

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD, NH  
MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE  
George B. White Building  
8 Raymond Road, Deerfield, NH 03037  
December 21, 2017  
MINUTES**

**Call to Order:**

6:35 pm – Chair called the meeting to order

**Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag:**

Chairman Dill asks all to rise and pledge allegiance to the Flag

**Roll Call:** Alden Dill, Chair, Members Troi Hopkins, Kevin Verville, Benjamin Miner, Phil Bilodeau, Andrea Hotaling, Zach Langlois, School Board Representative, Andrew Robertson, Select Board Representative.

Excused Absences: James Spillane, John Dubiansky

Unexcused: David Carbone

**Review of Outstanding Minutes:**

None to approve but will talk with recording secretary to slim down notes from meetings.

**Citizen's Comments:**

None

**Old Business:**

Further discussion of the School Budget.

Mr. Langlois went over the updated version of the School Board Budget and stated that any requests for information will not be available until after the first of the year when staff come back from Christmas Break.

All updates were requested by members of the MBC at previous meetings.

Mr. Langlois stated that the School Board is working on Capital Improvements for a 10-year plan of improvements to the facilities.

There was discussion around classroom sizes of which some information that was requested seemed not to be included in the updated information.

Mr. Smith stated that he researched class size for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade and stated that what he had found out that 20 or less in a class is better than above 20 students for a classroom.

Mr. Langlois added that they had put another math specialist on in order to help the current math specialist not expecting that the enrollment would go up as much as it did. If left as the number of classes as it is now, there would be 23 students per classroom and would like to get that number down to where it is more appropriate.

Mr. Verville explained what his original request was which was to get the same worksheet for the 2017-2018 year in order to compare to 2018-2019 year.

**Motion:** Ms. Hopkins moves to remove the extra teacher in the line  
**Second:** No second on the motion

Mr. Verville asked for clarification regarding the math specialist that was added last year.

Mr. Langlois stated that this person is a supplemental resource which goes from room to room from grades K-5.

Mr. Verville asked if dropping the teacher from second grade to become a math specialist was a mistake in hindsight.

Mr. Langlois stated that the addition of the math specialists is an asset but it will take more than one year to see results.

Ms. Hotaling stated that by looking at the classroom sizes and maybe that other classrooms could be combined instead but was stated that it would take more than six months to get that into motion.

Ms. Hopkins asked that the Board get to the Technology and Physical Education representatives in order to hear what they need to add to the conversation.

**Motion:** Ms. Hopkins moves to table discussion on class size to teacher ratio and move onto Technology.  
**Second:** Mr. Verville  
**Discussion:**  
**Vote: Yea 8, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries**

The physical education teacher came to the Board and explained that the heart rate monitors that he was proposing to purchase would not be used just in the physical education setting a few months out of the year but instead to use as a motivational tool to help students create and maintain a wellness protocol for themselves now and as they get older.

It was asked how these units would be used more in depth.

It was stated that they would be wrist units that students would use during physical education class. A unique feature of these units is that up to 40 can be streamed to an iPad device for monitoring and configured to be motivational as well by setting goals while student has the device on.

There would not be enough ordered for every single student but would be rotated through the students so that each student does get to use one each week. These units would be used by third through eighth grade students.

Mr. Langlois stated that the budgeting for this item is Line 70 in the budget on Page 3A.

It was asked if they were heart rate only to which it was answered yes and the cost is \$170.00 a unit.

A follow-up question of whether or not there were any other fees once the units were purchased to which the answer was only for the software that tracks the individual students and allowed parents to have online access to their children's data.

Ms. Hotaling asked about health privacy issues and asked if it could be set up so that a person's name would not be displayed. It was answered that it could be set up a number of different ways and one would be that it wouldn't display and only be shown on the individual's monitor.

**Motion:** Mr. Minerd moves to put the heart monitors back into the budget in the amount of \$4,900.00  
**Second:** Mr. Langlois  
**Discussion:** It was stated that most were against the motion for various reasons to include that the school board and the administration opted to remove it when making cuts to their budgets.  
**Vote: Yea 2, Nay 6, Abstained 0 – Motion Fails**

The Chairman asked Ms. Boisvert to come to the microphone and asked her if she had any lines that she wished to discuss.

She stated that she was here to answer any questions that the Board might have but also had one item she would like to discuss.

She started by giving a shout out to Mr. West as to the level of expertise he has regarding using technology in physical education and gave the Board an example of his work which is streaming on the City of Manchester's website.

Ms. Boisvert reviewed the Technology Budget for the Board.

One of the issues about technology today is that software is now being offered as a subscription service as opposed to buying software and that is the reason why the software line has increased and that this will be the trend for the future.

Another item that Ms. Boisvert brought up was that her budget was down and it was due in part because money was taken out for hardware replacement. The line is down \$15,000.00 leaving approximately \$23,000.00 for hardware replacement (Line 100 in old budget). She explained that this is the line that classroom computers, servers, printers, switches and any piece of background hardware were bought out of.

With the \$23,000.00 budget, it won't allow the school to replace the computers that were up for replacement (approximately 1/5 of the computers are replaced yearly).

It was asked why was the last year's budget was \$42,000.00 and was this amount due to major breakdowns or such. It was explained that it was due to replacing the backup system for the school.

Ms. Boisvert stated that the server that stores all the school, student and software is going to need to be replaced this year to the cost of \$8,000.00 which would be fine if the next year the budget would allow to get back to the replacement cycle but it doesn't.

Mr. Langlois remarked that there is also a reserve fund for technology that is funded at about \$20,000.00 which could be used for any big items that needed to be purchased.

Line 274 and Line 276 which Line 274 is Ms. Boisvert's salary which will be able to go down next year as she is retiring and the end next year. The summer tech line is up. Network Tech is also vital to the working of the school.

Mr. Verville thanked Ms. Boisvert for her years of service. His question to Ms. Boisvert was with the expansion of the program within the school, did she feel that they were done expanding or are their gaps that still needed to be filled.

Ms. Boisvert explained that she thought at this time there were enough computers for 90% of the student that she thought that with a change in what type of devices they use, they could get almost 100% of all the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades with devices of their own such as Chrome Books or devices along that line.

Mr. Verville asked what the plan of the school board regarding 1 on 1 computers from K-8. 1 on 1 device to student is currently done in grades 5-8 but that it is a hybrid system in which students bring their own devices from home.

Accordingly, it was stated that there is no plan in place to do the same for K-4 grade students nor is it in the budget.

Mr. Verville asked if the SAU could provide budget numbers from a few years that could show how money was being spent in the classroom for technology. It shouldn't include figures that would be support services such as server or switch type costs.

**Motion:** Mr. Verville moves to obtain the costs of technology in the classroom for students over a number of years

**Second:** Mr. Robertson

**Discussion:** Mr. Verville stated that the reason that he was asking for the information was the numbers highlight in orange and as the programs are expanded, those become fixed costs and would like to see what it does over time.

Mr. Langlois stated that he thought that this motion would involve a lot of time and resources and didn't know if any good would come out of the request.

Mr. Robertson withdrew his second so that Mr. Verville could withdraw his motion and the motion for the information was withdrawn.

Chairman Dill asked about the paraprofessional line and how many in the line were for special education.

Mr. Langlois stated that on pages 21-29 there is a roster for the operating budget and explained that the special education aides are put in the building per the child's needs.

There are kindergarten and preschool aides that are not attached to special education. It was asked if the 1 to 1 aides are there to help the class to which it was answered that they are assigned to one student.

An overview of Special Education was done by the Assistant Director of Special Education for the SAU.

It was mentioned that Deerfield has a high concentration of students with autism which results in a higher student to aide ratio.

It was asked what the ratio of the budget is special education related. It was determined that it was approximately 1/4 of the budget.

It was explained that the number of aides that Deerfield has is the result of being vetted. The state level of children with IEP's is around 15-17% but Deerfield seems to be at around 20% of children with IEP's.

Ms. Hotaling brought up transportation and if there was going to be another provider. She also asked if it were for in town or out of town transportation and it was answered both as transportation has to be provided to any child that needs placement whether in or out of town.

The SAU is going out to bid for transportation and the challenge is finding bus drivers and busses to accommodate the needs of the district.

Mr. Verville asked what the cost savings would be if the new teacher was not approved. It was determined that it would be approximately \$65,000.00 to \$70,000.00 for salary and benefits.

Ms. Hotaling asked about tuition revenue which was stated is from the preschool.

PACE Academy usually have one or two students that attend from Deerfield. The line in the budget is the amount that needs to be paid above the high school tuition.

Chairman Dill asked if there were any other questions regarding the school budget of which there were none.

Mr. Robertson stated that he had an update on the town budget.

He stated that the most current copy of the town budget shows the changes that have been made by the MBC to date.

He noted for the MBC that the Selectmen's line does not match the MBC line as based on the opinion of the road agent, the Select Board is not supporting the \$100,000.00 for Road Resurfacing.

It was asked why it isn't being supported and it was stated that the road agent feels that it is not needed but also does not have a plan for it. Mr. Robertson stated that the Board felt if the road agent didn't have a plan for it then they were not in favor of adding it to the budget.

Mr. Verville stated that this was the same thing that happened last year that \$100,000.00 was brought up to put into roads and it was stated that it was not needed but once impact monies were found to be expiring, there was a great need to expend them.

He also stated that there is evidence that the longer that we wait to do road maintenance, the higher it is going to cost to fix it.

Mr. Robertson also stated that personally he is for this but when presented to the rest of the Select Board, it was not well received.

It was asked why the bottom line doesn't reflect a loss of \$100,000.00 to which Mr. Robertson stated that there were other changes that were made to the budget such as a wage scale increase for the highway department which is three members. There was also a 1.5% COLA increase for employees except for the town clerk, the police department and the highway department.

Ms. Hotaling brought up her concern about budget numbers that didn't seem to match what was voted on by the MBC and Mr. Robertson stated that in fact the MBC will be voting on the bottom line and the budget that the MBC will be presented as final will have all the correct numbers and no other changes will be made to the town budget unless they are made by the MBC.

Chairman Dill asked a question about the insurance and what had changed. Mr. Robertson stated that the town had found a different plan which was less expensive because the hospital deductible was larger. The town has a reimbursement account so that employees can be reimbursed should they need to be for a hospitalization and found since it was a higher deductible, the amount put into that line was raised.

Mr. Verville stated that he thought that the numbers that were voted on by the MBC should be the numbers that the public sees as the MBC budget and if there are discrepancies then they should be corrected. The selectmen can do anything with their column as it is their column. The numbers for the MBC should be double checked and put back to what the MBC voted on.

He went to stated that he thought that if the select board's budget changed, they it was his understanding that the select board would come back to the MBC and make a motion to change the number in the budget.

Mr. Harrington stated that nothing in the numbers provided to the MBC have changed in regard to COLA's. The line for the select board has changed and he stated that he would get a list to the MBC so that it can be looked at and voted on.

Mr. Robertson stated that he will make sure that the budget numbers are the ones that were voted on by the MBC.

Chairman Dill asked if Tuesday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January worked for everyone at 6:30 pm and wanted to know if there was anyone that needed to be asked to come in.

#### **New Business:**

Discussion on timing of meetings and warrant articles ensued. The school only started discussing them the previous night and they are due on January 9<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Robertson stated that they had draft warrant articles on the table as to what they were planning on proposing but have until the 9<sup>th</sup> to accept petition warrant articles.

Mr. Verville stated that the Board needs to choose an alternate date to have a meeting in order to vote on the warrant articles. It will give the board a chance to look at them and know what is being asked when approached by the voters.

Chairman Dill stated that he thought that there was no way that they could have the public hearing on the 9<sup>th</sup>. All petition warrant articles are sent to legal counsel to be vetted according to Mr. Robertson.

Chairman Dill proposed that the committee meet on January 11<sup>th</sup> in order to vote on warrant articles and have the public hearing on the 16<sup>th</sup> of January.

Mr. Verville stated that he thought that there was another meeting being held in the room on that night so Chairman Dill proposed having the review and vote on warrant articles on the 16<sup>th</sup> and have the public hearing on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Verville stated that it would be nice to meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> and get close to finishing the town budget and then button it up on the 6<sup>th</sup>. That would finish the school budget but allow a little time until the 16<sup>th</sup> when the bottom line is voted on which usually waits until last just in case someone brings up something that needs to be changed or added.

Chairman Dill agreed with the schedule and the 2<sup>nd</sup> the committee would only be working on the town budget as there would not be anyone from the school in attendance.

He stated that on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, it would be a quick meeting on the town budget. The meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> would start at 9:00 am and the MBC will have a meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> and have the public hearing on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Verville asked if the time frame between the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> would be enough time for the school and town to be prepared for the public hearing. Both representatives agreed it would be. Mr. Verville went on to say that he thought that the committee should get confirmation from the school that they are comfortable with the time table. He was comfortable that the town would be ready as the town administrator stated that they would be. It was also brought up that public hearing have historically been held at 7 p.m. at the G.B. White Building.

Mr. Minerd brought up also that there is a member on the committee that has had two, possibly three unexcused absents and that the chair should reach out to him.

No other old or new business.

**Adjourn:**

**Motion:** Mr. Robertson

**Second:** Mr. Minerd

**Discussion:**

**Vote: Yea 8, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries**

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 2, 2018 at 6:30 pm**

*The Minutes were transcribed and respectfully submitted by Dianne L. Kimball, Recording Secretary  
Pending approval by the Municipal Budget Committee*