



**Timberlane Regional Budget Committee
Meeting Minutes**

Budget Committee Meeting

December 26, 2024

7:00 PM

Call to Order at 7:01 PM by Liz Kosta

Roll Call taken by Heather Greenfield

Present: Liz Kosta, Karen White, Lauren Schlerf, Katie Knutsen, Julie Hammond, Sierra Dolce, Kathryn Consalvo, Kristi Auclair (7:02), Sue Sherman

Not in Attendance: Sabrina Alberg (Excused)

Administrators Present: Justin Krieger – Superintendent, Lisa Oliver – Assistant Business Administrator, Chris Martin – Director of Operations and Special Projects, Sandy Allaire – Assistant Superintendent

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Sierra Dolce motioned to accept the meeting minutes of December 16, 2024.

Seconded by Kathryn Consalvo

Motion passed: 8-0-1

Sue Sherman Abstained

Liz Kosta states that throughout this process shes had to think of the tax payers and what they are going through. She appreciates the work the superintendent, business administrator, and administration have done. She states that we have citizens that can't afford clothing or coats and some that are living in their cars. She thanks everyone for being there.

DELEGATES AND INDIVIDUALS –

Jack Sapia, Atkinson states that he was disappointed that the joint meeting wasn't more of a round table discussion. He recognizes that there are people that are struggling but the committees job is to fund education. He states that the school board rejected multiple projects to not spend any more of the \$16 million surplus. He asks to look at the funded open positions from the meeting on January 5, 2023 and states that was roughly \$6 million of the surplus.

Mark Sherwood, Sandown thanks the committee for the work that they have done. No matter what the



budget committee proposes it will be criticized by the taxpayers. He states that we are dealing with record high inflation coupled with the surge in our tax bills. He talks about the 4 contracts that were being negotiated the last couple years and that the district was having difficulty hiring special education teachers. We had leaky walls, roofs, unplayable courts/fields. We were on our 3rd superintendent in a couple years. Now we have playable courts and fields, we have been able to competitively hire teachers, we have new roofs and HVAC units, and we've negotiated 7 successful union contracts. He states that the citizens demanded accountability and that the school board passed policies to increase transparency and accountability. The superintendent went through the budget and presented the first budget in a decade that reflects a decrease. He suggests that if an additional \$2.4 million is removed that the budget committee should rally themselves to decide what these costs are whether its worth the savings involved. He speaks about how each of the departments came to present there budgets and if no red lights went off saying hey there's \$100,000 here or there to cut.

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Justin shares that the CBA's should be brought January 2nd for ratifications. He reminds the budget committee that they should be nominal in the amount of money that will be required. He has also engaged with First Student and they were able to renegotiate the current contract and there should be around \$100k savings for FY26. Justin also reminds the committee that we are holding 4 Public Hearings, one in each town regarding the tax cap warrant article.

Justin states that is thinking ahead to the FY27 budget and would like to provide some suggestions regarding the sequence the calendar for next years budget meetings so that it doesn't come down to the last hours.

Justin states if you decide to do nothing you are still delivering a budget that has been reduced which hasn't been seen in a decade.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion of \$2.4 Million Reduction

Justin discusses the table that outlines several options that would add up to the \$2.4 million reduction but explains that there are a multitude of pathways to get to the \$2.4 million.

Liz asks about the bathroom renovations at the high school and if a reduction in the CIP line would affect that and what sort of timeline, they are looking at to begin the project. She asks about Keene and how long the process took from RFP to approval of the funds to beginning the construction. Chris also states that the asbestos in the tiles create a large variable to the timeline for completion.

Sue goes on to explain that this isn't a one and done projects that it will be multiple phases in order to complete each of the high school bathrooms.



Liz personally would not want to see any positions cut.

Kristi keeps going back to the statement that some of the cuts would bring us to the minimum standard and that is no the standard that she wants us to provide for our children. She does want to see our taxes go down but she can't support any of these cuts. What we are going to lose isn't worth what we will save.

Sue is uncomfortable with the what ifs surrounding the teacher personal day payouts and the insurance selections.

Sierra is looking at the assumptions and thinking that there are some lines that she thinks could be cut.

Justin talks about how cuts to those assumptions would push us to be less conservative than we would like because if those lines end up short the money needs to come from somewhere.

The committee discusses different lines that they would like to make sure remain in the budget and lines that they could cut some money.

Sierra asks about academic equipment and what those lines contain.

Sandy explains that they academic resources are different programs that each of the schools currently use but that they have cumulatively come to the decision that they could ultimately do without.

Julie asks about the unfilled positions that are out there, and Justin explains that he did not bring forward any vacant or unfilled positions because he doesn't feel like they have any.

Sandy informs the committee that the academic equipment lines include tables and chairs, replacement of outdated equipment, and music equipment.

Sue isn't happy about any of these cuts and states that she cannot vote for any of them.

Lauren comments on some of the top lines and their conservative numbers. She believes that some of these things are trending downward and that some of the academic resources should be based on needs and not wants. She would be inclined to make those cuts.

The committee goes through different scenarios of what they could cut and different combinations of the lines that were presented.

Katie asks about the professional development line and what that would effect. Sandy explains that it would effect the districts ability to bring presenters in on professional developments days. As well as trainings that would include teacher training to teach AP courses.

The committee continues to discuss additions and subtractions from the proposed budget cuts.



MOTION: Sierra motioned to accept the FY26 proposed budget of \$89,643,002.98. Seconded by Sue Sherman
Motion fails: 4-5-0

The committee continues to go through combinations of cuts from the lines that were presented.

MOTION: Sierra makes a second motion to approve the FY26 proposed budget of \$89,643,002.98. Seconded by Sue Sherman
Motion passes: 5-4-0

Adjournment – Liz Kosta at 8:18 PM

Minutes Submitted By: Heather Greenfield

Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/1042291964>