

Timberlane Regional School District Budget Committee

Atkinson, Danville, Plaistow, and Sandown

Regular Meeting
November 20, 2012
7:00 p.m.

30 Greenough Road
Plaistow, New Hampshire
03865

1. Call to Order

Mrs. O'Neil called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call:

Present: Mrs. Rothwell, Mrs. Green, Mrs. Lisi, Mrs. O'Neil Chair, Mr. Barczak, Mr. Weymouth, Mr. Francoeur and Ms. Rochford. Absent: Mr. Spero. Also present were Dr. Metzler, Superintendent and Mr. Stokinger, Business Administrator.

3. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

4. Approval of minutes: Mrs. Rothwell made a motion and was seconded by Ms. Rochford to approve the minutes of November 8, 2012 with amendments.

Vote: 6 in favor, Mr. Francoeur abstained.

5. Correspondence:

An email was received from Mrs. Caruso regarding the Athletic budget. Mrs. O'Neil stated this topic will be addressed later in the meeting.

Mrs. O'Neil received an email from Mr. Spero saying that he would not be available for tonight's meeting.

Ms. Rochford asked about the procedure for responding to correspondence – does chair respond or is it presented at the next meeting for committee input. Mrs. O'Neil stated that it is the chair that responds as a representative of the committee.

6. Delegations and Individuals: None

7. Unfinished Business:

Dennis Francoeur's questions: Mr. Stokinger handed out the list of questions he had received from Mr. Francoeur. The questions and answers were:

Facilities operations:

100-2620-330-12-33 DDC contract service for \$21,850. What is DDC for?

Response: DDC is the digital controls to run equipment

100-2620-430-12-33 Misc. supplies and general supplies at \$6K and \$14K?

Response: Repair items and supplies for the district including plumbing, electrical and small items like duct tape.

100-2620-643-12-33 Information access fees for \$7K?

Response: This is an on-line work order system. Jim Hughes reviews and delegates tasks to his staff.

Also a monitoring calendar for service reminders,

Curriculum:

100-2213-320-02-35 An increase of \$8K for in-service professional staff?

Response: Common Core and math curriculum

100-1100-643-00-37 \$19,305 for middle high school access fees for NWEA?

Response: Mr. Strainge answered via email that they are adding NWEA to the 9th grade for 2013/14. Currently it is only in grades 6-8.

Elementary supplies:

Increase in general supplies over last year?

Response: school purchases of printer toner cartridges, the addition of preschool at Sandown North
Music:

There are sheet music fees on various lines totaling \$27,325 in addition to various line items for method books. Is that really that new sheet music needed for each year versus re-use?

Response: Mr. DiBartolomeo answered via email that the line item is certainly not limited to purchasing music for all the districts ensembles in grades 3-12 but also for the numerous supplies and needs for the program. Copies are made only after we purchase the music. This includes all of the elementary, middle and high schools ensembles and classes. This line supports the band, orchestra, chorus, guitar ensembles, general music classes, and the entire department K-12.

PPS:

100-2152-733-69-33 An increase in speech equipment of \$7,460, is this purchase, rental or upgrade?

Response: Dr. Roxanne Wilson spoke to Mr. Stokinger and responded that we have a student who was recently evaluated that is using trial equipment this year to be certain of equipment that best suits his needs. The student has on-going needs and will use the equipment in upcoming years.

Business Services:

100-2840-650-14 Data process software increase of \$49,425 in one year?

Response: Mr. Holland responded to Mr. Stokinger this is for back-up and off-site for financial and HR systems. Increase is made up of new software for Powerschool (schoolnet) license and software for tests and assessments.

Athletic trainer expense: Mr. Stokinger addressed the increase explaining that two invoices totaling about \$10,000 from 2011/12 were received late and paid in 2012/13. The funds were encumbered in 2011/12 and moved into the 2012/13 budget for payment. Additional funds requested in the 2013/14 budget is for a rate increase for trainers and extra coverage for games

Mrs. Green asked at what point services go out to bid. Mr. Stokinger responded that Mr. Fantasia went out to bid several years ago and the bids were in-line with what he currently pays so he continues work with current vendors. The policy for professional fees is that if we currently have a relationship that we are satisfied with we stick with it. Mrs. Green would like a copy of the contract.

8. New Business

2013-2014 Budget: Mr. Stokinger handed out a sheet showing the major factors affecting the budget, Draft #2 for budget cuts/additions, budget recap by object code sorted by change, budget recap by object code sorted by account, and budget report showing line by line requests for 2014 compared to 2013 budget and 2012 expenditures.

Draft #2 showing budget cuts/additions is down \$258,370.95 from previous meeting. Additions include property and liability insurance, worker's compensation insurance, SN preschool program staff, and HS Administrator. Reductions include: four teacher positions, .5 nurse position, FICA, NHRS, S/L assistant position, and employee insurance.

Mrs. O'Neil asked about the addition of HR Administrator. Dr. Metzler said he is working on a potential reorganization for the high school and although it is premature to speak of he wanted to be transparent and work with the Budget Committee about the potential changes.

Mr. Barczak questioned if the positions to be eliminated are currently open or filled. Dr. Metzler responded that some are open and some currently filled.

Ms. Rochford questioned the elimination of the .5 school nurse position. Are we still within the state's regulation for student: nurse ratio? Is it cost effective to use vendors for substitutes when needed? Mr. Stokinger responded that we have adequate coverage for students and that it is an open position. Dr. Wilson has considered the costs and that using vendor substitutes as well as individuals who receive substitute pay is cost effective since no benefits are paid.

The 2013-14 proposed budget includes a 2.5% increase for non-affiliated personnel (non-union employees). This would mean the steps average of 2% and the salary schedule was adjusted up .5%.

Discussion ensued among committee members with some feeling it was hard to justify due to the current economy and others feeling it was justified and that if necessary cuts could be found in other areas. Dr. Metzler said he feels strongly that the 2.5% increase was necessary and he would find a way to make it happen by making cuts in other areas of the budget.

Mrs. Rothwell asked if the teacher's contracts had been decided yet. Dr. Metzler said it was not ratified yet so no details are available at this point.

Mrs. O'Neil gave some comparison figures between 2002/03 and 2013/14 comparing group insurance costs, social security costs, teacher retirement costs and numbers of employees. The overall budget has gone from \$42.8 million to \$64.4 million in the 10-year period.

Mr. Weymouth asked if the district goes out to bid for group insurance and if co-pays are increased. Mr. Stokinger responded that co-pays have increased and that last year we solicited bids and they were all close so we stayed with our current provider LCG Healthtrust.

Mrs. Rothwell asked if we could hold off one year on the purchase of new and replacement computers. Mrs. O'Neil responded that putting off purchases may be problematic with new software.

Mrs. O'Neil asked members to give Dr. Metzler an idea of what number or percentage they would like for the next draft of the budget. Mrs. Green made a motion to reduce the 2013-2014 proposed Budget to a 1% increase over the current budget. With no second, the motion failed.

Mrs. Green asked about the paving at TRMS and TRHS in the maintenance budget. Mrs. O'Neil and Mrs. Rothwell both felt it was needed and that it is a cost savings to keep up maintenance.

Mrs. Green asked about the \$10,000 for automated bleachers at TRHS. Mr. Stokinger responded that the current bleachers need repair because they are pulling away from the wall. It is also a safety concern because anyone can pull them out. The plan is to fix the bleachers and install a key-driven system to prevent damage and limit access.

Ms. Rochford spoke about our bus services. Since many parents drive their children, can we look at consolidating and have fewer busses without increasing ride times? Dr. Metzler has been looking at bus stops. Some students have over an hour ride. He feels we have the fewest busses going as far as they can at this point. Safety is a concern as well as cost.

Mr. Barczak asked what would be the amount cut if we went to a 2% increase in the overall budget rather than the proposed 2.28%. Mr. Stokingier said that the overall cut would be just under \$200,000.

Mrs. O'Neil asked Dr. Metzler to come back to the committee on December 3rd with more budget cuts. Committee members did not come up with a target percentage of cuts.

9. Reports of Committees

There were no reports.

10. Other Business

Mrs. Green asked Mr. Stokingier about how tax assessments and how rates are set. Mr. Stokingier explained how the towns calculate and set tax rates.

Mr. Stokingier asked the committee if the handouts he gave them with different views of the budget were helpful or if they would like to see something different. Mrs. Green said it would be helpful to have these copies before the meeting so that there is time to review.

11. Future Agenda and Dates:

Mrs. O'Neil went over the schedule of meetings. The next meeting is scheduled for December 3rd. Looking ahead to the December 27th meeting, Mrs. O'Neil polled the committee member to get a sense of whether or not there would be a quorum. Since this came out a tie, the meeting will remain scheduled at this point.

With no further business to come before the committee, Mrs. Lisi made a motion and was seconded by Ms. Rochford to adjourn at 8:57 p.m.

Vote: Unanimous

Lucy Williams
Secretary Pro Tem
Approved
12/3/2012