

**Town of Farmington**  
*Budget Committee Meeting Minutes - Approved*  
**Saturday December 7, 2013**  
**9:00AM**  
**Selectmen's Chambers**  
**356 Main Street**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Brian St. Onge (Chairperson), Sam Cataldo, Jodi Connolly, Gail Young, Steve Henry, Neil Johnson, Gerry McCarthy, Ann Titus, Arthur Capello (Selectman's Rep) and Kathy King (School Board's Rep)

**MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:**

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Steven Welford (Superintendent), Stephanie Lafreniere (Assistant Superintendent), Laurie Verville (Business Administrator), Walter Anacki (Special Ed Director), Bonnie Telles (Bus Coordinator), Richard Bailey (Technology Director), Matthew Jozokos (HS Principal), Steve Woodward (HW Principal), and Cynthia Sparks (VV Principal)

**1. Call To Order**

Brian (Chairperson) called meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance at 9:05AM.

Brian stated that we are currently not on the air and the purpose of this meeting was for the School District to have an opportunity to present an overview of the 2014-15 Farmington School budget. He noted that this was a Public Meeting and not a Public Hearing. He added that the Budget Committee has not yet set the date for the Public Hearing and that it will need to be held in January. Arthur stated it must be done before the January 25<sup>th</sup>.

**2. School Budget Overview**

Mr. Welford stated that his goal today was not to have to say that they will need to get back to the Committee with that information, so he has brought with him everyone that should be able to answer any questions that could come up. He thanked the school administrator team for their work in preparing this budget and added that a lot of thought went into this budget, and what he will present today is focused on what is best for the kids, which may not always be what is best for the adults.

Mr. Welford stated that they receive multiple sources of Revenue including Federal & State aid, Trust Funds, and local taxes, and the Proposed Budget uses all three to address some sufficient issues. He added that last year, they return a lot of money back to the town due to prudent spending and other factors, and felt a responsible to give it back to the tax payers. He stated that it is extremely important that the teacher's agreement be funded and passed because it has become very difficult to hire and keep qualified teachers, and they have not had a pay increase in several years.

Mr. Welford added that we are currently short in this year's budget due to a reduction of about \$400,000 in State funding, and about \$300,000 from Middleton, so we will not be able to return any funds this year. We are trying to hold the line the best we can to the present budget. Mr. Welford then stated that they have prepared a slide show outlining the important details of the proposed budget.

A slide show was presented and the following discussion took place.

***Slide 1 - FY 2015 Budget Overview:***

- *Focus On Strengthening The Academic Program*
- *Updating Instructional Programs*
- *Continued Improvements In Technology*
- *Community Service*

Mr. Welford stated that we are trying to raise the bar on our academic offering by introducing new programs and courses that will benefit students. He added that we need to update some of the things we are using to teach kids and a lot of what we are currently doing is out of date including our current 3<sup>rd</sup> grade curriculum and this needs to be updated so that we can keep up in education and Common Core standards. Mr. Welford stated that we will be able to creating a new technology lab at the high school next year without putting a burden the tax payers. He added that the schools belong to the community and they are looking to add a program that will engage student involvement in their community and help to bridge the gap between students and the community need for help.

Brian stated that we are on the air now and restated that the purpose of this meeting was for the school to present their overview of next year's budget and this was not a Public Hearing. He added that the meeting started just a few minutes ago and the public viewers have not missed much.

***Slide 2 – Personnel Reduced:***

- *2 Middle School Teachers (program)*
- *1 Grade 6 Teacher (enrollments)*
- *1 grade 3 Teacher (enrollments)*
- *.5 ESOL Teacher (to be contracted)*

Mr. Welford stated that the proposed budget was prepared the same way as last year by starting at \$0 and then adding items as needed. They do not start with the current budget and then make adjustments. He stated that by doing it this way, they have identified these areas for personnel reduction and added that we cannot be blind that our class sizes are declining and we need to address this. He added that the half-time ESOL Teacher is no longer needed and the position will be contracted out.

***Slide 3 – Personnel Added:***

- *1 World Language Teacher*
- *1 Reading Teacher*

Mr. Welford stated that there is currently 2 Literacy Programs at the 7 & 8 levels which were introduce about 2 years ago and we are not seeing enhancements or benefits to these programs so we would like to replace them with a World Language Teacher and a Reading Teacher. He added that the World Language Teacher would teach Spanish half the year and French the other half. This program will allow students a better opportunity to make a choice in taking a foreign language when they go to high school. The Reading Teacher would teach the other half of the year. Brian asked if the same teacher would teach both programs, and Mr. Welford answered no and explained that they are two different full-time teachers. He added that we are still behind in reading.

Steve asked what the difference is between Reading and Literacy Mr. Welford asked Mr. Anachi (Special Education Director) to answer that question. Mr. Anachi stated that literacy was focus on different aspects of reading and foreign language is just that, it teaches students a foreign language including structure and will add a value to the students because they will be able to compare what they are learning in English to that of what they are learning in a foreign language class. He added that currently our students do not have that exposure. Mr. Welford stated that there are many studies that proved students benefit from taking a foreign language and we currently have a large population of high school students who do not take a foreign language course. Neil asked if foreign language was required for graduation. Mr. Welford answered no and Mr. Jozokos added that it is a required for college.

- *1 Health/Physical Education Teacher*

Mr. Welford stated there is currently no health program at the middle school and we only have one PE teacher to cover the health needs of the whole school. He added that because we are technically not classified as a middle school, we have been able to get away with that, but it is not the best situation for our students. He stated that this became apparent with the results from the Health Behavior Risk Survey that our students completed and based on this data we have some serious issues we need to address. Mr. Welford also listed programs and other things that are being done at the High School to address some of these issues, however we need to address and engage students in the earlier grades, as well as increase the amount of time we can offer PE classes at these grade levels. He added that 1 teacher for 450 students with no health program is not a good receipt, and this request is just be the beginning to solving some of the issues we to address.

- *1 Life Skills Teacher*

Mr. Welford stated that we have about 8 to 12 teachers at the high school who work with the students who are development delayed, however we don't have any teachers at the middle school for the same amount of students. He stated that adding a Life Skills Teacher at the middle school will allow us to start the program earlier on which will enable us to do so much more for these students. The addition would also help to free up time needed at the high school in covering basic skills. Mr. Welford stated that by adding this position we could take these students even farther in the short time we have them at the High School. He added that we can't just teach them to just cook; we need to teach them life skills including managing money, balancing a checkbook, and work skills. The Life Skills teacher would cover grades 4 to 8. Jodi asked if there was a plan for engaging parent in this program and Mr. Welford explained in most cases he has found that the parents of these students are very much involved with their children and invest in their education. Kathy stated that when students are development delayed they tend to spend more time at school. Jodi stated that she felt the parents need to be involved and if the school pays for this program, the parents also need to be part of the program to educate these students. Neil stated the school has no authority over the parents. Mr. Welford stated that he feels this is a population of students that we are currently letting down by starting too late. He added that we are not doing the best we can these students and we could do more.

- *P/T Community Ed. Coordinator*

Mr. Welford stated that by using the schools and their equipment this position would help to fill a few needs we have. First, there are folks in this community that we could bring in to learn valuable skills that would help them with their business. Second, we have kids that are short on needed credits for

graduation and the thought is that maybe we could offer this opportunity as an alternative to summer school with the possibility of coming to school at night 1 or 2 days per week for 12 weeks instead of 8 weeks in the summer. He added that they felt the best approach to these needs was to hire the Teacher and share our facilities with the community. Arthur asked if this position would be filled with current staff or if it was a new hire. Mr. Welford stated that the proposal is for a \$5,000 stipend and he would expect that those who could pay would and we would have a small pocket to offer to those who couldn't. Mr. Welford pointed out that the High School started a GED option program last year and as it turns out, Mr. Jozokos hired a good person to run the program. Mr. Jozokos stated that there are currently 15 students in program with 9 completing all requirements. He added that of the 9 that have taken the required test, only one had to retake the test a second time. Neil asked how many students in the program cannot read and Mr. Jozokos stated that all persons entering the GED program must have at least an 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading level to take the class. He added that the goal is to become a testing site and maybe having other schools send their student to us to earn their GED, as well as older members of our community. Sam stated that he has seen this work in other schools where 30 plus year olds have passed the GED test and the joy that comes with a husband and wife earning their GED's together.

Mr. Jozokos stated that they are thinking about doing a pilot that also includes Art, Finance, and other classes that are not just academically focused but will also cover other interests. Sam suggested that members of this and other Town Board's and Committees should think about taking some of these classes. Steve asked how the teacher(s) would be paid and Mr. Welford stated that we may have to underwrite some of the program and then get grants and other funding to offset the costs. Steve asked if the plan was to eliminate the summer school program altogether and Mr. Welford answered that he is not sure how the student may feel about going to night school after being in school all day, however a night course is more benedictional and might be more popular to students then summer school. Mr. Welford added that we will need to continue that discussion. Steve wondered how Dover is doing with its night courses and asked Mr. Welford if he could look into that and report back. He also asked Mr. Welford when he expected to see some value to the program and Mr. Welford stated that we would like to give it a full year then reevaluate.

- *Student Work/Student Program*

Mr. Welford explained that the plan was to hire 8 high school students to do actual work for the School Department. These students would be evaluated and based on the work they have done, they will be asked to come back the following year or not. He added that there is not a lot of work for students in town therefore students do not have much of a chance to learn skills that are valuable in the work place. Benefits of the program include students learning marketable skills, learning that if they do a good job and keep up their grades they can earn their own money, plus the District would benefit by getting inexpensive local labor. Brian asked if this would be strictly a summer job program and Mr. Welford answered that most jobs would be done during the summer, however he was also considering time during vacations and on weekends. Sam stated that some business may be able to add to this program and Mr. Welford added that if we are going to ask other employers to take part in the program, we will first need to show that it works and good results will open up many doors.

Gail asked how the \$19,000 was going to be used and Mr. Welford stated that the program would take up to 8 students paying \$7.50 per hour. Neil stated that he has a concern about using school funds to employ students and it is not a schools or other entities responsibility to provide jobs to students or anyone else. Mr. Welford suggested that Neil and he could talk about this topic more offline and all

agreed. Steve stated that he assumed that these jobs would be jobs that we would otherwise have to hire someone to do. Steve stated that some would be but that not all jobs would be that way and he gave an example of the painting that was done that HW building. Steve questioned if the \$19,000 would be all used for pay and how the admin cost would be covered. Mr. Welford stated that there would be no additional admin costs since it would be covered using the current staff. Jerry stated that the amount would cover all costs and Gail stated that she knew that other schools required a certain amount of community service to be done in order to graduate. Mr. Jozokos stated that they are currently having conversations about looking into a community service programs at the high school level and noted that most student already do some sort of community service as part of preparation for their college applications. Gail asked why this program couldn't be used for those community service hours. Mr. Welford explained the goal of work study program is different and we are looking at building marketable work skills where students are supervisor, evaluated, and paid for their work. Kathy added that she looks at this program as a job to earn money and build skills and not just volunteer work. She added that when a student does volunteer work, there is no one measuring the skills needed to do the job or evaluating their job performance, and no feedback is received. These students are going to need to learn some valuable skills and encouraging them to work, earn some money, and not sit home is a value to the community. Mr. Welford stated that another benefit of the program is that there will be a group of kids that may now have a reason to stay in school and this program may just make the difference.

Mr. Anachi added that the life skills students would also benefit from this program. Jodi stated that she has concerns that it seems we tend to exclude certain groups from such programs and added that if we are going to have a student work program, she wants to make sure all students have access to the benefits of the program and not just a selected few. Mr. Welford stated that regardless of what group a student belongs to all students should have the benefits to succeed. Sam asked if grants have been looked at for funding this program and Mr. Welford answered that they are looking into that. Jerry stated that the Public Works Department up on the highway reported that the problem they had with the students they hired is that they did not have the algebra skills needed to do the job so maybe we should just hire another algebra teacher. Mr. Jozokos stated that we had students who were failing high school classes passed the GED test with scores over 600 when only a score of 500 was required. What we are trying to do is build pride in our students. Jerry asked if it was the responsibility of the school to hire students and give them work. Mr. Welford explained that the currently District's dropout rate is not something to be proud of and we need to make sure these students have skills to be successful. Kathy stated that as a community we lack in some areas of what we are doing for students and we need to look at the data in the Health Behavior Risk Survey. The results are eye opening and we as a community have to do something. She added that we just can't look at education for the solution; we need to look at what the community can do as a whole.

Brian said he felt that we have talked about this subject long enough and everyone has had a chance ask questions and provide their views. Jodi asked if she could get a copy of the Health Behavior Risk Survey and Mr. Welford stated that he was in the process of getting it posted on the website.

***Slide 4 – Insurance Increases:***

- *Cigna - Health Insurance rates will increase by 5.8% - This plan covers teachers, paraprofessionals, and custodians.*
- *LGC - Health Insurance rates will increase by 10.8% - This plan covers administrators, secretaries, bus drivers, and IT personnel.*
- *Dental Insurance rates with LGC will increase by 0% - This plan covers all personnel.*

Mr. Welford stated that there will be a \$156,000 increase due to the changes in insurance options of the staff and increase of insurance premiums. Arthur asked if they have looked at other vendors and options for the insurance plan for the admins, secretaries, bus drivers, and IT personnel, and added that a 10.8% increase is a very large increase. Mr. Welford stated that yes they are currently looking at other vendors and options, and explained that it is not just health insurance they are currently looking at alternative providers for all insurance policies. Kathy added that this will be hard to do since there are not many insurance companies doing business in New Hampshire. Arthur said that Kathy is correct and that he has found that in NH there are not many options for insurance coverage, and added that the Affordable Care Act takes place June 2015 and we have to consider how that will effect half of this budget. Mr. Welford stated yes, and that half of this budget takes into consideration the new health care act.

***Slide 5 – Insurance Increases (continued):***

- *\$75,000 has been added to cover the Affordable Care Act*

Mr. Welford stated that part of this budget includes a consideration for fines that may need to be paid under this Affordable Care Act, and since we offer insurance to everyone, we must figure out if that insurance is concerned affordable under this Act. He added that in calculating the fine amount that may need to be paid, we looked at the total number of Paras positions and a fine of \$2000 for each, and then we cut that number in half to represent the last half of the budget cycle. Mr. Welford stated that they are currently in negotiations with the Para's and are looking at all options. Steve asked if they have looked at the potential cost of the fines for the Para's and wondered if they have considered the option to not offer insurance to this group, and questioned if we can afford to cover the 40% cost of insurance plus the \$2000 fine. Mr. Welford stated that a single person plan cost about \$11,000 per year and that this rate will most likely go up since we are looking at the year 2015. Arthur asked if this cost has the potential to be an additional cost moving forward and Mr. Welford answered yes. Arthur then asked if we should have a Capital Reserve Fund set aside for these costs so that we don't have to budget for them each year. Mr. Welford stated that he thought that could be done, however the availability to the funds may be an issue. Arthur suggested that something could be done to make the funds available as needed.

***Slide 6 – Main Budget – Additions:***

- *Universal Healthcare Cost - \$75,000*
- *Health Insurance Increase - \$156,177*
- *Contacted Services – SPED - \$88,154*
- *Textbooks - \$17,282*
- *Vocational Tuition - \$20,000*
- *Grounds – Repair/Maintenance - \$30,900*
- *Technology Hardware - \$19,931*
- *Furniture/Replacement - \$22,308*

Mr. Welford stated that an overview of these increases is provided in the budget book under the summary page. He added that the plus on the increase for SPED is that they are currently working with 3 students in the district to see if we can keep these students here. Mr. Welford stated that they need a new reading series at VV since the current one being replaced is over 18 years old. He added that the increase in Vocational Tuition is not because the cost went up, but that the State has not met

their responsibility in funding this program. Mr. Welford stated that there are many repairs that need to be made to the grounds and athletic fields and they are considering yearly maintenance contracts with vendors, the \$19,931 increase in hardware is due to the need to replaced technology equipment throughout the District, and the lease program they have been in for 5 years is now over. He added that all the computers under this lease are now 5 years old and some need to be replaced. Mr. Welford stated that the classroom furniture in the Henry Wilson building is in rough shape and 2 full classrooms are being budgeted to be replaced.

***Slide 7 – Main Budget Impact Items – Reductions:***

- *Insurance Buybacks - \$23,529*
- *Workers Compensation - \$21,108*
- *District Resource Officer - \$24,875*
- *Building Repairs /Maintenance - \$67,974*
- *Telephone & Internet - \$7,423*
- *Tuition – Out-of-District – \$145,574*
- *Supplies - \$27,561*
- *Utilities - \$62,552*

Mr. Welford stated that buybacks are down because when teachers left they were replaced with staff that selected insurance due to the increase to the overall cost of health insurance. He added that the District's portion of the cost for the Resource Officer has gone down due to Chief Wiley's good work and a portion of this position will be paid for out of the COPS Grant. Mr. Welford stated that the decrease in Telephone & Internet was taken from the HW building and is due to the changeover in service. Mr. Welford stated that Mr. Anachi has a lot to do with the decrease of over \$145,000 in Out-of-District Tuition. Mr. Anachi that there are currently 20 students in the SPED program of which 15 are placed out of district and the district is looking at added 2 more next year. Mr. Welford added that the staff has worked hard to keep these students in the district. Jerry asked if the average of \$38,000 to \$42,000 per student is a high number and Mr. Anachi answered that the out-of-district costs of a student could be as high as \$125,000 so keeping students in the district is a huge savings to the District. Mr. Welford stated this decrease in Utilities was due to them getting a handle on the usage of fuel oil based on actual events and actual costs. Jerry asked if the Resource Officer was still at a 20/80 split and Mr. Welford answered yes.

***Slide 8 – Valley View Community School:***

- *Budget is up by \$187,678.53*
- *Textbooks will increase by \$120,000*
- *Reductions in salary-related lines, supplies, consumable books, and new equipment*

Mr. Welford stated that the major increase in this budget is due to the \$120,000 that is needed for new textbooks for Reading program for PreK through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, and added that grades 3 – 6 will need new textbooks the following budget cycle and this cost will most likely be about the same. Jodi asked if this cost was just for textbooks and Mr. Welford answered yes and any other costs associated with this Reading program would be absorb using the current staff. Steve asked how many students this cost covers and Ms. Sparks stated about 280 students in PreK through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Mr. Welford added that \$20,000 of this cost would be to also replace/update the Everyday Math materials. Jodi asked if the \$120,000 textbook increase at VVCS includes consumables. Ms. Sparks stated that they are not included and explained that this cost does however include the teacher kits and teacher books, and will

be a one-time purchase. Steve asked if this could wait and Mr. Welford replied that we need to make the change now if we want to see any benefits in these areas moving forward.

***Slide 9 – Henry Wilson Memorial School:***

- *Budget is up by \$106,294.16*
- *Current Literacy program in Grades 7 & 8 will be replaced with a World Language and a Reading Program*
- *Add a new Health/Physical Education position*
- *Remove study halls from the school schedule*

Mr. Welford stated that the overall HWMS budget is up by \$106,294.16 due to the current Literacy program in grades 7&8 being replaced with a World Language and Reading Program, and plans are in work to eliminate study halls at the middle & high school levels. A Committee has been formed to figure out how the schedules are going to work and that has not been finalized. He added that the Teacher's contract will not be affected since the length of the day is not changing. Arthur stated that this was an effective way to increase academic programs without increasing the school day.

Gail asked if the Textbook line #465000 in the budget includes the new World Language and Reading Program and Mr. Welford answered yes. Steve stated that he had a concern that even though the overall cost seems lower, he felt that \$360.00 for textbooks per student is high and asked what the life expectancy is for these textbooks. Mr. Welford answered that in general it is 7 to 10 years. Steve questioned how there could be a decrease in textbooks of \$5,000 if we are going to hire a new World Language Teacher. Mr. Welford stated that they will need new textbooks for this new program however; we will not be using the funds that have been used in the past for the Literacy Program so the overall cost is \$5,000 less. Jodi asked about grant funds and how they could be used and Mr. Welford explained that there are limitations in grants and how funds can be used but there was a possibility the current Everyday Math program might fit into a grant.

***Slide 10 – Farmington High School:***

- *Budget is down by \$50,750*
- *A new computer lab will be installed using grant funds*
- *Vocational Education Tuition has been fully funded because the State has underfunded Vocational Aid*
- *Next Year schedule includes no study halls*

Mr. Welford stated that the overall High School budget is down \$50,750 and they will be installing a second computer lab in room 208 which will be paid for with federal funds. He added that last year's new computer lab was a success and with the new equipment, students are now doing some fantastic stuff and have gained an interest in the classes that they are now able to offer. Mr. Welford stated that they are currently looking at what classes should be increased based on that interest. Arthur asked if the taxes payers would have to put out the bill to replace the lab if it was purchased with the grant funds and Mr. Welford stated that he is not going to worry about that now if he can get 5 generations of students through the labs with equipment he would not have been able to otherwise have. He added that all new equipment would have a 5 year warranty and any equipment purchased through a grant can be possibly be replaced with other grant money, whereas equipment bought by the District cannot.

Mr. Jozokos stated that they were also planning on replacing 6 to 8 year old equipment with new ones adding that one focus is to offer the accounting students the capability to gain skills in using the Quickens accounting software. Mr. Welford stated that we now have a new Computer Teacher at the



middle school, which is very good and has students using free software, which has resulted in a group of kids in the middle school who now have an interest in technology so we need to continue that interest at the high school level. He added that we will benefit significantly from the Federal Tech Grant and the grant will cover replacing 17 old computers with 20 upgraded more advance systems.

***Slide 11 – Information Technology:***

- *Budget is up \$16,289*
- *Equipment line is level funded for purchases including replacement of computer, additional interactive white boards, a document camera, projector mounts, and a new server for VV.*
- *Primary increase is a \$20,000 transfer to the Tech budget from the HWMS budget. The original funds were part of the lease which has ended and will now be used to purchase replacement computers throughout the District.*
- *Upgrades will continue to be made to the network/infrastructure Districtwide*

Mr. Welford state that the IT budget is up by \$16,268 with the primary increase being due to a \$20,000 transfer from the HWMS budget. He added that upgrades will continue to be made to the network/infrastructure Districtwide and explained that there are current issues with the network capacity being overloaded when students are completing assessments.

Brian questioned why the proposed and default budget show \$20,000 listed on line #57310-50-88 for New Equipment. Mr. Welford explained this was due to the computer lease that has ended and the funds were move to the Tech budget. Brian stated that his concern is that the other line that the lease was moved from was \$11,000 last year and he was wondered why the default budget is showing \$68,000. He added that his main concern is that what he would consider one-time purchases seems to somehow continue to work its way into the budget. Mr. Welford suggested that the difference in the default budget may be due to the 2 buses that were leased last year. Arthur pointed out that bus lease lines were listed below. Mr. Welford explained that the lease agreements must be in the default budget, but if you decide not to pay it, the item can be removed. Arthur noted that the equipment lease line has decrease \$50,000 which is the about the difference in the lines Brian questioned.

Mr. Welford stated that there was also a decrease in HW because of the new phone system and explained that they had budget for installation costs and there was none to upgrade the current system. He added that every line in the build was now been located and they are identifying lines that are not being used and may be removed.

***Slide 12 – Special Education:***

- *Budget is up by \$31,272.69*
- *Significant decreases due to Out of District Tuition at VV & HW*
- *Reorganization of Speech Services continues to evolve based on student needs and the expanded Preschool program*
- *Contracted Services have increased as we work to develop capacity to keep students affected by Autism in the District*
- *New Life Skills teaching position added to HW*

Mr. Welford stated that the budget is up by \$31,272.69; however there are significant decreases in Out of District tuition at both VV and HW. He added that the Speech Services costs prior to last year was about \$274,000 which consisted of two full positions with PreK not included in this program. Currently there are about 15 students that need services in this program and they felt there was not

enough need to have two full-time positions. Speech Services proposed budget is \$217,000. Mr. Welford stated that contracted services will be used to develop an Autism program and the new life skills teaching position has been added to HW. He added that this is the lowest SPEC Ed costs they had in quite a few years. Steve asked if the Life Skills teaching position is going to be picked up by the State and Federal aid and if the Paras that are currently serving the kids will still serve the same kids. Mr. Welford stated the Paras will still serve the same students and he was not sure how the State and Federal aid would be affected. Jodi stated that if we start earlier there is a better chance for these students to have the skills needed when they get to high school. Mr. Welford stated that these students will leave high school and will need to support themselves and work, and we need to ensure these students get the basic skills they need before they get to high school so that we can focus on the skills they will need when they leave high school. Mr. Anachi also stated that we are responsible for some of these students until they reach 21 of age. Gail asked how many physiologists there was in the District and Mr. Welford stated that there are 3; one that is salaried and 2 that are contracted. Gail stated that it looks like the contracted physiologists were less expensive and Mr. Anachi explained that we are very lucky that one of the contracted person was a past employee of the District and agreed on a lower rate than we would have to normally paid for another contract person. Gail stated that maybe we should consider to look at contracting all of these positions to save money. Mr. Aanchi stated that the cost would be just about the same and we get other tasks completed from the employee that we would not get from the contract persons. Sam questioned the issue about physiologists being at the schools and Mr. Welford stated that the Psychiatrist we have does not do counselling and parents are always involved.

***Slide 13 & 14 – Facilities:***

- *Budget decrease of \$13,846*
- *\$5,000 has been added at each school for wiring and mounting of Projectors*
- *#14,679 has been added for replacement of the intercom system at Henry Wilson*
- *Utilities have been budgeted more accurately based on usage*
- *Refinishing the gym floors at both the high school and HW will be requested through the FSD Building/Grounds CRF 93 Fund*
- *Warrant articles to install irrigation systems for the athletic fields, reconstruction of the football/soccer field, and rejuvenation of the baseball and softball fields with possible funding being requested from the Outdoor Athletic Facilities Trust Fund.*
- *Warrant article to repair the rooftop air conditioning unit at the High School with funding requested from the FHS Construction, Renovation and Repair Fund*

Mr. Welford stated that the overall Facilities budget has decrease \$13,845 and highlights included, \$5,000 being budgeted at the each school for the wiring and mounting of new technology projectors. The teachers and staff have expressed the need and the cost is about \$1000 to have projectors in each room. He also stated that the intercom system does not work in the whole HW building and we currently need to use two microphones to reach everyone and even with that we still have some areas and rooms that we are not reaching. He added that the current system dates back to the late 60's and it has real become a safety issue at this point. Mr. Welford stated that the gym floors at the both the High School and Henry Wilson need to be refinishing and they will be requesting the funds through the FSB Building/Grounds CRF93 fund based on the recommendation of the Budget Committee and there is currently about \$145,000 in that account. He stated that he thought this was the best place for the funds to come from and added that taking the floors down to the bare wood would help to extend the life of the floors.

Mr. Welford stated that he met with a Rep from Cameron's concerning the athletic fields and they stated that biggest problem is irrigation with all 3 fields. The football/soccer field is not crowned, there is no grass and/or drainage and they suggested that the field be completely rebuilt. If we do this the field may need to be taken it out of use for a year or possibly longer. The other fields need to be reclaimed and Mr. Welford state that he is still gathering numbers and will look towards at the trust funds help with fixing the problems. He explained that the football field is used a lot and was not originally build as it should have been. Arthur asked what would happen to the teams that use this field if it is down that long and Mr. Welford stated that maybe they could use the boys/girls 500 club, or the area by VV, or it might be necessary for the football team to play all away games for a year. He added that whatever we decide to do, we will need to take better care of the fields we have in the future. Mr. Welford stated that the irrigation system is in the ballpark of \$50,000 to \$55,000 for all 3 fields and rebuilding the fields is about \$60,000 including drainage, site prep and sod. Gail state that these costs were the type of costs the Trust Fund was set up for. Jerry stated he thought so too but didn't want it to see all the funds used up at once. Mr. Welford stated the plan would include a turf maintenance agreement so that we don't just replace the fields but we keep them up, to which we have not done a good job. Neil asked if his cost includes the mowing and Mr. Welford explained that it does not include the mowing but does include everything else such as the coat of testing and all chemicals.

Steve asked when the gym floors were last done and Mr. Jozokos stated that he thought it was 1999. Steve added that there were talks about fixing the tennis courts last year and Mr. Welford stated that they received an estimate of \$45,000 to repair them. Steve asked if that cost was included in the budget and Mr. Welford stated no and said he thought the fields were a priority and needed to be fixed first. Jerry added that the tennis courts were installed by the school with a grant in 1990. Mr. Welford stated that these are costs and items that have not been touched for many years and they are working on a project needs plan so that we can address these short term replacement and repairs.

Mr. Welford stated that the purpose of FHS Construction, Renovation and Repair Fund is to cover repairs for the high school only and the estimate cost for the rooftop air conditioning unit is in the range of \$25,000 to \$40,000, and the actually cost will depend if we decide to repair the existing rooftop unit or purchase a new one. He added that the estimate shows that it will be less expensive to replace the rooftop unit with a new ground unit, however if we decide to purchase a ground unit we will then need considered where to put it and how the computer labs may come into play since it is important to keep those rooms cool and air conditioned. Steve asked how much of the building has air condition now. Mr. Welford stated that he knows that at least 1 biology classroom has air conditioning as well as the library, the nurse's office and the Administrative offices. He then asked Kathy if she knew for sure how many window units were currently being used and she stated 14 units. Neil stated that his only concern was taking funds now when we know that we have to replace the roof for a cost of an estimate cost of about \$700,000.

Mr. Welford stated that he would like to work with the Budget Committee in identifying the best place to look for funding these items and that the board has not really had the time to discuss the warranty articles details as of yet. Arthur asked if there was any talk about using some of the Technology Capital Reserve Funds for computer replacements and Kathy stated that they have started to talk about that option. Arthur then questioned why we are we not using some of these funds to do both schools at the same time to see if we could save on the logistic costs. Mr. Bailey explained that most work is done over the summer and it may be hard for a company to do both schools during this timeframe but he would check into it.

**MOTION MADE:** Arthur made motion to take a 5 minute recess at 11:57AM.

**SECOND BY:** Jodi

**DISCUSSION:** None

**VOTE TAKEN:** All in favor – motion passes.

### **Return from Recess**

Brian called meeting back to order at 12:09PM and the presentation continued.

#### ***Slide 15 – Districtwide Budget:***

- *Budget increased by \$3,187.40*
- *Proposed New Community Education Program funding at \$15,000*
- *School Resource Officer Account has been reduced by \$24,875 due to Federal Grant*
- *\$5,400 has been provided for establishing New Teacher Mentors at each of the schools*

Mr. Welford stated that the overall District budget increased by \$3,187.40 which includes \$5,400 being provided for establishing a mentor at each school that will work with newly hired teachers. Ms. Lafreniere stated that as a Title 1 school, we are now required to have a new teacher mentor plan in place and this request will help us meet that requirement. She added that these mentors will also help with reviewing teacher improvement plans and assisting these teachers with areas of improvement. Mr. Welford stated that the plan was to have 3 mentors at each building which reflects 9 stipends. Steve asked if we were already doing some type of mentoring now, and Ms. Lafreniere stated yes, but this would be more of a uniform program that would meet the Title 1 requirements which we do not have now. Jerry asked if a Teacher was on an improvement plan, would that affect the steps in the contract and their pay. Mr. Welford answered that it could and he added that the idea was to have a purpose for Teachers to improve on skills and not to punish them. Gail asked how many new teachers were hired this year and Mr. Welford answered 21 and added that VV is always pretty stable, HW saws some turnover, but High School had the most turnover last year. Jodi asked how long new teachers were be mentored and Ms. Lafreniere stated that they are considering a 2 year program. Jodi asked if 9 mentors were really needed and Ms. Lafreniere explained that they took into consideration teaching differences in academic areas (math, reading, science), the unified arts programs, and specialized areas of improvement, for example classroom management as well as the availability and extra responsibility of these mentors.

#### ***Slide 15 – Transportation:***

- *Budget is down by \$24,839*
- *Repair lines are down based on two new buses*
- *Fuel for SPED and Summer School has been accurately allocated*
- *New radios and new base station are proposed for all vehicles due to ongoing issues with current equipment*

Mr. Welford stated that the Transportation budget is down \$24,839 due to the removal of two leased busses we received this year and repair costs were also down. He added that the biggest need is the new radios and base station that are being proposed for all vehicles due to ongoing issues. Ms. King pointed out that we did budget for this equipment last year, however the amount we allocated did not cover the total costs to replace all the equipment and more funds were are needed. Mr. Welford stated that the total cost to replace all the needed equipment is \$15,668.00. Arthur asked what happened to the amount the was in last year's budget and not used and Mr. Welford explained that since they did

not have enough to purchase all the equipment that was needed they choose not to purchase any of it. He added that \$6700 was all that was budgeted last year and that money was returned to the town. Jodi asked with the decrease of enrollment, do we still need the same number of busses. Ms. Telles explained that the decrease could be from walkers and have no impact on the number of students riding the bus. Mr. Welford added that two factors go into the need for buses; the time students are on the bus, and the number of students taking the buses. Gail stated that we talked about hiring a bus service a few years back but don't remember getting the details of the information. Steve stated that he believed that it was looked into at some point and the decision was that it was not cost effective. Jodi stated that we thought the same thing about food services too and now we are contracting that service out. She added that maybe we should just look at it again. Kathy stated that she felt that there is a difference between contracting the bus service compared to contracting the custodian work. Steve asked if the student workers could be used/hired for some of the custodian tasks and Mr. Welford replied that we need to be careful in selecting and outlining the tasks the student workers will do.

***Slide 16 – Budget Comparison:***

- *FY 14 Budget = \$16,311,142*
- *FY 15 Proposed Budget = \$16,287,247*
- *FY Default Budget = \$16,224,556*
- *The proposed FY15 budget is \$23,895 LESS than the FY14 budget*
- *The proposed FY15 Budget is \$62,691 MORE than the default budget*

Brian stated that one thing that did not come up today is the impact on tax payers if Middletown pulls out. Mr. Welford stated that the impact would be a lot and that on Nov 26, 2013 Middletown applied for a Withdrawal from the AREA Agreement. He added that the plan includes moving their 7 – 12 Grade students to the Governor Wentworth School District. The original agreement with GW included a 24 month notice to leave by either party. The GW District informed Middletown that they currently did not have space for their K – 6 graders, and Middletown is now looking at asking the town to fund a new elementary school this March. Mr. Welford stated that if this plan is approved Middleton's 7- 12 grade students will leave Farmington July 2015 and the PreK – 6 grades would leave July 2016. He added that the State must make sure Middletown's plan will provide an adequate education to their students and asking the town to spend 5 to 6 million on building a new school in a short amount of time is a lot to ask for.

Mr. Welford stated that the State now needs to review and concerned the plan as submitted. He pointed out that the main concern with the plan is the timeframe that Middletown is under to get the approval for the new construction by March. Kathy stated that the Farmington School Board has tried to work with the Middleton School Board; however we really don't want to end up with just their PreK – 6 grade students. She asked the public to attend the next meeting to offer their input. Mr. Welford stated that if grades 7 – 12 were to leave, the current year's tuition impact would be \$1,406,548 which covers 126 students. If grades PreK – 6 were to leave in 2016, an additional loss of \$1,521,889 which covers 140 students would be felt for a total loss of \$2, 928,437. Gail asked if we know what the GW tuition rates were and Neil stated that in one of the board minutes it was noted to be about \$12,000 per student. Ann asked what our current tuition rate was for Middletown and Ms. Verville stated it was \$11, 289.36 per high school student, and \$10,870.64 per elementary student. Brian asked if we lost the Middleton students and money how much would we save by not education these students. Mr. Welford explained that we would have to cut teachers and programs. Ann asked if we are looking at others schools to come into our district and Mr. Welford said the Board has begun to engage talks with other schools that have shown an interest in coming to this district. Mr. Welford added that the

Middletown plan has asked to shorten the time frame they have to get notice to leave by one year. Neil stated that from what he could tell, the November 16<sup>th</sup> board meeting minutes stated they want to be able to go when they want and Farmington will just be their holding school as needed. Kathy stated that her concern is that Middleton is actually in the position to drive the withdrawal and that shouldn't be the case – we should be.

Gail asked what was the different between an AREA Agreement and a Tuition Agreement and Mr. Welford stated that an AREA Agreement spells out in detail what the responsibilities are of both schools and includes a rental fee. A Tuition Agreement is a contract that is basic stating that you will pay this much per student until we no longer have room for you. He added that a Tuition Agreement is usually active for 10 years and there is usually a 2 year frame to when the school is notified. He pointed out that with a Tuition Agreement you are the captain of the ship, however it goes both ways and the other school could leave at any time after giving the same notice. Ann asked Mr. Welford if Middletown was still working with him and he stated that they are part of the SAU and he continues to work with them and pointed that he is not taking this personal it is really about educating kids to the best of our ability. Mr. Welford stated that Middletown's biggest objects is to the way the SAU budget is calculated and they feel they are be doubled charged when in reality they have good cause to be concerned. Arthur agreed and said that they are currently being double charged and should not be. Kathy stated that she felt that the Board has done everything they could to make sure talks were done in good faith. Ms. Thivierge stated that it always seems to come down to what Middletown wants.

Gail asked about the Food Service area and where it was in the budget. Ms. Verville stated that it is not in this budget and they are currently looking at pulling the numbers together. She explained that in some months the use is up and in others is it down. The company looks at it by a month-to-month loss/gain and as of now there has not been a month with a loss. Mr. Welford told Gail that the number he thinks she is looking for is on page 52. Brian asked if that \$35,000 cost is the total cost to run the program, does it include the management fee, and if any of the revenue is returned. Mr. Welford explained that the amount covers the total cost and that we no longer see the budget for the food service because it is "their" budget to manage.

Neil asked if we could look at the last page of the presentation again. Mr. Welford reminded the committee that they start the budget process at zero and only added items as needed. Brian stated that on page 53 there is a 2 million dollar different. Ms. Verville explained that a big part of the difference was due to the freezing of the budget and return of funds to the town as well as about a \$97,000 auditing adjustments and items being recorded differently.

Steve asked if we have a Facilities Director yet and Mr. Welford stated no but that they were in the process of reviewing applicants. Steve asked how the Teacher Coach open positions were going at VV and Ms. Lafreniere stated that they have received some applicants and just did not feel these were a fit. She added that they didn't want to just fill the positions and hire anyone so they are still looking.

Brian thanked Mr. Welford for his presentation and explanations to their questions and stated that everyone appreciates the hard work he District and School Board has done in preparing this budget.

### **3. Any Other Business to Come before the Committee**

Brian asked if anyone had any other business to discuss and there was none. Brian stated the next Budget Committee Meeting will be on December 19, 2013 at 6:30PM and their plan is to set the dates for the public hearing.

**4. Adjournment:**

***MOTION MADE:*** At 1:07PM, Gail made motion to adjourn Committee Meeting.

***SECOND BY:*** Ann

***DISCUSSION:*** None

***VOTE TAKEN:*** All in favor – motion passes.

**Budget Committee Meeting adjourned at 1:07PM**

Respectfully submitted by: Debra Cantwell, Recording Secretary