

**REGULAR MEETING
TIMBERLANE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

**2018-19 Budget Season
November 21, 2017
7:02 PM**

**SAU #55 Boardroom
30 Greenough Road
Plaistow, NH**

CALL TO ORDER 7:02 PM

Chairman Gerns called this November 21, 2017 meeting of the Timberlane Regional School District Budget Committee to order at 7:02 PM with the roll call.

ROLL CALL

Budget Committee Members Present: Mr. Alan David, Mrs. Eileen Dube, Mr. Lee Dube, Mr. David Gerns, Mr. Daniel Guide (School Board Rep), Mrs. Julie Hammond, Mr. John Hughes, Mr. Michael Mascola, Mr. Shawn O'Neil, Mr. Jim Paul

Administrators Present:

Geoff Dowd, Business Administrator
Dr. Earl Metzler, Superintendent of Schools

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Mr. O'Neil led the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 9, 2017 Meeting

7:05 PM

MOTION: Motion to Approve the Minutes of the November 9, 2017 meeting. Made by Mr. Hughes, second by Mr. Mascola. Chairman Gerns called the vote, which passed (9-0-1) with Mr. Dube abstaining.

CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence folder was distributed.

DELEGATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

Timberlane School Board Chair Brain Boyle joined by Vice Chair Dr. Kim Farah spoke to their perspective on the proposed budget, budgeting practices, and concern for the towns' tax burden. Mr. Boyle reported that approximately six weeks ago the School Board was polled to support a 3% reduction of the operating budget in a vote/poll 5-4. Mr. Boyle invited Chairman Gerns to poll the Budget Committee on this initiative.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

SANDOWN NORTH/SANDOWN CENTRAL

Mr. Guide reported the SLT recommendation is to maintain current organization of the Sandown North (1-5) and Sandown Central (PreK-K) for the next few years. Discussion ensued on the CIP request for additional playground equipment at Sandown North.

7:14 PM

MOTION: Motion to accept the Sandown North budget proposal under advisement, for further consideration at the next meeting. Made by Mr. Gerns, second by Mr. Dube. Chairman Gerns called the vote, which passed (9-1-0) with Mr. O'Neil against.

Mr. Dube expressed concern for the cost and need for the Sandown Central signage, and suggested this be completed in other ways, such as an Eagle Scout project. Mr. Dowd clarified the request's total amount is for installing an updated sign with better lighting in a more central location.

7:15 PM

MOTION: Motion to remove FACS-0018 (Signage) from the CIP. Made by Mr. Dube, second by Mrs. Hammond. Chairman Gerns called the vote, which passed unanimously (10-0-0).

7:17 PM

MOTION: Motion to remove FACB-0046, FACB-0047, FACB-0048, and FACB-0050 from the CIP. Made by Mrs. Hammond, second by Mr. Dube.

Mr. Dube asked that Mrs. Hammond withdraw her motion to discuss each request individually. Mrs. Hammond withdrew her motion.

7:17 PM

MOTION: Motion to remove FACB-0046 (Replacement of Art Cabinets and Sinks) from the CIP. Made by Mrs. Hammond, second by Mr. O'Neil.

Mrs. Hammond explained she does not find these updates to be fiscally responsible in the absence of a strategic plan/known future of Sandown Central. Mr. Dowd clarified that all Final CIP projects are included in the proposed budget, however those that have been voted as removed from the CIP are then defunded in the proposed budget draft as well.

VOTE: Chairman Gerns called the vote which passed unanimously (10-0-0).

Discussion ensued on FACB-0047 (upgrade building management systems) regarding the purpose and district scope of system upgrades. Mr. Dowd explained that system upgrades allow for more direct and accurate managing of site facility systems, especially in regards to identifying and diagnosing system failures. He explained that all school sites have made some upgrades, if not all. It is unclear what elements of the upgrade could be transferred to other sites for future use, or would be necessary at that time, if Sandown Central were to close. No action was taken on FACB-0047.

7:24 PM

MOTION: Motion to remove FACB-0048 (Restroom Renovations) from the CIP. Made by Mrs. Hammond, second by Mr. Mascola.

Discussion ensued on the safety of student restrooms and the urgency of this request. Dr. Metzler explained that the current toilets do not present a safety issue. At the time of Sandown consolidation, many renovations were made to both schools to make them age appropriate – restrooms were not included in this. Mr. Paul expressed concern for funding a CIP request without knowledge of a strategic plan. Dr. Metzler noted that in the absence of a strategic plan, administrators' requests are not targeted towards long-term district goals. Mrs. Dube expressed that she believes the bathrooms to be a safety issue, and that alternate solutions should be explored.

VOTE: Chairman Gerns called the vote which passed (8-2-0), with Mr. Dube and Mr. Guide against.

Mrs. Dube requested Dr. Metzler investigate the safety of Sandown Central student bathrooms.

7:36 PM

MOTION: Motion to remove FACB-0050 (Install Classroom Observation Windows) from the CIP. Made by Mrs. Hammond, second by Mr. Dube. Chairman Gerns called the vote which passed unanimously (10-0-0).

Mrs. Hammond explained the details of the request and reiterated her reasoning for removing.

VOTE: Chairman Gerns called the vote which passed unanimously (10-0-0).

Mr. Guide inquired about Sandown Central overspent funds in 2017. Mr. Dowd explained they had under budgeted. Dr. Metzler explained that these first years of consolidation have created a moving target for administrators in regards to budget development and meeting student population needs. Sandown North and Sandown Central principals worked closely during budget season and throughout the year to understand these details.

7:40 PM

MOTION: Motion to accept the Sandown Central budget proposal as revised, pending further review. Made by Mr. Gerns, second by Mr. Dube. Chairman Gerns called the vote which passed unanimously (10-0-0).

Dr. Metzler confirmed that he will look into Sandown Central bathroom safety.

BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Discussion ensued on CIP Item BIT-0001 on the reasoning for buying verse leasing, in regards to cash flow properties. Mr. Guide reported that there is no School Board lease policy, and the School Board's recommendation is to fund the request fully. Mr. Gerns suggested a motion to fully fund the request and then charge the District to explore all possible grants. Mr. Dowd explained there are currently two possible grants the district could apply for – e-rate funding and state surplus funding. Dr. Metzler clarified how grant budgeting works as related to the offsetting of revenue.

7:48 PM

MOTION: Motion to budget \$48,000 for CIP request BIT-0001. Made by Mr. O'Neil, second by Mr. Paul.

Mr. Dowd detailed his understanding of the grant timelines and expirations as they relate to our budgeting cycles. Mr. O'Neil noted that we could include a buy-out clause in the leasing contract. Dr. Metzler expressed interest in the prioritization initiatives of the Committee to inform his work in the budget process. Mr. Dube suggested this project move to the warrant process, possibly to be capital reserve funded over a period of a few years. Mrs. Hammond expressed concern for delaying the process and the inability to apply for grant funding. Discussion ensued about the creation of warrant articles and bonds.

VOTE: Chairman Gerns called the vote which failed (2-7-1), with Mr. O'Neil and Mr. Paul in favor, and Mr. Gerns abstaining.

7:57 PM

MOTION: Motion to remove BIT-0001 from the CIP, and recommend to the School Board to move to a warrant article. Made by Mr. Dube, second by Mr. Hughes.

Mr. Dube expressed that this is a risk, however if passed through warrant would allow for the opportunity to recoup via grant revenue. Discussion ensued on the larger scope of prioritization in regards to the CIP and greater budget. Mr. Guide expressed concern that there are compelling safety issues that cannot be shared with the community regarding this request.

VOTE: Chairman Gerns called the vote which passed (6-3-1), with Mrs. Dube, Mr. Guide and Mr. Paul against, and Mrs. Hammond abstaining.

8:04 PM

MOTION: Motion to accept the Business Operations budget proposal as revised, pending further review. Made by Mr. Mascola, second by Mr. Dube. Chairman Gerns called the vote which passed unanimously (10-0-0).

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mr. Gerns expressed concern for the TRMS flexible furniture budget request, as it did not go through the CIP process.

8:05 PM

MOTION: Motion to reduce the budgeted \$55,425 for TRMS flexible student furniture by 50% (line 100.1100.737.27.50.00000). Made by Mr. Gerns, second by Mr. Guide.

Mr. Dowd noted that this line in the Middle School proposed budget has already been reduced by \$32,000, as a phase approach to roll out of this project. The total updated middle school proposed budget of \$347,625 is represented in Draft One of the budget. Chairman Gerns withdrew his motion. Mr. O'Neil suggested budget owners make their own cuts, and Mr. Mascola agreed.

8:12 PM

MOTION: Motion to adopt the recommendation of the School Board to cut 3% from the current operation budget for the 18-19 proposed budget, for a total proposed budget for \$69,606,633. Made by Mr. O'Neil, second by Mr. Paul.

Mrs. Hammond inquired about the costs of those items considered non-negotiable. Dr. Metzler provided an estimate for the default budget of about \$73.5 million. Discussion ensued about the staffing needs of the district, and the process and associated savings for the laying off of teachers and underemployment of administrative staff. Dr. Metzler explained the super teacher contract for administrative deans. Discussion ensued on finding the balance between fiscal responsibility and high quality education, and serving two separate populations. Mr. Dowd clarified that the 100 fund expense reports does not include all funds. As a selectman Mr. O'Neil noted concern for the towns' responsibility to absorb unpaid property taxes. Mr. Mascola inquired about the various impacts of a decreased budget. Dr. Metzler explained he will need to investigate more to understand the impacts on staffing, and academic/extracurricular programming at a range of budgets (from \$73.5 million to \$69.6 million). Dr. Metzler and Mr. Guide stated that no consequences of the cuts were discussed by the School Board. Mr. David expressed concern for the community members tax burden, as related to the district's increasing \$2 million expenditure

each year. Discussion ensued on if the motion should be taken at another time or changed to reflect a lesser cut. Mr. O'Neil explained the motion will allow for the Budget Committee to indicate to the School Board and community where they stand in this process.

8:43 PM

VOTE: Chairman Gerns called the vote, which passed (6-4-0), with Chairman Gerns, Mr. Guide, Mrs. Dube, and Mrs. Hammond against.

Discussion ensued on the process of the transportation contract renewal versus going to bid through an RFP, and the costs differences associated with each option. Chairman Gerns requested a second draft budget reflecting the bottom line budget amount with the 3% cut, and discussion ensued on when this will be available. Mr. O'Neil noted that he requested an income report to look at the offsetting of revenues, and Mr. Dowd said that will be complete after the second draft budget.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMEBERS

Mrs. Dube reported on the interests and concerns of the residents who attended the Constituent Coffee with Plaistow Budget Committee representatives. Mr. Mascola inquired about publicizing the budget committee Chair email address to receive greater community input.

SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVE

Mr. Guide reported on the curbing request as it relates to insurance concerns. Mr. Dube inquired about students who receive student mileage reimbursements for out of district courses, and the offsetting of revenue from state reimbursement.

ADJOURNMENT

09:01 PM

MOTION: Motion to Adjourn. Made by Mr. O'Neil, second by Mr. Dube. Chairman Gerns called the vote, which passed (10-0-0).

Respectfully submitted,



Katarina Curtin
Recording Clerk

Approved by the Budget Committee on November 30, 2017.

This meeting may be watched in its entirety by logging on to: <https://vimeo.com/244060119>