Town of Farmington
Budget Committee Meeting
Wednesday, July 27, 2016

**Committee Members Present:** **Others Present:**
Stephen Henry, Chairman Town Administrator Arthur Capello
Neil Johnson, Selectmen’s Rep. Superintendent Ruth Ellen Vaughn
Stan Freeda, School Board Rep. Business Administrator Laurie
Elizabeth Johnson Verville
Jodi Connolly
Sam Cataldo

**Committee Members Absent:**
Sylvia Arcouette, Vice Chairman, excused
Alex Morin, excused

**1). Call to Order:**Chairman Henry called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**2). Pledge of Allegiance:**All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3). Public Comment**: None.

**4). Review of Minutes**:
June 22, 2016- Page 3, sixth sentence- Amend to read “Mr. Pfeifer said the district pre-purchased heating oil to off-set savings not realized knowing there may be a shortage in the budget.”
Motion: (Johnson, second Connolly) to accept the minutes as amended passed 5-0-1 (Freeda abstained).

**5). Review School Reports:**Ms. Verville began by introducing the new Superintendent Ruth Ellen Vaughn to the committee. She said Ms. Vaughn will begin work at the SAU on August 1.
Ms. Verville gave the members a memo that outlined the school district’s financial status as of June 30, 2016 in lieu of the year-end reports as the Business Office is in the process of closing out the books for the year. She said that although not all of the reconciliations have been completed, the estimated unassigned fund balance to be returned to the town in October is $344,796.83.
Ms. Verville said some of the items accomplished in the district in June as a result of significant savings include repairs and maintenance of all the school kitchens, painting the dining areas of the cafeterias to make them more “dining room friendly”, purchase and installation of security cameras in two of the schools, purchase of cafeteria tables at the high school and six ceiling projectors at the Valley View Community School.
The memo also states all tuition has been billed and all payments were collected for the Middleton School District by June 30, 2016. Ms. Verville said this concludes our relationship with the Middleton School District and will allow the SAU to bring its focus back to Farmington students.
Mr. Johnson asked if there was a big Middleton student departure.
Ms. Verville said there was a net loss of 14 Middleton students this year.
Ms. Verville said fiscal year 2015-16 was an unusual budget year because there were several situations that resulted in an unassigned fund balance that is higher than expected earlier. Some of the savings came from teachers/Transition Specialist attrition ($319,848), changes and vacancies in administration at Henry Wilson Middle School ($68,441) and nurse vacancy at Henry Wilson ($43,822) she said.
Mr. Johnson asked if the interim Superintendent was wrong when he told the committee that the district would return $200,000 to the town.
Ms. Verville said she gave him that number earlier as a conservative estimate of the remaining unassigned funds. She added that many of the changes that resulted in the higher savings were unanticipated.
Mr. Cataldo asked about the SIG federal grant monies for 2016-17.
Ms. Verville said the School Improvement Grant funds are still “trickling down” to the district and was used to purchase new technology which resulted in a savings of $20,242. These funds will “dry up” in ’16-’17 but any remaining funds may be able to be rolled over into next year she said.
Mr. Cataldo asked if the nurse vacancy at the Henry Wilson School has been filled.
Ms. Verville said that it took some time but after some active recruitment the position has filled.
Mr. Henry asked if the amount of money in the reserve fund has gone up or down.
Ms. Verville said the amount of reserve funds required is based on the district’s assessment and they are allowed to keep two and on-half percent of that value in the fund.
Mr. Cataldo asked for more information on the new technology purchases.
Ms. Verville said the district is on a replacement schedule for lap tops and touch screens. She said they are upgrading some models within a reasonable budget that stretches dollars to get the best possible equipment that may not be “state of the art”. She said she will provide the committee with more specific information on the types of technology purchased.
Mr. Henry asked if there were more than the normal amount of staff resignations this year.
Ms. Verville said there more resignations this year than last year.
Mr. Henry asked if an employee were to resign now would payment of unused sick time come out of next year’s budget.
Ms. Verville said it depends on the how long the employee was employed by the district and the terms of their contract.
There were no more questions from the committee. Mr. Henry thanked Ms. Vaughn and Ms. Verville for attending the meeting.

**6). Review Town Reports:**Mr. Capello said he hoped the members have taken a ride by to see the progress at the new Public Safety Building site. He said the construction of the walls has begun and the town has made the first payment to Groen Construction ($84,000) for the site work that has been completed. He added that the project is under budget so far.
**Remittance Report-** There were no questions about this report.
**Actual & Anticipated Revenues**- There were no questions about this report.
**Actual & Budgeted Expenses & Encumbrances**- Mr. Capello said the town is half way through the yearly budget and noted collections for the Fire Dept. (ambulance) are on target. Third party billing has begun and the bills have been sent out he said.
Page 3, Line 01-4191-10-565- Board’s Printing and Ads- Mr. Johnson told the committee that this line is over budget by $1,141 due to the cost for advertising notices. Previously an applicant was charged a flat fee for advertising but that has been changed to charging for the actual cost of the advertising he said.
Mr. Capello added that Selectmen have also approved an increase to plumbing/electrical permit fees and the addition of an after the fact fine for construction begun without a building permit.
Page 4, Line 01-4194-10-430- Repairs/Maint.-Town Hall Bldgs. - Mr. Cataldo asked if repairs to the pillars in the front of the Municipal Building have been completed.
Mr. Capello said that they have and added that the line is overspent (-$7009.36) following a tremendous amount of work around town. He said there are more repairs planned such as adding TREX to the gazebo floor, replacement of the broken windows at the Rec. Dept. and the new pad for the new Coast Bus stop and said he felt confident the costs will be absorbed in the budget.
Coast Bus- Mr. Henry asked if the Coast Bus Company is reducing the number of runs in Farmington.
Mr. Capello said the company announced it is ending the door-to-door service for seniors that was offered two days a week. Community Action will take over providing this service but only for one day a week he said.
Page 6, Line 01-4220-30-740- Forestry Equipment- Mr. Cataldo asked why this line is overspent by $915.67.
Mr. Capello said this is due replacement of hose at a cost of $3,442. He added the dept. may receive some revenue from their assistance with a forest fire if the fire was set intentionally and the individual responsible is found.
Page 7, Line 01-4311-10-630-Highway Building Repair- Ms. Connolly asked about the over expenditure of this line by $2,576.48.
Mr. Capello said the biggest part of the expense was due to the replacement of the dept.’s water heater at a cost of $835. He said the DPW Director was also paid $200 for mileage as he had to use his own vehicle on town business because the town’s car he normally uses was in the shop for repair.
Page 8, Line 01-4312-30-740- Culverts and Catch Basins- Mr. Johnson told the committee that this line is over spent by $759.75 due to the replacement of some collapsed culverts found during the annual cleaning.
Hay Day-Mr. Henry asked how much money has been raised for the Hay Day fireworks. Mr. Johnson said there is $2,850 in the fund so far.
Mr. Capello told the committee that the Board of Selectmen plan to participate in bed race held during Hay Day and encouraged the committee to join in the competition.
Page 13, Line 01-4903-10-721-Bond Account Main Street School-Construction Public Safety Bldg. - Mr. Johnson noted that “street” and “construction” were misspelled in the report. He told the members that the account still shows that 100% of the $2.363 million bond is still in the account because the first draw down on the account ($84,000) occurred after the report was published.
**June Monthly Parks and Recreation Report**- Following a brief review of the monthly report members remarked that “Bingo is big” among seniors in the community as the average number of participants each week is about 50 people. There were no other comments or questions on this report.
Budget Process- Mr. Capello told the committee he will begin the process for the 2017 budget proposal with dept. heads in August and with the Board of Selectmen in Sept. He added that Selectmen have begun negations for the Police and Highway Depts. contract proposals to be included on the 2017 Town Warrant.

**7). Old Business:** None.

**8). New Business:** None.

**9). Any Other Business to Come Before the Committee:** None.

**10). Public Comment:** None.

**11). Next Meeting:** Wednesday, August 24, 2016 at 7 p.m.

**12).Adjournment:**
Motion: (Cataldo, second Connolly) to adjourn the meeting passed unanimously at 7:45 p.m.

Respectively submitted
Kathleen Magoon
Recording Secretary