

APPROVED DECEMBER 29, 2010

Chairman Charles Kimball called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. Budget Committee members present were Charles Kimball, Mike Nygren, Andy Kohlhofer, Laurie Allore, Pat Martel, Selectman Greta St. Germain, Selectman Annmarie Scribner, School Board members Ida Keane, Deborah Genthner, Sharon Girardi, Eric Abney, Chairman Jeff Rowell, Financial Administrator Bonnie Sandstrom, Superintendent Bill Lander, Principal Dawn Lewis, Principal John Safina, Reading Specialist Jennifer Thomas, Secretary Sherri Ficker, Out of District Coordinator Melissa McKeon, Building Superintendent Scott Brown, member of the public Larry Dobson and Recording Secretary Jeanne Nygren.

A letter of resignation from Joyce Booker Janvrin was handed in to Chairman Kimball due to conflict of interest as a Department Head. Kimball wants to have this position reposted for filling the rest of the budget season.

A motion was made by Kohlhofer to accept the minutes of the December 1, 2010 meeting. This was seconded by Nygren. The vote was unanimous 7-0.

Kimball asked if anyone had any more questions in follow up to the answers for the questions that the Budget Committee asked last week.

St. Germain asked about the \$484,000 that was going to be returned when she was at DRA at the State budget meeting and it is not listed on the budget sheet on page 16 as revenue. Sandstrom said this was an old estimate and she was told to only budget what they got this year. Jeane Samms at DRA said they should count on this amount. St. Germain stated this is not reflected on page 16. The legislature may be changing the whole formula in 2012. Lander said he will check with Jeane Samms which figure to use. St. Germain said she will confirm with Jeane Samms as these figures were what was given when the tax rate was set.

Nygren feels to be less confusing we should refer to 2012 when the budget is spoken about. He asked if this figure in revenue is above and beyond the figures are in the budget book. Keane said it has to do with whether we are a receiver or donor town and the Department of Education said we may not receive any additional funds.

Nygren asked where the contract didn't go through in Sanborn, will this figure be in the fund balance? He also asked if in pre K tuition if this is an average what other schools pay. Lewis said it may be different depending upon what they offer in their program. Kohlhofer asked how much more was funded in Kindergarten and Sandstrom said \$75,900.

Kohlhofer asked if they are expecting funds to go down next year. Sandstrom said yes. Kohlhofer asked what was it spent on? Safina said the Title I program the ARRA money was used and a math coach position which is under IDEA. He asked if they felt the pre school tuition at \$140.00/\$175.00 was a good rate. Lander didn't feel this was a competitive amount. Keane asked how this figure is set. Lewis said this was based upon the rate of other area pre schools and she felt this is a good rate to keep the integrated program going. They try to keep the ratio 1/2 and 1/2, identified and non-identified students and they try not to go over 12 students.

Martel asked on the social worker which is a new position and was this contract before. Lewis said it was funded through IDEA and the family coordinator was used in the past but this position was cut. Kohlhofer asked if this position has to be kept once the grant runs out. Lewis

said they will get this money every year and they will decide upon how they use this money. Nygren asked what the total cost was this year for this program. Lewis said it is the cost of the salary plus benefits. Lander said it is about \$47,000 prorated at it wasn't a full year position this year. Martel said it was listed as \$54,500.00 plus benefits. Lewis will email this figure to the Budget Committee. Nygren asked why all grant positions don't include the benefits. Lander said didn't know off hand. Nygren said he feels that the benefits should not be passed on to the taxpayer. Safina said under the Title I grants benefits are paid for.

Scribner asked on the IDEA money when budgeting last year for this present year what happened to the funding of these positions in the budget. Lewis said she has not spent some of this money yet. The 09-10 budgets didn't have the social worker position funded in it and then in 10-11 with grant money they looked at the needs and wanted to put the social worker back into the budget.

Kohlhofer said that in the teacher's contract being negotiated he would not support any contract with the Evergreen clause. Lander said even if it is not in the contract they will still get the step. Kohlhofer recommended that this never be put into the contract. Lander understands that is what the law is and they would have to negotiate to remove this.

Nygren (page 17) in 2010 the budget was \$5,200,000.00 and now this budget is \$680,000.00 more for general education and he asked why? Lander figured this was due to a tuition rate increase. Nygren said they haven't passed a contract at Sanborn for two years and yet every year there has been a \$100,000 to \$150,000 a year increase. What are we paying for? Lander said there is a formula to calculate the tuition payment and that the contract also includes an additional cost for building and additional cost for special education. There is a \$1200.00 increase per student this year. Lander said they budgeted for the projected increase. Lander said they have the formula and he is in agreement with his thinking but Sanborn is not willing to make any changes. Nygren said there is a standard answer each year and he feels that School Board needs to force them and take them to court as Fremont cannot afford the tuition to continually increase. If their contract is ever ratified this could mean a million dollar increase for Fremont. Lander agrees that this is not fair. Kohlhofer asked for Lander to take a look at this again to see if there are grounds for a law suit. Keane feels there may be a possibility to renegotiate. Keane questioned the \$1200.00 increase per student rate as she doesn't come up with this figure.

Kohlhofer commented that 20% of the students at Ellis School are special education. St. Germain stated that the total number of students is down 22 from last year and went through the class sizes. Nygren asked between 2010 and 2011 how many new teachers they have hired. Lewis said two, a first grade and second grade teachers. Nygren said they went up \$185,000.00 just in salary. Lewis said there are teachers on leave of absence coming back at a higher salary. Sandstrom said also that some of this is in step increases. Keane said this is steps plus the \$1000.00. Lander said when these teachers come back from leave their salary is higher than the one that replaced them when they were out.

Nygren asked what are you basing the health increase at? Lander stated that 17.7% is the average increase. Kimball asked how many teachers are in the J1 plan. Sandstrom said there are only two staff members. St. Germain asked on 1st and 2nd grade new hired teachers and asked if she is not bringing back one teacher. Lander said they are all coming back but just being moved around due to enrollments and they are being shifted or moving with their class.

Allore asked how many paraprofessionals are there in the classroom. Lewis said it all depends if there are children that have special needs in these classrooms. Allore asked how many IEP students are there and who does the IEP testing. Lewis said yes there are. Lewis said a parent, classroom teacher, special education teacher of that grade, disability speech language, physical therapy if needed are present to determine if testing needs to be done. The testing is then done and then there is a determination whether the child needs an IEP. There are then goals set for this IEP and what placement for services is necessary.

Kohlhofer asked regarding the inclusion issue. Lewis said if there was a room they might have an inclusive model and they could use that room but there isn't. Allore asked on all the paraprofessionals listed are they all for the special needs students. Lewis answered yes. Allore said there are 19 full time paraprofessionals in the school. Keane said there are 20 as one is grant funded for next year. Martel asked if the paraprofessionals receive benefits. Lander answered no.

Scribner asked on page 4 why the numbers and teachers don't match from the prior year. Lander said this is due to the problematic students in one grade. St. Germain questioned the number of classes and students and there seems to be a decrease of students in classes causing an increase in teachers. Lewis said this is due to the classroom sizes.

Kohlhofer asked if the contract doesn't get passed are we responsible for contracted staff benefits. Lander said anything contracted last year is grandfathered this year. Nygren said that when negotiating contracts you usually start with a new contract as the existing contract has expired and not everything needs to stay into the new negotiated contract.

Martel asked on health insurance premiums are they working with the insurance companies to keep the rates down. Lander said these are the rates their provider has given them. Sandstrom said they were given good rates comparing to other districts that got up to 30 percent increase.

Kohlhofer asked if texts books replaced every year. Safina they only replace those lost or damaged.

Allore asked how the testing scores are running and what are the average State testing scores? Safina provided the yearly progress report 82.0 is the target. The scores from October are not back yet. Allore thought that with small class sizes at Ellis that their test scores should be higher. Safina said index target rate we were above in math but lower in reading. This year they were identified as a school needing improvement and that the New Hampshire test scores standards went up. Kohlhofer asked if math scores don't improve over the year would they consider changing the curriculum. Safina said for the most part math is higher and he showed a graph which showed the improvement. Kohlhofer asked what funds were spent on these programs. Safina said with Title I grant money they were able to improve the curriculum program.

Kohlhofer said while looking at page 23 on computer software line there is a projected \$3,000 increase. Safina said this was to update to software and licenses. Nygren asked with all the different programs and testing how much time is actually spent by the teachers evaluating data against actual teaching. Safina said this is done during staff meetings and not during school time. Lander feels this redirects their focus. Nygren asked if there are any new programs coming next year. Lander said there is nothing. Lander said they are looking at reading but

there has been nothing definitely decided. Lander said this is the first year Ellis has improved but the bar gets higher and higher every year. They are not where they want to be and are looking at programs that need improvement to go to the next level. Keane said their main goal is to increase student achievement.

Allore doesn't think adding new teachers are going to solve the testing scores and she stated that she feels the curriculum needs to be changed. Kohlhofer said that an inadequate curriculum in the long term will produce more students that will not need special help. Lander said the State is driving the curriculum right now.

Martel projected 2011 budget in high school tuition is \$2.9 million for 212 students and by adding 5 more students will bring it to \$3.3 million. Lander said this could be the tuition difference. Nygren said this is a \$280,000 increase from what they spent this year and what they are projecting next year.

Sandstrom said 11 aides resigned and their replacements were hired and were under a lower pay scale.

Martel asked how many students are tuition out of the 109 at Ellis. Sandstrom said 5 charter school and 8 at private and 30 at the high school.

Kohlhofer asked on page 31 are they not hiring an ESL position. Lewis said she is under grant funds. Kimball asked how many students in this program and Lewis answered one.

Martel asked the difference in the tuition from one year to the past. Lewis said it runs from 32,000 to 50,000 a year and some students go to 2 or 3 placements a year. Lander said tuition rates are developed by the Department of Education.

Andy asked about the LGC retirement law suit regarding state reimbursement and if it is won there could be money coming from the State and any question if they had any idea and what we would be reimbursed if the suit was won. Lander didn't know the status. Kohlhofer asked if they could find out the estimate. Lander said they could probably calculate an estimate.

Kohlhofer looking on page 33 under athletics program after projected spending this year there could be \$50,000 remaining. Sandstrom said this is hard to encumber the figure. Safina said supply line is still to be used through to the end of the year. Kohlhofer asked why the athletic salaries went up? Safina said last year they didn't have a soft ball team. They are asking for this amount only if all the programs are developed. If not they will not use these funds. Kohlhofer said in the Assembly programs there is a large increase. Safina said this is due to the new bullying law. Kohlhofer asked if we are going to bill the state for these extra services as they are required to pay by law. Kohlhofer said he wouldn't approve this spending.

Kohlhofer asked if we have to have 2 guidance counselors. Lander quoted that for over 500 you have to have 2 counselors and he felt this was a good position. Andy asked if guidance counselor is going to do 75% guidance and 25 something else or do they have to do 100% guidance. Lander said potentially you could depending upon what that something else.

St. Germain asked on guidance counselors possibly using them as an associated principal. Lander said they have two guidance counselors and could you use those associated principals if the school chose to do this. Lander said there has to be someone certified in special education in 506. St. Germain asked as she read the Department of Education classroom size requirements.

Kimball asked on the school nurse have they ever though of contracting this out. Lander said if they do this not only are you paying nurse salary you are also paying agency fees. Lander in the past stated contracting has cost more. Allore asked if they have ever looked into doing the nurse position by contracting.

Kohlhofer asked on psychological evaluation why coverage from private insurance isn't billed through their parents. Lewis said not all have insurance that can cover these services and if the student needs this service then it is provided by the school depending upon the need.

2150-Speech Audio Services-Kohlhofer commented the benefits are extremely high. Martel asked about the difference in the salaries. One is a speech psychologist and one is a speech therapist and the pay scales are different. Kohlhofer asked if there is a list in number of students that use each service.

2160-Physical Therapy/Occupational Therapy/Vision-Kohlhofer asked what they would need to contract out. If any of the out of district students needs occupational therapy Ellis would have to supply it. How many students were served by Occupational Therapist this year in school? Lewis will supply the case load email that she has that has this information. Nygren asked how many Occupational Therapy students do they have at Ellis? Lander answered 20 requiring Physical Therapy, 95 students requiring Speech Therapy and 43 students requiring Occupational Therapy.

2600-Operation of Plant: There was a reduction in force 2 years ago and Custodial Supervisor Brown wanted to get more help with another part time custodian. State regulations have issued him a book on what has to be done on a daily basis.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Kohlhofer. This was seconded by Nygren. The vote was unanimous 7-0.

The next Budget Committee meeting will be held on December 15, 2010 at 7:00 PM. The meeting ended at 10:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Nygren
Recording Secretary