

Minutes
Nottingham Budget Committee Meeting
December 20, 2012

Members Present: Chair Donna Danis, Chet Batchelder, Selectman Mark Carpenter, School Rep. Peter Perron, Korey Ferland, Jason Marcotte, Michael Koester, Barbara Scannell, Barbara Walder, and Jeff Wheeler

Members Absent: Gene Reed

Other in Attendance: Jennifer Biron, James O'Brien, Mary Bonser and Heidi Seaverns.

Chair Donna Danis called the meeting to order at 7:03PM. Introductions were made.

Outstanding Minutes:

Motion: Motion by Mr. Batchelder, second by Ms. Scannell to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2012 meeting as amended.

Vote: 8-0-2 (Danis, Koester) in favor.

Chair Danis explained that the meeting was being held tonight as an extra meeting to discuss the budget prep process, to review the School Budget, to discuss SB2 and to discuss the School Default budget. The action items review would take place at the next meeting. Since Mr. Reed was absent and he was the catalyst for the budget prep process discussion, Chair Danis suggested that this item be postponed to the next meeting. Members agreed. Mr. Perron told the members that the School Board had met the night before and had gone through the default budget line by line. The final result was a 5% increase. He stated he would email members the budget once the SAU had inputted the changes the School Board had made. Mr. Perron went on to say that the School Board had scheduled another meeting on December 27th to address any Budget Committee concerns that came out of this meeting.

Review of the School Budget: Chair Danis asked how the members wanted to review the budget. Mr. Batchelder suggested a page by page review which would allow members to discuss any specific items they had questions/comments about. Mr. Perron informed the members that the School Board had made changes in 3 of the tuition lines as follows: 01-1100-5561-000 Tuition Dover & Other public schools changed from \$ 1,271,878 down to 1,147, 710 (decrease of \$124,168); 01-1100-5563-000 Tuition-Coe Brown change from \$1,589,819 to \$ 1,628,902 (increase of \$39,083) and 01-1200-5563-061 Special Ed Tuition-Coe Brown change from \$43,926 to \$ 39,900 (decrease of \$4026). These totals represent changes in tuition rates as well as a shift in numbers of students at each school. The overall change in the budget with these changes is an \$89,111 decrease in the budget (approximate 1% decrease).

Page 1: The focus of this discussion was the addition of the Math Specialist. Mr. Batchelder stated he would reserve his opinion on adding staff at this point. He went on to say that to keep adding staff may not be the best option given the economy. Mr. Perron stated that the School Board (SB) was in favor of adding this position and that adding this position to the staff would benefit the broader population of students and math improvement is a critical need. He stated that the SB is exploring ways to offset the cost of this position. Mr. Wheeler, Mr. Ferland & Mr. Marcotte were all in favor of adding the position. Mr. Wheeler stated he trusted the administration's decision to request the position. Mr. Carpenter stated he had a lack of confidence in the administration based on past performance of increased spending without results. Chair Danis & Mr. Koester asked if the SB had considered using a contracted employee. Ms. Scannell hopes that the SB would look at what & how it is being delivered before just adding staff. Ms. Walder also asked if there was going to be a new program might there be an added benefit to using contracted services for the short term. Mr.

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Ferland asked if the audience members could participate in the discussion. Chair Danis said that they would be allowed to speak if they wanted to.

Page 2: The focus of the discussion on this page of the budget were the two tuition lines-Dover & Coe Brown. Overall, members expressed their frustration over the continued under spending of these lines. They were in agreement that there should be a way to accurately budget these lines given student numbers & rates of tuition. Mr. Koester asked that the SB provide projected enrollment figures and tuition costs for June 2013 to the Committee. This will enable the Committee to look at the budget and make any adjustments. Mr. Batchelder asked what the tuition rates for Dover & Coe Brown (CBNA) will be for the 2013-2014 school year. Mr. Perron responded that CBNA tuition is \$13,462/pupil. He said he would look through his paperwork to get the Dover rate. Mr. Batchelder stated it was not necessary for this meeting.

Page 3: It was pointed out there were decreases in several supply lines on this page from the first budget presented.

Page 4: Mr. Carpenter pointed out that since the number of paraprofessionals has increased, performance has decreased. Mr. Ferland asked about consumables and if there were going to be provided or the staff was going to have to copy to have enough materials for the classes. Mr. Perron stated that the SB would fund whatever program they decide to implement. Mr. Perron also stated that the SB is considering whether to have the Math Teacher position and the books as separate warrant articles in the event that the budget does not pass.

Page 5: Mr. Perron informed the members that the SB had combined the Teacher of the Deaf with the Speech Pathologist position. Members asked why there was still \$24,000 in the line. Mr. Perron believes that is an oversight and will confirm with business administrator. Ms. Walder asked about the Special Education Tuition line. Mr. Perron reiterated that this is a volatile line and given the breakdown provided, this is what should be budgeted.

Page 6: Mr. Carpenter reminded the members that the CBA contains a percentage increase for the stipends which are reflected in the proposed budget.

Page 7: No comments.

Page 8: Mr. Batchelder questioned the retirement amounts. He stated that the master agreement has a cap for the payouts. This item needs to be looked into.

Page 9: Mr. Perron pointed out that the English as a Second Language Contracted services line had been reduced to \$1.

Page 10: The Speech Pathologist line should reflect the inclusion of the Teacher for the Deaf.

Page 11: Mr. Batchelder asked what had been spent in the Course Tuition Reimbursement line. Mr. Perron stated that the SB had reduced the amount for this line for the proposed budget. This number reflects a small percentage of the liability in the contractual obligation.

Page 12: Chair Danis asked about the SmartBoards. Mr. Perron stated their purchase is a separate warrant article. Mr. Carpenter asked about the portable aspect of these items. Mr. Perron stated that has not been addressed as yet.

Page 13: Mr. Marcotte asked if there had been any discussion about SB salaries. Mr. Perron said that he was not willing to serve on the SB at a cost to him. He went on to explain that there are multiple meetings each week.

Page 14: There was a question why the increase in Secretary line was at 3.95% while the other salary lines had an increase of 2%. Mr. Perron will ask why the difference. The question was asked if the Principal & Assistant Principal have contracts. Mr. Perron stated they do. The request was made for copies of them for Committee to review.

Page 15: no comments

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Page 16: no comments

Page 17: Mr. Perron reported to the members that the SB has started a discussion about using some of the funds in the Special Education Capital Reserve Fund (CRF). The funds in the Building Repair CRF may be used for the overhangs over the gym doors but cannot be used for kitchen equipment repair. The question was asked why the amount for line 5432-032 was greater than the sum of special projects listed. Mr. Perron stated that line included other items as well as the special projects listed. He also stated that the SB is discussing about whether or not to refinish the gym floor yearly.

Page 18: Mr. Perron told the members that the Electricity line has been reduced by \$3000 and the Propane line has been reduced by \$10,000. Mr. Carpenter reminded the members that the Town & the School are looking into entering into an agreement with a power supply broker with all Towns & Schools in SAU#44.

Page 19: This page deals with the transportation portion of the budget. There were several members that addressed their concerns about the special education transportation line as well as the amount of funds not used in this budget. Mr. Perron spoke about the transportation sub committee, which the SB created as a result of the dissatisfaction with the SAU's management of the transportation. The special education portion of the transportation budget was not included in the sub committee's review. It was stated that the special-education transportation has a lot of 1 on 1 cost. Members would like to see a breakdown of the special education line indicating costs for A, B, C etc. It was asked what ages are guaranteed transportation. Transportation must be provided to elementary students and all special education students.

Page 20: There was a discussion about the costs & revenues of the lunch program. It is unknown whether the revenue totally offsets the cost of the program. The question was asked if there was a dietician on staff, Mr. Perron did not know.

Mr. Perron then addressed the areas that the SB is considering cut backs in to offset the cost of the math specialist. They are as follows:

The unified arts program is currently on a 5 day rotation. The proposal is to go to a 6 day rotation and remove kindergarten from the rotation. Several members stated they felt it was very important for the younger children to have exposure to these subjects.

Mr. Perron then talked about the Summer institute. He stated it was not a significant amount of money but it did not benefit a large percentage of the children.

Reducing the number of homerooms for Grade 6 or 8 would reduce a salary & free up a classroom while increasing class size for a grade that has a high number of special ed students.

Reducing or removing the Special Education Coordinator. Ms. Biron stated that if this position was removed/reduced there would be an increase of work for the remaining staff.

There was a brief discussion about the increase in the number of students requiring special education services.

Mr. Batchelder asked about the funding of the teacher & paraprofessional contracts. After a brief discussion, Mr. Perron referenced the articles that funded these that were in the 2011 School Warrant and were approved by the voters.

The discussion turned back to the tuition numbers & the committee's frustration with the continued overages in these lines. In regard to the cost of tuition, Mr. Perron told the members that Barrington had put out an RFP for high schools as their contract with Dover was coming up for renewal. They received responses from Dover, Somersworth, Oyster River & Coe Brown. He stated Nottingham is in the third year of a five year contract and will probably do the same thing to see what is out there.

SB2 Discussion:

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Mr. Batchelder started the discussion. He stated that with the SB2 form of government, there is always an increase from year to year. There are contractual obligations that cannot be changed. For example, Mr. Batchelder stated that the Town's budget is at zero increase and the default budget for the School is a 5% increase. He feels that SB2 prevents the Budget Committee from proper oversight of the budget. He would like the Committee to advocate going back to School District Meeting form of government. Chair Danis stated she was hesitant to go forward this year. She does not want it to be rushed. Mr. Koester stated that it takes a 3/5 majority to overturn SB2. Mr. Perron stated he believes it does not matter which type of system you have. The SB wants to move forward & make tough decisions that will provide results. Mr. Batchelder asked Mr. Koester how the work on the default budget. Mr. Koester stated he was at a standstill, partially because he was waiting for information. He went on to explain that in year's past, the Committee never had the opportunity to review the default budget prior to the public hearing. So the Committee took it on themselves to develop a default budget to compare to what they received at the meeting. He stated the need for a Budget Committee default budget has been diluted by the current SB working on the default budget sooner. It was suggested that at the next meeting, the Committee take a half hour to review the default budget and indicate what lines they could impact and which ones they cannot (SB2). At that time, the Committee can decide if they wish to pursue the revocation of SB2 this year. Mr. Ferland asked Mr. Perron how he would be presenting this information to the SB since there was no consensus for many items discussed. Mr. Perron stated he would bring that information back to the Board and they would make their decisions after hearing it.

Mr. Carpenter said he had a recent email exchange with someone regarding their hard earned money. He stated that he does not like spending other people's hard earned money, and as a result expects to get the best possible return.

Action Items: These are from the December 13 meeting

1. Michelle Carvalho: Age of current text books.
2. Frank Markiewicz: Amount and reasons for increase in salary; percentages, COLA for certified teachers and Para-professionals. Provide a copy of collective bargaining agreement.
3. Frank Markiewicz: Distribution of School Board member payments.
4. Michelle Carvalho: breakdown of how many staff members are reflected in each salary line.
5. Frank Markiewicz: Para professional salary information

Additional Action Items: (from this meeting)

1. Peter Perron: email default budget to members.
2. Peter Perron: provide estimate of tuition numbers for both Dover High School & Coe Brown for end of year (June).
3. Peter Perron: tuition rate for Dover High School for 2013-2014.
4. Peter Perron: explanation why Secretary Salary line shows 3.95% increase.
5. Peter Perron: Copies of Principal & Vice Principal's contracts.
6. Peter Perron: Amounts of retirement payouts as per master agreement.

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Having no further business,

9:50 PM **Motion:** by Mr. Marcotte, second by Mr. Ferland

Vote: 10-0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heidi Seaverns

Approved as amended
01/03/2013