

**SPAULDING HIGH SCHOOL
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**
Spaulding High School – Library
December 7, 2015 - 4:30 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

David LaCroix - Chair
Joe Blakely – arrived at 4:44 p.m.
Penny Chamberlin, Director Central Vermont Career Center
John Pandolfo, Superintendent
Lisa Perrault, Business Manager
Brenda Waterhouse, Principal

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Veronica Foadelli-McCormick
Norma Malone
Paul Malone
Dotty Ricks
Carlotta Simonds-Perantoni

GUESTS PRESENT:

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mr. LaCroix, called the Monday, December 7, 2015, Finance Committee meeting to order at 4:35 p.m., which was held at the Spaulding High School Library.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

None.

3. Approval of Minutes – November 19, 2015 Finance Committee Meeting

On a motion by Mr. Pandolfo, seconded by Mrs. Waterhouse, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the November 19, 2015 Finance Committee meeting.

4. FY'17 Budget Adjustments

Ms. Perreault showed a Power Point presentation consisting of the slides she proposes to use for the public presentation. The current budget draft has the Spaulding budget at \$13,029,297, which is an increase of 3.01% (\$380,674). Transportation and Special Education costs have not been removed. The draft budget for CVCC is \$2,933,370, which represents a decrease of .58% (\$17,141). Ms. Perreault advised that General Fund SHS expenditures, less Revenue, divided by the FY17 Equalized Pupil (784.37) calculates to an Education Spending amount of \$10,334,297, which calculates to an Equalized Cost Per-Pupil of \$13,175.28. The maximum amount allowed under Act 46 is \$12,874. The SHS budget will need to be reduced by approximately \$300,000 to avoid exceeding the cap defined under Act 46. It was noted that SHS has seen a substantial decrease in student population, with the greatest reduction appearing in 2015/16 Junior class (a loss of 31 students). Historical information from FY13 through FY16 showed student counts to be consistent. The number of pupils will be researched further to confirm if there truly was a loss of 31 students transitioning from sophomore to junior. It was noted that next year's enrollment is expected to increase, but not enough to match previous levels.

Ms. Perreault recommends that before using the Tax Stabilization Fund, the Board should consider additional cuts to the budget. Mr. McMahon will try to lower the Special Education expenses. Mrs. Waterhouse will try to shave some expenses from the SHS budget, but noted that the existing draft is very lean. It was noted that the CLA will also have an impact on the budget. The budget should be finalized by the end of December. The Power Point presentation will need to be updated to reflect the mission statement and the increase in Equalized Cost Per-Pupil. Mr. Pandolfo cautions that the percentage increase looks a bit high. In response to a query, it was noted that a Special Article would be required to reassign monies from the Capital Improvement fund (roof fund). Tax Stabilization funds may be used without special authorization. The new ballot language, as mandated by Sec.33.16 V.S.A. 563 was briefly discussed and an example was exhibited. It should be noted that the approximate 7% increase in cost per Equalized Pupil is due to lower enrollment. There may be a decrease in the assessment, but that has not been confirmed. Brief discussion was held regarding staffing (a reduction of 2 teachers, and a previously Board approved increase of 1.25 FTE due to new graduation requirements and student needs in Arts).

Additional discussion included how to 'crosswalk' this year's Article, budget development considerations (salary/benefits, enrollment, Act 46, VSTRS Health Assessment, integration of education programs/services, facility upgrades, and the SU assessment, which due to Act 153, will include Transportation and Special Education), contributing factors affecting the Tax Rate, investments, how assessment costs will be determined for each district (Equalized Pupil for Superintendent's Office/Technology/Curriculum, and Proposed Expenses for Special Education and Transportation).

Possible modifications to the Power Point presentation include; documenting the anticipated FY18 increase in pupil count, showing a comparison of SHS equalized pupil costs vs Vermont state average for cost per equalized pupil, and the addition of budget goals. Mr. LaCroix queried regarding the possibility of having all three boards give a joint budget presentation to the Barre City Council. Mr. Blakely recommended holding the public presentation earlier in the year, videotaping the presentation, possibly holding the Barre City and Barre Town forums jointly, and have a joint presentation (SHS/CVCC & Barre Town) with the Barre Town Select Board. Mr. Pandolfo will inquire regarding when the budget booklet is normally made available to the public.

Ms. Chamberlin distributed two documents; 'CVCC – Announced and Allowable Tuition Rates Over 11 Years', and 'Students with no Diploma FTE Counts By School Semester One for Barre Technical Center FY2015-2016'. Ms. Chamberlin provided an overview of the documents, advising that, comparisons encompassing 11 years of data indicate that CVCC tuition rates are solid compared to other technical centers. Additionally, Ms. Chamberlin provided an overview of student FTE counts, documented over 6 years, showing that CVCC counts (which are normally higher in the fall), are very close to the State figures (for a six semester average). It was noted that Ms. Chamberlin does not anticipate any changes to the proposed budget for CVCC.

A concise budget overview will be presented at this evenings SHS Board meeting.

5. Other Business

Mr. LaCroix advised that the owner of Barre Auto has contacted him inquiring as to whether Spaulding High School may be interested in purchasing his building. Mr. LaCroix advised that he believes the rent at Wall Street is high and that it may be beneficial to own this property. Additionally, Mr. LaCroix believes housing the alternative program in a building owned by Spaulding, would allow for improved security. Ms. Perreault advised that purchase of the building would require a bond. The rent at Wall Street is currently paid by grant monies. It may be possible to reassign what the grant budget would look like. It may be possible to utilize grant funding for the purchase. Ms. Perreault cautioned that with Act 46, the new debt may cause confusion.

6. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 22, 2015 at 3:00 p.m.
The version of the budget to be presented will show assessments and reductions.
Mr. LaCroix will send the Agenda and Warning to Deb Gibson.
It was noted that the budget needs to be internally finalized by January 20, 2016

7. Adjournment

On a motion by Ms. Chamberlin, seconded by Mr. Blakely, the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn at 5:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin