

Official

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING

Town Hall

MINUTES

35 Main Street

Thursday, December 16, 2010

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Miville called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Chair, M. Miville, N. Comai, K. Hughes, J. Hyde, T. Lizotte, JR Ouellette, D. Pearl, D. Sorel, and D. Argo, School Board Rep., and V. Lembo, Town Council Rep.

D. Sorel arrived late

T. Keach, excused

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 4, 2010 – Tabled

December 9, 2010 - Tabled

PUBLIC INPUT

None

BUSINESS

Hooksett School District – Dr. Littlefield

In assembling the budget in the past, we were very lean. This is the third year in a row that a budget was submitted below default. I don't want the school punished for being low three years ago. The result of adding the Language Arts is half of a new position. Hooksett students do perform satisfactory but that isn't good enough. Memorial and Cawley both failed to meet AYP, which is the target and admittedly it becomes more and more difficult to narrow the gap. Not meeting AYP is embarrassing and unacceptable. Reading "Dick and Jane" is no longer appropriate teaching. The reading systems are complex and teachers are stretched and need assistance. They need coaching. Another source of frustration is the State and Federal Government changing the rules. Recently the standards were changed. The Governor agreed that all districts in NH would adopt the COMMON CORE. We have to take everything done and back up and change everything we have done. We also have the model of the Math Coordinator. We had the same debate when we presented the Math Coordinator. I believe when we came in two years later and presented the data we have available, that it made a difference. If we can put this Language Arts program in place, we will come back and report in two years.

T. Lizotte asked if we could push this off one year because of the economy. The forecast in the industry is that sales won't improve until April and may get worst. Can you possibly restructure to help teachers and bridge the gap for one year without this position?

P. Littlefield: The frustration is that my kids needs don't go away. If you are in first grade, I can't say the economy is tough and can you wait a year to improve your skills. I work for the School Board and I can't agree to anything without their approval. Can we put it off for a year? We can't put the service off for a year. I will say, rather than not fund the position, put at least 1 dollar to recognize the position so that I can find a grant or some way to fund the position. It would but the expense off for a year but it doesn't put the service to kids off for a year and allows us to find other ways to fund the position.

D. Pearl: Thank you for coming here and advocating for the position. My concern is enrollment isn't increasing and my concern is we are increasing staff regularly and although we have to get to no child left behind, since it is an unattainable goal, I don't know how much the tax payer can pay to fund this. I don't fault you for doing this and you are doing your job, our job is how much can we ask the taxpayers to pay to get there. This isn't a one-time cost. It is a recurring cost of a new position. This comes down to cost for me.

V. Lembo: What school would this coordinator work in?

P. Littlefield: All three. The Math Coordinator concentrated on Memorial in the first year because it was a school in need of improvement. Now she is concentrating on Cawley. This would be the same. Memorial and Cawley are both schools in need of improvement for reading and I assume the person would concentrate on those two schools but they would be involved in all three.

V. Lembo: Are all three behind in no school left behind?

P. Littlefield: All three are above State Standards but are below Federal Standards because it is a moving target. We have initiated a multi-year analysis of the school district and every part of the school district. One key component is allocation of resources. This is a multi-year approach. I echo David's concerns. Things are imposed upon us and we have to react with personnel. We have never stopped in our tracks and looked at what kids need to do, how do we do that, how do we assess that and what do we need to accomplish that. We are trying to do something new and different and start with a clean slate.

D. Pearl: One thing that would help me support this position is if it were involved in developing curriculum. We should look at changing curriculum rather than looking at new curriculum over and over. There are a couple of positions that I think are less valuable than this one. I agree with your approach of looking at everything and that would be worthwhile.

P. Littlefield: Any school system in the US that receives Federal Funds must adopt a scientifically based reading curriculum. I deal with this everyday. I came to NH for live free or die. I agree, we've had the same discussion. I feel we could generate our own curriculum but we could jeopardize our funding if we didn't have a scientifically based curriculum.

D. Pearl: I think that when we have one, we can keep it longer buy augmenting it ourselves rather than buying a whole new curriculum. It seems we always need new curriculum.

J. Hyde: Thank you for the compromise and that you are looking at the best organization for human and physical resources. In my company, we have reorganized four times and reduced redundancy. I think looking at organization and structure and asking people to do more with less and more period, like we do every day in the industry, and I do at work every day, it is tough to support another person because I'm afraid in another year, we won't be able to pay the people we have.

P. Littlefield: I understand, but I don't think when we are talking about our kid's future, if we can't afford not to do that. When you make the private vs. public comparison, I've been on both sides. When things bounce back in the private sector, people are rewarded for the sacrifices and in the public sector, that isn't the case. When you take a bite out you never get it back. The need doesn't go away and at some point in the future....remember for 3 years in a row, I came in below default, and I can no longer cut. Language Arts affects everything that a youngster learns.

V. Lembo: How close are we at losing Federal Funds?

P. Littlefield: They won't do that.

K. Hughes: Having excellent school systems is an attraction for businesses and people will want to live here.

P. Littlefield: The single most important component for protecting home values is your school system.

M. Miville: Are you saying if we leave \$1 in the line, you would only fund this through grants.

P. Littlefield: I must confer with my Board on all decisions. If in good conscience you said I understand the need and can't do it this year; let's agree on the need and leave the position in.

M. Miville: Is there another coordinator coming for Science or Social Studies next year?

P. Littlefield: No

BUDGET

T. Lizotte: Has the Board settled on an agreement for the DPW?

V. Lembo: There is an agreement signed for \$82,651.

D. Sorel: I was told by C. Soucie that was just labor.

D. Argo: We gave the Superintendent the authority to talk about the proposal and if it is settled, it is settled for 82,651.

D. Sorel: I was told tonight from Dale that it only covered labor and not any materials.

D. Argo: I understood that we were only sifting the cost of labor and not material.

N. Comai: You must then reduce the budget \$100,000 for that adjustment.

T. Lizotte: Is this budget now 1% below last year's budget?

D. Pearl: I'm not supporting picking one line and decreasing a lot of money like the insurance line. I will be voting in the negative if someone presents a blanket reduction. I will cut only when I agree on a specific cut.

JR Ouellette: I interpret that Dr. Littlefield will fund the position if we leave a dollar in because we, as a Budget Committee, are saying we agree with the need for the position but can't afford the funding and if we zero the line, he will not fund the position. That is my interpretation of his statement.

Dr. Littlefield is looking into the disparity in five million dollars in Special Education and \$800,000 received in Medicaid and Catastrophic Aid.

V. Lembo stated that the Special Ed budget in the Annual Report didn't match the budget submitted. The difference was 2 million dollars.

J. Hyde: My understanding is we are not a legislative body, we deal with the numbers. What we do with the numbers sends a message. Dr. Littlefield is a smart guy and when you give him a way to above and beyond he will find a way to do that. He is innovative when forced to do things differently. I'm not saying it isn't an important position.

D. Pearl: It is my understanding that the director is \$108,800. My intension is to remove the line and let the school district find funding.

D. Pearl motioned to reduce the Curriculum Director line by \$108,800 1100-5111-0-00-89. Seconded by J. Hyde.

D. Pearl: I don't think it is the value of the position but the fact that we cannot afford it. I don't think this is the time to be spending money for additional personnel. We don't want to be looking at layoffs next year.

Roll Call Vote

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>V. Lembo</i> | <i>Abstained</i> |
| <i>D. Argo</i> | <i>No</i> |
| <i>J. Hyde</i> | <i>Yes</i> |
| <i>K. Hughes</i> | <i>No</i> |
| <i>David Pearl</i> | <i>Yes</i> |
| <i>M. Miville</i> | <i>Yes</i> |
| <i>JR</i> | <i>Yes</i> |
| <i>Todd</i> | <i>Yes</i> |
| <i>Nancy</i> | <i>No</i> |
| <i>Doris</i> | <i>Yes</i> |
| <i>T. Keach</i> | <i>Absent</i> |

6:3
Vote carries

N. Comai motioned to reduce 31-2600-5424-000 \$101,999. T. Lizotte seconded.

Roll call voted 8:1. V. Lembo abstained Motion carries

D. Argo stated he voted against the motion because he is unaware of any agreement with the board.

JR Ouellette: To meet the 1% reduction, we need to cut \$106,712.

M. Miville distributed a list of potential reductions in the budget, including language arts 172,300 for training. If you remove the coordinator \$63,583 for all three schools. I think one reduction can be in training.

N. Comai asked if training is part of the contract.

D. Argo: Yes.

T. Lizotte stated that the ALPS program for information access were budget for \$1600 and the actual was \$136.

T. Lizotte motioned to reduce to \$800.00 from (page 11) 3112705643104. Seconded by J. Hyde.

Vote:

6:3 1 V. Lembo abstained Motion carries

\$121,428.98 has been reduced so far.

J. Hyde motioned to reduce line 1200-5644-1-03-61 which is Sped Periodicals to reduce to 0. Seconded by D. Pearl. Also line 04 and 05 for a total \$882.

J. Hyde stated that there are more inexpensive ways to read up on a professions including libraries and online.

Vote:

6:3 1 V. Lembo abstained Motion carries

New total \$122,310.98

K. Hughes motioned to recommend the school budget for \$25,813,015.02. Seconded by JR. Ouellette

Vote

| | |
|--------------|-----|
| J. Hyde | Yes |
| K. Hughes | Yes |
| D. Pearl | No |
| M. Miville | No |
| JR Ouellette | Yes |
| T. Lizotte | No |
| N. Comai | Yes |
| D. Sorel | No |
| V. Lembo | No |
| D. Argo | No |

4:6 Motion fails

N. Comai motioned to cut \$1680.80 from 2000-5733-2-05-09 media additional furniture at Cawley. Seconded by T. Lizotte

Vote 6:3 V. Lembo abstained Motion carries

T. Lizotte motioned to reduce District Wide Conferences 50% to \$1275. Seconded by J. Hyde. Line 31-1100-5242-0-0000

Vote

| | |
|--------------|-----|
| D. Argo | No |
| J. Hyde | Yes |
| K. Hughes | No |
| D. Pearl | Yes |
| M. Miville | Yes |
| JR Ouellette | No |
| T. Lizotte | Yes |
| N. Comai | No |
| Doris | Yes |

Vote

5:4:1 V. Lembo abstained Motion carries

N. Comai motioned to reduce line 1100-5810-1-03-00 \$45.00 for shipping fee. Seconded by T. Lizotte.

Vote 7:2:1 V. Lembo abstained Motion carries

D. Pearl motioned to reduce line 2190-54-50-2-05-32 rental for recognition evening to \$1. (reduction \$2999). Seconded by T. Lizotte.

If we purchased the chairs, we wouldn't need to rent every year and there was a purchase at Memorial which could be used as well.

Vote

5:4:1 V. Lembo abstained. Motion carried

T. Lizotte motioned to reduce line 3123105810-0-00-28 SB dues and fees from \$12000. to \$1500. (reduce \$10500) Seconded by D. Pearl.

Vote 4:5:1 V. Lembo abstained. motion fails

D. Pearl motioned to reduce workshop reimbursements by \$10,000 from \$20,900 for a new total of \$10,900. Seconded by T. Lizotte .

Vote 6:3:1 V. Lembo abstained Motion carries

N. Comai motioned to recommend the budget as \$25,809,193.30 Seconded by K. Hughes.

T. Lizotte stated there are still a number of items like the occupational items and trends that could be reduced. Occupational therapist is budgeted higher than actual. There is an opportunity for a cut there.

Vote

D. Argo No

J. Hyde No

K. Hughes Yes

D. Pearl No

M. Miville No

JR Ouellette Yes

T. Lizotte No

N. Comai Yes

D. Sorel No

V. Lembo No

3:7 Motion fails

D. Pearl motioned to reduce Underhill AV equipment lines 2200-573510310 and 0410 and 0510 \$2000 each for a total reduction of \$6000.

Seconded by J. Hyde

D. Argo stated that he felt these cuts are unfair based on the fact that he cannot answer the specific questions. The workshop was held on December 4th to answer these particular questions. I would prefer you just cut a particular number rather than random cuts like this.

M. Miville: You are assuming these are random. I wrote numbers down based on the December 4th discussion.

D. Argo: You are making cuts based on what was spent last year and that is wrong.

D. Pearl: I am not randomly picking numbers. I am purposely looking where cuts can be made.

V. Lembo: I think the school already cut those items.

D. Pearl withdrew his motion. J. Hyde withdrew his second.

V. Lembo motioned to reduce the budget to \$ 25,707,985.

Failed without a second

**J. Hyde motioned to reduce line 2410-5644-103-07 office periodicals to 0. (\$49) Seconded by T. Lizotte
Vote 5:4:1 V. Lembo abstained Motion carried.**

**J. Hyde motioned to reduce line 2410-5644-104-07 office periodicals at Memorial to 0 (\$223) Seconded by D. Pearl.
Vote 5:4:1 V. Lembo abstained Motion carried**

**J. Hyde motioned to reduce line 2220-5644-1-3-9 media services –4 and –5 all three schools to 0. (\$1943 reduction for all three schools) Seconded by T. Lizotte
Vote 5:4:1 V. Lembo abstained.**

**D. Argo motioned to adjourn. Seconded V. Lembo
Vote 5:5 Motion failed.**

V. Lembo motioned to reduce line 2600- 5155-1-03-32 (maintenance salaries Underhill, Memorial, and Cawley) \$33,000 from each school for a total of 99,000. Seconded by J. Hyde.

Vote:

| | |
|---------------------|------------|
| V. Lembo | Yes |
| D. Argo | No |
| J. Hyde | Yes |
| K. Hughes | No |
| D. Pearl | Yes |
| M. Miville | Yes |
| JR Ouellette | No |
| T. Lizotte | No |
| N. Comai | No |
| D. Sorel | Yes |

Vote 5:5 Motion fails

T. Lizotte 3126-00-5432-1-03-32 repairs building Underhill \$5000 reduction. Seconded by D. Pearl

Vote:

3:6:1 motion failed

N. Comai motioned to recommend the budget in the amount of \$25,806,977.33. Seconded by JR Ouellette

Vote

| | |
|---------------------|------------|
| D. Argo | No |
| J. Hyde | Yes |
| K. Hughes | No |
| D. Pearl | No |
| M. Miville | Yes |
| JR Ouellette | Yes |
| T. Lizotte | Yes |
| N. Comai | Yes |
| D. Sorel | Yes |
| V. Lembo | No |

6:4 motion carries

T. Lizotte motioned to adjourn. Seconded by JR Ouellette.

Vote unanimously in favor

Respectfully submitted,

***Lee Ann Moynihan
Budget Committee Secretary***