

TOWN OF DEERFIELD, NH
MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING
George B. White Building
8 Raymond Road, Deerfield, NH 03037
7:00pm Tuesday, 12 January 2016
MINUTES

Call to Order 7:01pm

1. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

2. Moment of Silence/Prayer

3. Roll Call

Present: Kevin Verville, Chairman; James Spillane, Vice Chairman; Fred McGarry, David Carbone, Brendan O'Donnell, Steve Giovinelli, Members; Andrew Robertson, Select Board Rep Member; Peter Menard, School Board Rep Member

Excused Absence: Carol Levesque, Karen Cote, Troi Hopkins**, Members

Also Present: Patricia Sherman, SAU #53 Co-Superintendent

4. Deerfield Municipal Budget Committee Chairman's Report on Town and School District Budgets

Chairman Verville states that the committee typically provides a brief overview of proceeding leading up to this meeting. The Town Budget has been adjusted for projected fuel costs. The Rescue Department requested increases for equipment. The Transfer Station repaving has been moved to a warrant article. The part time line item in the Animal Control budget has been reduced to match recent actual spending. Park and Recreation has reduced the Old Home Day line item since the 250th Celebration Committee is covering that cost this year. The Highway Safety budget has been reduced to \$1 per line since there has been no money spent from them budget. The budget as proposed by the Municipal Budget Committee is a 2.3% increase over the previous budget. It is .5% above the proposed draft budget.

The only change made in the School Budget was to add \$25,000 to the instructional supplies line. There is an over all .2% reduction over the previous year. The budget as proposed by the Municipal Budget Committee is 1.5% less than the default budget.

A. Robertson states that the paving at Transfer Station in the amount of \$35,000 does include from Brown Road around up to and covering the main area and down around the corner towards the burn piles Therefore there is more asphalt involved in this project than was initially conveyed.

5. Public Comment

Harriet Cady, 34 Old Centre Road Deerfield, asks how the Municipal Budget Committee has adjusted the School Budget based on state law and cost per student.

Chairman Verville responds that the Municipal Budget Committee took no action adjusting the budget based on cost per student.

H. Cady asks why Deerfield Community School has more paraprofessionals per handicapped students than any other school of our size even though we have the same percentage of handicapped students.

P. Menard states that he does not have an answer to that question at this time.

H. Cady asks how is the average pupil attendance in school to the number of certified staff known.

P. Menard responds that the information comes from the Department of Education databases.

H. Cady asks what the that ratio is.

Patricia Sherman, SAU #53 Co-Superintendent states that she does not have the numbers now but can get them.

P. Menard states that the estimated enrollment is 499 pupils and there are 60.6 certified staff.

H. Cady asks how the school energy cost was calculated per gallon.

**Troi Hopkins, Member, arrives.

P. Menard responds that \$2.50 per gallon was used. They budgeted for 14,000 gallons which was bud through the town.

H. Cady asks if any members of the committee abstained when the vote affected their children.

Chairman Verville states that to the best of his recollection there were no abstentions on financial votes by this committee.

H. Cady comments that the school turned back \$400,000 from the 2014/2015 budget and asks if it is known which lines were over budgeted.

P. Menard responds that the high school tuition line was the majority.

H. Cady asks if the Budget Committee looked at the overage in the budget and adjusted accordingly this year.

Chairman Verville responds that there was a one time savings due to negotiations of the high school contract with Concord High School.

H. Cady replies that the budget a year ago was figured on the new tuition figure.

Chairman Verville states that he reviewed the budget and made motions to make changes to line items.

All motions were seconded and votes were taken from there. Some motions passed as some did not.

H. Cady states that the Supreme Court requires that the overages from Health Trust be returned to the tax payer. Health Trust asked SAUs, school boards, select boards if they wanted to take holiday payments instead of getting that money back. The budget line for Health Trust was budgeted the same this year as it was last year even though there was a credit last year. For example, the dental Health Trust for the Select Board had a credit. H. Cady asks if they were aware of this.

A. Robertson replies that he cannot speak to the credit and does not recall deducting that at the time of budgeting. Although, the dental portion is very small and the Select Board does not run their health insurance through the Health Trust but rather the open market.

H. Cady asks for a response from the SAU.

P. Sherman responds that it was taken as a holiday.

H. Cady asks for if the amount of the credit was taken off of Health Trusts when budgeting.

P. Sherman replies that it is not a direct off set. It is necessary to budget for the amount of health insurance that there currently is now. The holiday payment is unknown ahead of time as well as the off set to the premiums.

H. Cady states that the holiday payment have been in December 2013, 2014, 2015.

H. Cady asks who of the town employees was given raises.

A. Robertson responds that several members of the Municipal Budget Committee asked about these raises and it was discussed.

Chairman Verville replies that motions were made in reference to raises and failed to pass.

H. Cady states that she would like the names of the employees.

A. Robertson replies that the names are not available this evening and they will get the information to her.

H. Cady asks why the town is buying bottled water in the town building when the water tests show that the well is drinkable.

A. Robertson replies that there is a preference to bottled water. There have been water quality problems in the past. They received a good deal on the water through a vender.

H. Cady suggests that this would be a good way to eliminate cost.

A. Robertson states that is can be taken under consideration.

H. Cady asks why was the town's bid policy ignored when they bought the electric panel and when the contract was given to Avitar for \$239,000.

A. Robertson responds that he cannot speak to the electrical panel. The board felt there was a good relationship with Avitar. They are familiar with our data base and the town. Previously when we could not financially complete the contract, they let us out of the contract.

H. Cady states that without taking bids you cant know that you are getting the best deal. There are at least fourteen state approved assessment companies. Our policy states that anything over \$10,000 requires a bid. She states that she was at the select board meeting when the maintenance person said that the cost of the electrical panel would be \$17,000 and no bid was put out.

H. Cady states that last year's budget was over funded by \$600,000. This is over \$1.25 per thousand of extra taxes paid by this town.

Chairman Verville points out that the amount added to the school budget for instructional supplies was \$25,000 not \$50,000 as written in Ms. Cady's notes.

H. Cady confirms that the \$25,000 is still included in the budget despite the fact that the extra money was already in the budget and could have bought the supplies.

6. Committee Discussion

No further discussion

7. Adjourn

Motion: F. McGarry moves to adjourn public meeting.

Second: Vice Chairman Spillane

Vote to adjourn: Yay: 9, Nay: 0, Abstained: 0 - Motion Carries