

**Inter-Lakes School Board Regular Meeting
BUDGET WORK SESSION
Humiston Building Conference Room, Meredith NH
January 21, 2020**

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hanson called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. RECORD ROLL

Members Present:

Mr. Richard Hanson, Chair
Mr. Howard Cunningham
Mr. Mark Billings
Mr. Charley Hanson
Mr. Duncan Porter-Zuckerman
Mr. Craig Baker (arr. 5:31 p.m.)

Members Absent:

Ms. Lisa Merrill

Administrators Present:

Mrs. Mary Moriarty, Superintendent
Mrs. Trish Temperino, Asst. Superintendent
Mrs. Elaine Dodge, Director of Student Services
Mr. Scott Currier, Principal ILM/HS
Ms. Kathleen Hill, Principal ILES
Mr. John Martin, Director of Technology
Mr. Brian Swanker, Facilities Director
Ms. Holly Vieten, Guidance Director

Others Present:

Public

IV. PUBLIC INPUT

None

V. BUDGET WORK SESSION

Chairman Hanson noted that the Public Hearing on the school budget will be held on February 5th, at 6:00 p.m. at the Inter-Lakes Community Auditorium.

Superintendent Moriarty reported that the largest drivers of the increase in the proposed budget are Special Education and Facilities. The single largest line item is \$19.9 million in salaries and benefits.

Due to more intensive needs of some students, combined with programming to replace services previously available in Laconia have impacted the Special Education line. The proposed budget funds an additional Special Education Teacher with the intent to build programming to better meet students' needs and to build a capacity to serve additional students in a more efficient way.

Mr. C. Hanson noted that the Special Education budget line has increased significantly over time. Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the need to provide educational services to students in the least restrictive environment, ages 3-21.

The District has received guaranteed maximum rates of increase of 1.8 percent for dental insurance and 3.9 percent for health insurance. This year marks the first time those rates have been available prior to the Annual School District meeting allowing for more accurate budgeting.

Through contract negotiations, the District no longer provides lifetime health and dental insurance for retirees. However, the District remains liable for past retirees insurance costs which amount to \$1,185,571 or 29% of the proposed budget. Health and dental insurance for retirees and current personnel totals \$4,117,733.

Proposed staff changes in the budget include reducing a 0.5 FTE English Teacher position and shifting it to create a full-time Social Studies Teacher position. An administrative support position in the office of the principal at the high school will not be filled following a resignation, resulting in savings of \$116,433.

The administration is recommending adding a second School Psychologist at a cost of \$48,652 and increasing the number of work days of the Middle/High School Registrar an increase of \$12,205. The rate of pay for the Middle/High School Receptionist will be increased at a cost of \$3,575. Two additional FTE Para-Educators at Inter-Lakes Elementary School to support four Kindergarten classrooms will cost \$56,244 and one FTE regular education para-educator to support Competency Pathways for students in grades 7-9 will cost \$33,092.

The administration is also recommending that hourly maintenance position be shifted to a salaried position with a new job description of automation technician at a cost of \$8,690 to look after the many complex systems that now control everything from the heating, plumbing, fire alarms, security systems and auditorium equipment. Total budget impacts attributed to staffing changes total \$303,417.

The proposed the Operating Budget is \$27,708,138 an increase of \$1,007,395 or 3.77% over the prior budget. This amount does not include the Collective Bargaining Agreement with teachers that is contained in a separate warrant article.

Facilities - Over the past several years the District has been addressing safety issues and utilizing state grant funds to make some strong infrastructure advancements. Some capital projects have been shifted as a result, and over time work has been deferred to limit budget increases.

The Facilities Expendable Trust now contains about \$400,000 that has been earmarked to help offset the cost of the future replacement of the football field and track.

Mr. Billings noted that two years of capital projects in the District have been deferred.

Superintendent Moriarty said the District does not have youthful campuses but noted that the buildings have been well cared for to create a safe and welcoming learning environment.

2021-2022 Capital Improvement Projects total \$725,400; which includes funds to replace an original ballasted roof that no longer meets building codes. The replacement roof is mechanically fastened and has a 30-year warranty.

At Sandwich Central School \$18,000 will be spent for asbestos abatement and \$50,000 for the roof. Sash mechanisms on all the windows have failed making them only able to be partially opened. They will be refurbished at a cost of \$14,500.

At Inter-Lakes Elementary School more carpet is being removed and replaced with tile; \$170,000 will be spent on repairs to the roof and a portion of the canopy; and an update of the bathrooms is recommended at a cost of \$20,000.

At the Middle/High School \$110,000 is being proposed to redo the girl's locker room and bathroom a project that had been repeatedly deferred. Finishing the renovation of the music room is budgeted at \$45,000 and replacement of worn window treatments that is a safety issue as they can't be closed allowing an unobstructed view into the classrooms is proposed at \$10,000.

The portable stage that is set up in the gym during the Annual School District meeting and is also used in Sandwich is extremely heavy and has warped over the years. The recommendation is to replace it.

The board discussed special education costs at length and heard that in October there were 175 students with Individualized Education Plans - a legal document that the District is required to meet. Student disabilities range in complexity. Currently nearly 50 of almost 200 special education students have more than one disability.

The administration has also recommended removing \$50,000 from the budget for the 8th grade field trip to New York City, citing its drift from a connection to the curriculum, the large number of staff required to properly chaperone it and the need to hire substitutes to fill in while 15 people are out of the building.

As a result of unanticipated Special Education costs this year, Assistant Superintendent Temperino said, she does not anticipate any remaining fund balance at year end and that a withdrawal from the Special Education Expendable Trust is also very likely.

Chairman Hanson said he believes experiential education is what makes the District what it is. He expressed passionate feelings about retaining such experiences and said while he could appreciate the administration's belief that the trip should be "paused" to allow it to be better aligned with the curriculum he said he did not want to see it completely dismantled. The District has a long track record of successful field trip experiences including Merrowvista and Cape Cod.

The board discussed the Warrant Articles which includes a Collective Bargaining Agreement for teachers, and requests to add funds to Facilities Maintenance Expendable Trust, the Special Education Expendable Trust, and the Multifunction School Activity Expendable Trust.

Chairman Hanson said the Public Budget Hearing is February 5th, at which time the Board will listen to comments from residents before voting on the budget that will be presented at the Annual School District meeting March 4th.

VI. PUBLIC INPUT

Haley Goodwin an 8th grade Social Studies Teacher said she appreciated Chairman Hanson's comments and envisions the NYC field trip changing to a Civics and American History based focus while still giving kids a sense of leadership and a field experience that is very valuable.

Nancy Fredrickson of Sandwich, said there are number of important issues at play as part of the budget process including a teacher contract and the fate of a legacy field trip. She expressed frustration that no reporters were in attendance and that the public typically relies on media coverage to learn about issues prior to the District Annual Meeting. She voiced concern that without media coverage rumors can spread and residents can show up at the Annual Meeting at the last minute not well informed about the issues.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. **Thursday, January 23, 2020 – Humiston Building Conference Room**
Inter-Lakes School Board – Budget Works Session (Tentative)
- B. **Monday, January 27, 2020 – Inter-Lakes Elementary School (Room TBA)**
Meet & Greet Inter-Lakes Elementary School Principal Candidates – **5:30 p.m.**
- C. **Tuesday, January 28, 2020 – Inter-Lakes Middle/High School Auditorium**
Inter-Lakes Special School Board Meeting – **6:00 p.m.**
 - Learning Series Part 3 - Grading Practices; Reporting Learner Progress; Recognition
- D. **Thursday, January 30, 2020 – Inter-Lakes Elementary School**
SNOW DATE For Meet & Greet Inter-Lakes Elementary Principal Candidates – **5:30 p.m.**
- E. **Wednesday, February 5, 2020**
Inter-Lakes School Board @ Inter-Lakes High School Auditorium
 - Budget Public Hearing – **6:00 p.m.**
- F. **Wednesday, March 4, 2020**
Inter-Lakes School Board @ Inter-Lakes High School Gymnasium
 - Annual School District Meeting – **7:00 p.m.**
- G. **Tuesday, March 10, 2020 – Town Elections / Voting**

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Cunningham moved, seconded by Mr. Porter-Zuckerman, to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bea Lewis Wheeler
School District Clerk