

**TOWN OF CHESTERFIELD, NH
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 10, 2006**

Present: Gary Winn; Chairman, Fred Szmit; Vice Chairman, Wanda McNamara; Selectman's Representative, Deb Hogancamp; Chesterfield Fire Precinct, Dave Thomas; Spofford Fire Precinct, Susan Newcomer, William Bucknell, Bob Brockmann, Nelson, Fegley, Steve Laskowski, Elliot Rowsey

Absent: Anita Barber

Winn called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm at the Chesterfield School.

General Concerns and Suggestions

Winn announced that Rick Carrier had e-mailed out budget status updates and noted that the Selectmen have changed their approach as to the warrant article for engineering for the new Town Office and Police Station.

School Budget

The Budget Committee reviewed a budget of \$7,304,430, less than a 1% increase. Tim Ruehr from Supervisory Union 29, Marty Mahoney; Principal, Sharon D'eon; Vice Principal and the Chesterfield School Board members Judy Idelkope, Jane Carroll were in attendance to present the School Budget. A Chesterfield School Boards 2006-2007 Budget Proposal Overview was passed out. Ruehr asked Idelkope to review the 2006-2007 Budget Proposal Overview. Idelkope explained that the total budget does not include the teachers' salary increases. These contracts are still in negotiations. The budget was up mostly due to the increase cost in Health Insurance. The total budget is \$7,070,860 minus the transfers with a 2.67% increase.

McNamara arrived at 7:14 pm.

Ruehr explained that the Expendable Trust can only be spent by a Public Hearing and the Capital Reserve can only be spent at the District meeting. The balance of the Expendable Trust as of 6/30/05 is \$158,071 and the Capital Reserve is at \$137,691. Ruehr explained that finally several projects are completed, the new Boilers and the gym floor. A Chesterfield School District General Fund Financial Report was passed out. These figures show where the school is as of January 4, 2006. Ruehr explained that he had composed the YTD encumbered by taking the projections and using purchase orders to know what they need. There was a discussion on the State Adequacy Grant. Ruehr explained that this grant was born out of a Claremont decision, it is money the state pays to school districts for education. The State Adequacy Grant will continue to go down. The town has already lost \$946,000. The state is taking money paid by donor towns to the state and distributing the money to receiver towns. Chesterfield is considered a donor town. This grant was designed to meet the standard that the court wanted for education.

The grant is targeted towards more needy towns. This budgeted amount has not yet been set. Newcomer questioned writing a letter to the legislature asking them to please let the town know

before the town meeting so voters know what they are budgeting for. There was a discussion on hiring a lawyer to take them to court. Ruehr explained that Nashua did, however they had lost \$6 million. Bucknell explained that he moved here from Rhode Island, and down there, the state had agreed to a budget cap of 5.5%. Maybe New Hampshire State should too. Ruehr explained that there is a \$85,000 surplus and expenses due to 1 fewer teachers than budgeted and replaced some teachers with less experienced teachers. The school currently has 406 students in K-8 and 186 students at the Keene High School.

Ruehr explained that the school had just negotiated a new 5 year contract with Laidlaw. There was a discussion on the escalating cost of fuel. The school pays 70% and Laidlaw pays 30% of the fuel overage cost. Ruehr explained that the district is protected in the municipal contract that if they are not happy they may opt out any year that they don't agree on the numbers. Ruehr explained that next time the Budget Committee meets with the School, they will have the mileage numbers. Ruehr explained that currently the school is paying \$1.97 for oil and budgeted for \$2.10. There was a discussion as to if this is enough. Ruehr explained that it is not as of a big deal as it is for the town, since the school budget can cover a deficit much easier than the town.

Regular Instruction-1100

Ruehr explained that the Keene High School tuition cost is up due to the addition of 3 students. The Substitute Salary line is up due to long term subs, and that would make the professional salary go down. There was a discussion on finding substitutes. Mahoney explained that this process is simple, due to having a 4 ½ page list of substitutes. The pay is \$75.00 per day, and the substitutes actually request where they want to sub. After 10 days the substitute pay goes up to \$110.00 per day. Mahoney explained that finding long term substitutes is more difficult due to meeting the No Child Left Behind act. Ruehr explained that the Health Insurance budget has 17% built in for premiums.

Special Instruction-1200

Ruehr explained that this budget is up \$79,000 due to salary and benefits for an additional one-on-one staff member. Without one-on-one support the student would need to school outside of the district. There is currently 25 employees. There are no new students, but the students were just re-evaluated over 3 years. The state is good about kicking in on students' education costing more than \$30,000. The problem is that the school pays and then the state reimburses you. There is a sliding scale. Up to \$30,000 you pay entire cost, \$30,000-80,000 is a 80/20% split, and \$80,000 and more the state pays for the entire cost. There was a discussion as to the parents paying towards the cost. Ruehr explained that the state law explains that the parents do not pay. There was a discussion on the cost of owning a copier versus leasing one. Mahoney explained that he had done a study analysis a while back, and it was much better to lease. Mahoney explained that the use of the copiers is down due to governors being put on. Ruehr explained that the Tuition in state, Keene High School has decreased. However the tuition cost for private High School out of district has risen due to an increase in 5 new area students.

Co-Curricular-1400

Ruehr explained that the budget for Co-Curricular salaries/benefits is up \$1,000 due to adding cheerleading and an increase for the athletic director. Ruehr explained that the coaching scale salary fluctuates year to year. The Serv Other (Athletic Officials) is up \$2,500 due to the addition of Marlborough. Replacement Equipment is up \$300 due to intramural supplies.

Guidance Services-2120

Guidance Salary/Benefits is down by \$11,500 due to a new position at a lower level. Ruehr explained that Serv Pupil (Testing and Evaluation) is to pay for evaluations that occur outside from our para professionals.

Health Services-2130

Health Services is down by \$3,000. The Clerical Assistant position was withdrawn.

Psychology Services-2140

The Psychologist salary/benefits are up by 2.75% due to salary increase and health insurance. This position is not part of the union. There was a discussion on the coverage cost of the Psychology counseling for High School students, which is covered under the Keene High School tuition cost. Ruehr explained that every kid pays a piece, whether they use it or not.

Speech Services-2150

Speech Therapist salary/benefits is up 2.75% due to health insurance and a retirement stipend. This individual will be retiring 2007-2008. It was explained that upon retiring the state pays for health insurance. Ruehr explained that this is formula driven regarding age and whether they are receiving social security. Szmit questioned if all teachers get a stipend. Ruehr explained that no they do not, they must meet the criteria designed to benefit those teachers who have been loyal to Chesterfield.

PT Services-2162

PT Services is physical therapy needed for a student.

OT Services-2163

Ruehr explained that Meetings with Parents/IEP/STAT for 74 hours wasn't budgeted for last year. D'eon broke up into more realistic numbers. Ruehr explained that Evaluation Time stands for a 3 year comprehensive evaluation and a 1 year re-evaluation. The Supplies line is a new line to OT Services since it used to be located under the Special Education line.

Staff Support Services-2210

Salaries/Benefits number reflects 1 fewer teacher than last year. Also the budget shows stipends for SAU wide curriculum. The additional monies being asked for, for summer in-service will include Social Studies, English and Math.

Ed. Media Services-2220

Media Generalist Salary/Benefits and Aide Salary/Benefits portion has been level funded pending approval of a successor contract. New Furniture is up due to the purchase of a double faced 72" bookcase to match one already in use.

SPED Consultation-2290

Relates to behavior management and medical consultation for 10 identified special needs students.

Admin. Support Services-2300

Ruehr pointed out that there has been no money put into the budget for rent next year. The SAU passed this budget without a figure in it. Ruehr explained that no other board has put in extra money for rent. McNamara questioned the lease being up, so how can they charge rent. Idelkope explained that the rent was based upon the charge Keene pays to maintain and run the building. Ruehr explained that yes they own the building free and clear and had a deed that stated that this building must be used for educational purposes for the next 20-30 years, then they may do as they like.

Exec. Services-2400

Executive Administrative Salary/Benefits is down due to a changing of people. Phone line is down due to a bargain with Keene for internet service. Travel Reimbursement is up to 44 ½ cents per mile.

There was a 5 minute break.

Hogancamp left at 9:15 pm.

Building Svcs. & Maintenance-2600

Newcomer questioned if the school is keeping to a schedule. Idelkope explained that the ventilating system in the all purpose room; they would like to do a study to make sure it is working efficiently. Mahoney explained that the rest of this year gives the committee time to re-evaluate a 5 year schedule. Mahoney explained that the windows on the 4 classrooms to the left of the school need to be replaced and the heavens in the back parking lot need paying and maybe foundation. These are all things that the Facility Committee needs to address. There are temporary classrooms which need to be replaced.

Transportation Services-2700

Ruehr explained that he did reduce 1 bus last year. Mahoney explained that the split model works well and that next year they should address the problem of transporting high school students with elementary students. D'eon will be looking into this.

Transfers

Ruehr explained that they are asking for \$100,000 to be transferred into the Food Service Fund and \$6 million to be transferred into the General Fund. The budget shows revenue on revenue side and generally wipes it out.

Ruehr explained that they will be looking into transportation for students to Crotched Mountain. D'eon updated the committee to the actual number of students presently. There are 640 students, including Pre-School and Out of District and 186 High School Students.

There was a discussion on going to Town Meeting without knowing the figure for the teachers' contracts. Ruehr explained that they don't have the figures now, but will have them for Town Meeting.

Ruehr explained that Warrant Article #7 is asking for \$30,000 to be appropriated and transferred to the Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of major renovation/reconstruction of the school buildings and related costs. This Fund can only be used by a yes vote at a District meeting.

Laskowski made a motion to waive having the School Board members back on January 17th, 2006 for further review and was 2nd by Szmit. Ruehr explained that he hopes to have the revenue page ready by next week and will have a copy of the Public Hearing documents. Szmit would like Carrier to show the tax rate with everything. Brockmann would like to see a 2005 actual to compare. Motion carried to waive having the School Board members back on January 17th, 2006.

School Board members left at 9:55 pm.

Newcomer explained that if Rowsey has any questions, between now and the Public Hearing, he should feel free to contact any Budget Committee member. There was a question as to when the line items are voted on. Szmit explained that sometime in February each line item will be voted on, with a motion. Winn explained that at the Public Hearing he will be going over the whole budget item by item and will field questions.

There was a discussion on the Transfer Station request for a new roll-off truck. There was a discussion as to one person running the place, while the other takes 1 hour to make the haul. It was explained that it used to be thought that 2 people manning the Transfer Station was the best idea because they were actually handling the trash. Now customers are handling their own trash. It was decided upon to wait on further discussion until February when it is time to vote. Newcomer questioned what percentage of the town uses the Transfer Station, wouldn't be surprised if only 50%.

Winn reminded the Budget Committee that the Public Hearing will be held at the Chesterfield School beginning at 1:00 on Saturday, January 28th, 2006. Winn explained that the Selectmen will not be presenting the budget, he will, however Winn will be fielding questions to the School Board and the Selectmen.

Bucknell questioned possibly sharing the new truck with other towns.

Laskowski made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 pm and was 2nd by Fegley. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted:

Jody Moreau
Secretary