

SUNAPEE BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
SUNAPEE SCHOOL BOARD  
BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
JOINT MEETING  
6:00PM Town Office Meeting Room  
Monday, June 8, 2015

Present:

Selectmen: Josh Trow, Chairman, Suzanne Gottling Vice Chairman, John Augustine, Fred Gallup and Donna Nashawaty, Town Manager

School Board: Shaun Carroll, Chairman, Paul Skarin and Russ Holden

Budget Advisory Committee (BAC): Don Bettencourt, Chairman Veronica Hastings and John Brandolini and Spec Bowers.

Also Present: See Sign-in Sheet

Chairman Trow opened the meeting at 6:10PM

The BAC guidelines were given to attendees. Chairman Trow reviewed that the BAC was established to give input to the Selectmen, School Board, Town Manager and department heads during the budget review process. Chairman Trow stated that one of the items that have come up this year is that the BAC would like to be a year round committee and thought it would be in the town's best interest to maintain communication, information sharing and find out what the best options were for the town and school. It has become a question, what is the intention of the committee, and what should it be. Hopefully, that will be figured out tonight.

Selectman Augustine feels that from the residents or taxpayers want this group, so the question is to what degree are they going to operate. Selectman Augustine said what he didn't see in the guidelines was anything that said mission statement or objective of the committee. Chairman Trow stated that he feels the portion that is the mission statement is in the second paragraph, which states that the committee is advisory and needs to complement the Selectmen as a "watch dog" group. Chairman Trow said that really is what the BAC is and their goal is to look over the town and school budgets and come up with ideas. Selectman Augustine asked if the committee is just dotting I's and crossing T's and being a final proof-reader.

Don Bettencourt read the draft mission statement that the BAC committee had worked on to the attendees; "to provide unbiased, independent analysis and recommendations, for both the Sunapee Board of Selectmen, and the Sunapee School Board, on any and all issues in the development, deliberation, and presentation of their respective budgets".

Selectman Gottling said that the major difference she sees from what is currently being done is when the mission statement talks about development, which is ordinarily left to the Town Manager and the Department Heads. But, everyone is certainly involved in the deliberation and presentation. Shaun Carroll said that the year the guidelines were voted

on there was plenty of discussion, so he asked what was the matter with the content that has been working for years.

Shaun Carroll does not understand why it needs to be changed. Chairman Trow replied it wasn't a question of changing, but clarifying the guidelines. Shaun Carroll asked what the rationale behind having to go all year long, it's not intended to go all year long and both Boards are not in the budget season all year long. Donna Nashawaty and Russ Holden both stated that they didn't have the resources to provide the detailed information that the BAC was asking for. Selectman Augustine replied that it's just an overwhelming amount of information to deal with from November 1<sup>st</sup> to December 1<sup>st</sup>. Selectman Augustine continued that it is challenging to get a thick binder and be able to offer thoughtful commentary in one week. Chairman Trow said that in his mind, the counterpoint was the budget does not change much year to year, and how it's formulated in the background really does not change. For instance, the Police have 76 budget lines and they vary by a couple of thousand dollars. The budget lines year to year don't adjust that much. Chairman Trow asked Don Bettencourt what he thought the BAC should be or what people were asking of the BAC. Don Bettencourt replied that he thinks there are talented people willing to work for nothing to help with this complicated process. Chairman Trow said the question is; where you feel the value of the BAC is and what kind of interaction do you want. Don Bettencourt replied to find out if the Boards want their help. A discussion occurred regarding the philosophy differences of the Boards and BAC.

It was decided there would be no changes to the guidelines.

**Meeting adjourned at 7:40**

**Submitted by,**

**Barbara Vaughn**

**Administrative Assistant**

**Approved:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Joshua Trow, Chairman**

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**Suzanne H. Gottling, Vice Chairman**

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**John Augustine**

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**Frederick Gallup**

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**Emma Smith**