article deals with any potential surplus at the end of FY17 and the amount that will be put into the trust in that case. At the end of the last FY, the district put away \$350,000 in to the retained fund balance. However, the use of that money is governed by the budget committee and special meetings. This money will be added to the fund balance IF there is a surplus and ONLY for maintenance purposes. Regarding the tax cap, he clarified that the budget committee and the school board were unable to raise the funds needed for building maintenance because the cap is in the place, however, individuals from the governing body are always able to make the increase the budget at the deliberative session.

((Jeff Bird arrived 6:49))

Sue Cheney asked for any limits. Vincent replied that the governing body can add 10% of the budget at the deliberative session.

Warrant Article 5:

Teacher contract (copy and paste text)

Jeff Levesque spoke to the warrant article. He stated the specifics of the teacher contract Year 1 of the contract includes no COLA increase. Year 2 will include a 1% COLA increase. There will also be a longevity stipend for faculty in the district for 10 year and on step 15 of the pay matrix (top step)

Warrant article 6:

Operating Budget

John presented some key items of the budget: The goal of the budget was to meeting the needs of our students with increased rigor and higher outcomes, continue long range planning, improve facilities, improve and develop curriculum

Considerations included the teachers contract, support staff step increases (no COLA), Specialist and Admin increases of 2-3%, health insurance increase of 4.4%, retirement costs, transportation increase of 3%, support for increased building maintenance.

There is a decrease of \$249,541 from the proposed budget to the approved current budget. Including the teacher's contract, the budget is \$1,499 less than FY 16.

Figures were also provided on the default budget (21,202,155), Food Service fund 21, 597,605, and Grand Fund 22, 1,275,749.

Staffing requests and changes

Change in the dual role of NHCS/DES principal to two separate positions. Current principal will remain at NHCS and the new hire for DES will have additional responsibilities. There will be a decrease in stipends to assistant principals, reduce guidance counselor position to .6, eliminate secretary at DES. Increase substitute pay, add 2 paraeducators, change facilities manager position into 2 new positions, facilities director and maintenance person.

John then went over the specific to school requests as presented at the meeting on December 7, 2016.

Due to the tax cap, 1,800,156 had to be cut from the budget. John discussed some of the items that were cut from the budget as discussed at the last meeting as well. Academic cuts at: Furniture and equipment items totaling 21,020. Technology cuts at 328,360. Additional cuts at 155,831.

Lucille Keegan, Bristol, asked about the teacher contract. Jeff Levesque clarified that the contract included a 1% increase in the second year.

Ruby Hill, Danbury, wanted to clarify that anyone that is not on the top step of their matrix will still get a 2-3% increase in pay.

Becca Boudreau, Bristol, asked what the open position on the additional cuts page is. Stacy addressed the question by stating that it was an open position that was carried not knowing what incoming kindergarten numbers were going to look like. The position was retained in the budget as a security measure in case of increased enrollment.

VPM, Bridgewater, clarified that he is stating his personal opinion. First wanted to thank Ann Holleran for the role she has played as a dual principal in years past. Spoke to how the money in Warrant article 5 (teacher's contract) really supports student outcomes. What concerns him about the budget is the terminology that will have an impact on the voters. He does not like the phrase "cut from the budget" and clarified that the items were proposed and not approved in the budgeting process. He is personally opposed to rescinding the tax cap. He fears that the voters will not approve the teachers contract or operating budget when they see the tax cap warrant article.

Susan Colby, Bristol, wondering if the cuts proposed are set in stone or if the budget is bottom line and that the items could still go through. Specifically security cameras which are important to the safety of our student, summer programs and desks at DES. Stacy responded that it is a bottom line budget, but that there is not a whole lot of "wiggle room" in it. It was challenging to make the decisions that were made for the items removed from the budget.

Christine Duvall, New Hampton, wanted to speak to the parts of the budget that were not approved. She stated that the administrators in the building are the individuals that the school board relies on to make those decisions.

John Sellers, Bristol, asked about the Hill students and where their tuition money is. Stacy stated it is on revenue and goes to offset taxes. Michael Limannie called Mr. Sellers attention to the last page of the packet and the calculation of revenue and the tax cap. Without the Hill students, another 682K would have to be cut from the budget.

VPM, added a point of information, to Ms. Colby's point, that her items of question are a good example of items that can be added in to the budget at the deliberative session.

Jeff Levesque, Groton, speaking as an individual, items not ultimately included in the budget were presented as wants rather than needs. Others were what he would label as "least painful to cut." He has concerns about an individual making a motion to increase the budget by a substantial amount at the deliberative session. He hopes to see the teachers contract passed and those increases could potentially put its passing in jeopardy.

John Sellers, Bristol, asked for clarification on motions from the floor at the deliberative session. Can those funds be used only for the item mentioned in the motion. Jeff Levesque noted that because the district operates as a bottom line budget they are not bound to spend the money on that specific item, but likely would.

John closed the meeting at 7:30