

**Timberlane Regional School District Budget Committee
Atkinson, Danville, Plaistow, and Sandown**

Regular Meeting
November 20, 2007
7:00 p.m.

SAU # 55, 30 Greenough Road
Plaistow, New Hampshire
03865

Call to Order:

Mr. Balanoff called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Mrs. Zerba, Mrs. Suech, Mrs. Hess, Mrs. O'Neil, Mrs. Quigley (7:25 pm), Mr. Balanoff, Mrs. Collie and Mr. Mascola.

Absent: Mrs. Winn, and Mrs. Lambert

Timberlane Administrators Present:

Mr. LaSalle Superintendent
Mr. Stoking Business Administrator (7:10 p.m.)

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Mr. Mascola and seconded by Mrs. Zerba to approve the minutes of November 8, 2007 with amendments.

Vote: 6 in favor. Abstain: Mrs. O'Neil and Mrs. Collie.

Mr. LaSalle reviewed the last meeting, where he presented the unedited 2008-2009 budget requests by all administrators. After doing his homework since that meeting, he has managed to cut \$613,773 bringing the proposed 2008-2009 budget to \$59,564,901 which is a 5.17% increase over the 2008 Budget. Handouts were passed out so everyone could see the cuts Mr. LaSalle proposed. He stated that he didn't tell his Administrators what to cut, just how much, with a few exceptions. For example he recommended cutting the van request from facilities and the intercom proposal from the Middle School. He was able to cut the Transportation budget request due to a recently submitted contract from the current provider with an increase of only 4% over last year. Utilities he reviewed again but in light of the current prices and news regarding energy costs, he made no changes to that line. Mrs. Webster has a request for one additional first grade teacher but Mr. LaSalle cut that because he believes the position will probably not be needed and in the worse case scenario, he is hoping that he can take care of it by moving positions around within the district. Mr. Hugh's full-time secretary was cut to part-time as well as waiting until January to hire the new General Mechanic to cover the transition period for a retirement. The detailed line item cuts from the Administrators are due back to Mr. LaSalle on November 26, 2007.

Starting with this 2008-2009 Budget Mr. LaSalle explained that there will be much more line item accountability where transfers between lines will not be allowed except under approved circumstances.

Mr. Balanoff had many questions regarding what types of charges are in which accounts. He asked what is in the 1200.330 account. He asked for clarification on the legal line and also on the 2660 security line. He would also like to know if the prices for the classroom locks were based on quotes and Mr. Stokinger assured him they were.

The Curriculum line for \$99,000 was brought up for discussion as well as the \$199,000 Teacher contract professional development money. NH State certification for the Para I and II's was discussed and the \$30,000 in the proposed budget for their professional development.

High School transportation was discussed. Most students are getting a ride to school and causing a huge traffic jam and thereby causing the busses to be very empty. It is wasteful and the committee wondered what could be done about the situation.

Mrs. Zerba asked Mr. LaSalle how Timberlane compared with other schools within the state. He responded saying that comparisons to other districts needs to be done carefully so that only "like" districts are used in the comparison. It was noted that costs per student are higher in the southern part of the state than in the northern. Mrs. O'Neil stated the DOE website shows Timberlane HS cost per student below the State average. Mr. Balanoff asked Mrs. O'Neil to summarize the data on the website which shows the cost per pupil over the last few years. Mr. LaSalle discussed the citizen's effort survey he had seen once and found that to be very interesting. Nashua was last in the state in that survey. George stated he would try to get the "Citizens Effort" survey out to all the Budget Committee Members.

The estimated cost of the feasibility study changing from \$250k to \$125k for the HS/MS campus was discussed. The Budget Committee asked the School Board representative Mr. Mascola to please address the feasibility study at the next school board meeting and relay the positive feelings the Budget Committee has about conducting this study as soon as possible.

Mr. LaSalle brought up for discussion the declining enrollment trends he has noticed. He stated that due to the real estate market in the area, less elementary age children are moving into the area but more MS/HS students are moving in. The trends show that not many first homebuyers are moving in.

Mr. Balanoff brought up for discussion the possibility of this being the year to give something back to the voters by possibly cutting positions. One concern Mr. LaSalle has is that we recently paid off a bond and the savings from that is already forgotten and many times the savings are not remembered for very long. He would rather cut one entire program than nickel and dime all the programs, which causes us to do many things poorly.

The default Budget will be ready for the next meeting which will give everyone a better idea of how much of an actual increase there really is. Mr. Balanoff stated he is not concerned about "stuff" we don't need but rather "staff" we don't really need. The items that are not part of the State minimum standards are things like athletics or charging usage fees. Mr. LaSalle stated that he does not believe we are either over or understaffed at this time.

Mrs. O'Neil requested the October enrollment information be sent out to the Budget Committee members.

The phase 1 of the Science Lab (room # 310) proposed in the budget is approximately \$400k and it would take an additional \$500k to complete phase II and III. He said if the Board's wanted, he would support putting phase I in the budget and phase II and III in a separate warrant article. Phase I, II and III encompass the entire corner of the building including the woodshop area and the SPED classroom.

Mrs. Zerba asked how Timberlane High School compared to other like High School Programs? Mr. LaSalle stated he believes we are "good enough" but he is planning on improving the rigor, relevance and relationships in the High School and expect much more from our students. It is his aim to strike boredom from the classes thereby creating willing workers. We need to raise the community aspirations. Are they willing to accept the current conditions?

Mrs. O'Neil made a motion to hold an additional Budget Meeting on Monday December 3, 2007 at 7p.m. here at the SAU Boardroom to further discuss the proposed budget and potential cuts. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Zerba.

Vote: Unanimous

Mr. Balanoff stated he is concerned about the security budget and if the MS SRO money is in that line, he does not support it, since the Plaistow voters will probably vote down the SRO again and we will still have the money budgeted unnecessarily.

Mrs. Hess made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m. It was seconded by Mrs. Quigley.

Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Smith
Recording Secretary
Approved 12/6/2007