

FREMONT BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING

Fremont Town Hall
295 Main Street
Fremont, NH 03044
December 14, 2011
7 P.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Gene Cordes called the December 14, 2011 meeting to order at 7:01 PM on the main floor of Fremont Town Hall.

Present were: Budget Committee Members Gene Cordes, Greg Fraize (arriving at 7:45 pm), Greta St. Germain, Pat Martel, and Charles Kimball, School Board Representative Sharon Girardi, and Recording Secretary Susan Perry. Members of the Public included: Fremont School District Financial Administrator Bonnie Sandstrom, Ellis School Principal John Safina (arriving at 7:20 pm), Ellis School Principal John Safina, Special Education Coordinator Sarah Krebs, Fremont School Board Vice Chair Andy Kohlhofer.

II. SCHOOL BUDGET REVIEW

Ms. Girardi shared a revised function page where the amount of \$3,300 in line 2600 was an error (it should have read \$300). She distributed the default budget that was voted on last night as well as updated financials. She noted that the default budget difference was only around \$1,000.

There was a little increase (about 19%) in Federal/State (school) grants.

There was review of increases in guidance (a person had gone on leave, was replaced by someone at less salary, then came back to the District); Computer Technology (following the technology plan that was put in place for items such as rewiring, getting rid of Linux and replacing under-performing equipment); and Special Education Administration (due to reorganization: the dual role position of Special Education Director and Elementary Principal lines was eliminated. All salary used to be in line 2400; now there are two separate lines (Assistant Principal in 2400 and Special Education Coordinator in line 2330; both currently not full-time). The Vice Principal's salary is offset by an Ed Jobs grant this year (not next year). Other personnel changes going into next year should have cost savings.

Transportation cost decreased due to a new contract for Special Education transportation, which has a flat rate now. Regular Education transportation cost decreased as well.

There was an increase in line 2310 in FY12 and a decrease in FY13 because \$93,000 was put in for retirement to hold it but the District will be taking it out for next year.

Mr. Kimball noted that contracted services were up and Ms. Girardi noted that there is a student who needs vision services now.

General education budget increase was due to high school tuition. Mr. Kohlhofer noted that Sanborn School District was requesting a 5% increase in their budget; if it does not pass, there might be a savings to Fremont but that could not be relied upon. Tuition was based on the number

of Fremont students going to Sanborn Regional High school and the guaranteed maximum rate. By around November 1, the number of graduates, students coming in, etc. is usually determined. The tuition rate can adjust through the year and by April usually a decision is made as to what the bill would look like and at the last quarter they do reconciliation based on the number of days children were enrolled.

Ms. St. Germain commended the school on the budget work especially in these tough times. Mr. Cordes agreed that the budget was well received and there was good effort. There was discussion about tracking budget line transfers, noting that the goal was to get to a point where spending was done by budget lines.

Mr. Kimball mentioned that he wanted to review the November 30 financial report before voting on the school budget.

There was discussion about employee health insurance benefits and rates.

There was discussion about feelings on the school budget process including trying to level-fund the school budget and the improvements that came from changes made at Ellis.

There was discussion about student enrollment and how charter schools work (funded by the State but can accept private funding, trust funds, etc. to make up the difference; District is responsible for students with IEPs going there; teachers there do not have to be certified). Some Fremont students who had been on a waiting list to attend Charter School found it was not what they thought it would be and have returned to Ellis.

There was talk about the appreciation for the work done as a team (Administration, staff, School Board) in coming up with the school budget this year.

Mr. Kohlhofer mentioned that the School Board had received a list of capital projects so they had an idea of what needed to be addressed in school.

There was discussion about the default budget and how there was only a \$1,000 difference from the proposed budget. Proposed Warrant Articles included: Collective Bargaining units; putting \$10,000 in the existing expendible trust if there is a fund balance (for emergency use/for building repairs and maintenance); and Foreign Language Teacher.

There would be a meeting on December 21 to go over where they were with Collective Bargaining, the operating budget, Warrant Articles, etc.

III. OTHER BUDGETS

CAPITAL OUTLAY

The Committee members reviewed the Capital Outlay line. They needed clarification on the Bond Proceeds (lease vs. bond in text of Warrant Article).

Patricia Martel moved for the Budget Committee to recommend a Warrant Article (#12) for \$49,550 to be raised and appropriated to continue the Public Health Mosquito Control Program. Sharon Girardi seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:0.

Sharon Girardi moved for the Budget Committee to recommend that \$10,000 be raised and appropriated and placed in a Town Expendable Trust Fund to fund the 250th Celebration of Fremont to be held in the year 2014. Patricia Martel seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:0.

Patricia Martel moved for the Budget Committee to go with the Board of Selectmen in not recommending \$600 to be raised and appropriated to fund an increase in the Treasurer's Annual Stipend as requested in Warrant Article 13. Sharon Girardi seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 aye: 1 nay (G. Fraize).

Patricia Martel moved for the Budget Committee to not recommend the \$50,000 request for highway equipment (Warrant Article 9). There was no second so motion failed.

Sharon Girardi moved for the Budget Committee to recommend \$50,000 be raised and appropriated and placed in the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund for highway equipment as requested in Warrant Article 9. Charles Kimball seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 aye: 1 nay (P. Martel).

Charles Kimball moved that the Budget Committee recommend \$50,000 to be raised and appropriated and placed in the Fire Truck Capital Reserve Fund for a fire truck as requested in Warrant Article 8. Sharon Girardi seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 aye: 1 nay (P. Martel).

Patricia Martel moved that the Budget Committee recommend \$15,000 be raised and appropriated and placed in the Property Reassessment Capital Reserve Fund as requested in Warrant Article 7. Sharon Girardi seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:0.

The Committee reviewed items of the Police Department budget including the proposed fourth position, which the Board of Selectmen did not approve. Ms. St. Germain felt that the Police Department budget was fair and noted there were changes in staff and that the matrix makes the Department more competitive with other towns.

Patricia Martel moved for the Budget Committee to recommend the Board of Selectmen's recommendation of \$406,690 for the Police Department budget. Sharon Girardi seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:0.

Items to clarify next time included questions about Warrant Articles 2, 4, 5, 6, 10 and 11 that needed clarification. They also needed clarity on whether they needed to vote on Police Department revenue.

IV. NEXT SCHEDULED MEETINGS: DECEMBER 21, 2011 and January 4, 2012.

V. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:26 PM, Sharon Girardi made a motion to adjourn. Patricia Martel seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Perry,
Recording Secretary