

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

106 Hancock Road
Peterborough, New Hampshire

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

Selectmen's Advisory Committee

Thursday, January 25, 2018

7:00 p.m.

SAU #1

Minutes

Present: John Jordan (Hancock), Carl Newton (Sharon), Tyler Ward (Peterborough), Gail Cromwell (Temple), John Robertson (Antrim)

Others Present: Kimberly Saunders, Dr. Ann Forrest, Mindy Ryan, Tim Markley, Myron Steere, Janine Lesser, Jim Fredrickson, Bernd Foecking, Pierce Rigrod, Rich Cahoon, Colleen Roy, Kelly Parker, Ann O'Bryant, Nicole Pease, Jim Elder, Michael Lucow, Gib West

John Jordan called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

1. Accept Minutes of November 30, 2017

John Robertson moved to accept the minutes of November 30, 2017. Gail Cromwell second. Carl Newton abstained. All else in favor. Motion carried.

2. Budget Presentation

- All Selectboard members in the District are invited

John Jordan referenced Version 7 of the budget and a revised copy of that version.

Kimberly Saunders reported that last year, she and the former Business Administrator, visited several towns to share budget information. She is happy to meet in towns if that is desired. Ms. Saunders shared a presentation that outlined the vision and direction of the school district. The vision is to become a model of educational excellence within 5-7 years. SMART Goals are set and directed toward all staff working in one direction. The various stages toward excellence were outlined; they include Foundational Stages (making sure the basics are covered), Pedagogical Foundations (aligning curriculum, assuring equity etc.), School Board goals were discussed, and the budget prep timeline was shared. Budget assumptions include procedural, financial, and programmatic assumptions. Decreases in revenue have been evident.

The budget by object reflects an increase of .62%, or \$281,394.73 over the current year's budget. While the proposed budget is up .62%, district assessment reflects an increase of 5.55%, or \$1,831,987.73. The loss of \$440,799 in building aid revenue plays a large part in this increase.

Proposed use of trusts include \$75,000 from the Equipment Trust, \$75,000 for Athletics/Co-Curricular Trust, and \$150,000 from the Health Maintenance Trust Fund.

Last year, there was a recommendation to take \$68,000 from the Special Education Trust Fund to offset some special education costs. The district needed to go back in and put the \$68,000 to the revenue. This resulted in a change in information presented at the most recent budget hearing. Therefore, a supplementary budget hearing has been scheduled for tomorrow, Friday, January 26th at 6:00 p.m.

Gail Cromwell, Temple, asked what Selectman from other towns are doing about wages this year. Kimberly Saunders reported that the administrators have a merit pool available. The pool is 4%. Not everyone will get a 4% raise.

Gail Cromwell asked what \$136,000 represents in the proposed budget. Kimberly Saunders said that a large part of that figure is the ATC Administrator position, plus the merit pool. Gail Cromwell said that

there is virtually no inflation right now. Temple is giving 1.5% raises. John Jordan said that a COLA of 2% is based upon a living wage. The COLA is given, which comes to .22 cents per hour. Other increases are investigated as well. John Robertson said that 2% has been given over the past several years. Carl Newton reported that Sharon remains flat.

Bernd Foecking said that there has in fact been a 2% cost of living increase. Tyler Ward said that 2% is likely in Peterborough.

Kimberly Saunders said that there is no step and salary increase. The salary ranges for administration and administrative assistants are competitive but are in normal range.

Rich Cahoon said that the Social Security increase this year is 2%, which is based on the consumer price index and inflation. Any merit increase has to be over 2% to increase people's wages.

Myron Steere said that the school district is also staying in market range. We have been very careful about evaluation and ranges.

Jim Fredrickson reported a 2.4% increase for military personnel.

Rich Cahoon reported that we have two active open searches for administrators. We are not over competitive. There is a market and one will go elsewhere if they can get more.

Gail Cromwell said that Temple does not generally support the teacher's contract or the budget. People feel that the schools are overpaid.

Rich Cahoon reported that data was collected from over 80 districts to compare administrator salaries. We were competitive.

Jim Fredrickson said that the unemployment rate is low, we have to pay people to employ them.

Kimberly Saunders said that we are fortunate; the people that work here are dedicated to ConVal. They are dedicated to the long-term success of ConVal. Administration worked really hard to get the budget to a .62% increase.

John Jordan said that the bigger issue in New Hampshire is not what education costs us, it is how we fund it. Costs are down shifted.

3. Default Budget

Gail Cromwell distributed a copy of a document titled "Recalculation of Default Budget 1/16/18". Gail said that she does not believe the default was calculated correctly. She detailed four (4) lines that she found troublesome.

Kimberly Saunders reported that the default reflects decreases and increases in staff. Along with that, should a default result, there are still student needs that must be met. We are able to take last year's budget and take out one time appropriations; we are following the law. Kimberly reported that budget line items were cleaned up and reassigned appropriately.

4. Warrant Articles for Capital Reserves

There will be \$250,000 for the Capital Reserve Fund; \$100,000 for the Equipment Capital Reserve Fund, and \$75,000 for the Athletics/Co-Curricular Trust Fund. That is if those dollars exist at the end of the next fiscal year.

Right now, athletics has \$300,000; we are going to pull \$75,000 for supplies and equipment. \$75,000 will also be pulled for a special helmet program. Gail asked if this fund will be capped. The board has talked about considerations to cap trust funds. \$75,000 will be taken out of equipment while proposing to put \$100,000 back in if available.

Gail Cromwell asked if the same wording that has been used in the past for trust fund warrant articles will be used. Kimberly Saunders confirmed that the wording will remain. Rich Cahoon said that the language is recommended by the NHSBA.

5. Teachers' Contract and Factfinder's Report

John Jordan asked the impact on the budget of the Factfinder's Report. Jim Fredrickson reported that if the Factfinder's recommendation is approved, the impact is \$1.7 million for one year. If the Factfinder's recommendation is approved, the budget figures shared tonight will go up. If it does not get approved, teachers will have no raise. There is the option to have a special meeting should it fail.

Rich Cahoon said that the Factfinder's Report could not be supported in good conscience.

Myron Steere said that they feel bad that nothing can be provided to teachers and paras in the way of wage increases.

Rich Cahoon said that the problem is at the bottom of the pay scales. Our new teachers and paras are paid on the low side.

Tim Markley said that the paraprofessional wage scale ranges from \$10.87 to over \$18.00 for over 16 years of experience for paraprofessionals.

Rich Cahoon said that the last contract was just over \$800K in 2015 for a period of two years. The current proposal is \$1.7 million for one year.

6. Strategic Plan

Passed over.

7. Petitioned Warrant Article on School Closings

John Jordan referenced comments on the Petitioned Warrant Article to close schools. Mr. Jordan said that this works to shortcut the process.

John Jordan asked the implications on transportation? Kimberly Saunders said that our buses travel over 3,000 miles each and every day.

Rich Cahoon said that because the models that were presented from administrators were never meant to be complete, they were models meant to further discussion. The information needed to pursue is not collected.

Tyler Ward said that the petitioned warrant article does not ask to close schools, it asks that the Articles of Agreement be changed to allow schools to be closed should populations decline.

Kimberly Saunders reported the Autism Program once having a home base in Hancock is now provided to students in their home schools.

Carl Newton said that the decision about changing the Articles of Agreement should be left with the people and not with the board.

Pierce Rigrod said that the Articles act as a way to keep the district together.

8. Other

Kimberly Saunders reported that in the past, the SAC has voted to support the budget or articles. Is that the intent this year? John Jordan said that he would prefer for more selectpersons to be present.

Kimberly said that she cannot emphasize enough, bringing in a budget with an increase below 1%. She is worried about a default.

John Jordan said that when SAC has voted, they have gone back to their boards in the individual towns.

Carl Newton said that the budget is not the big issue here.

Myron urged support of the bond for the science labs.

Kimberly reported that NH is rated in the top three in the nation in terms of education.

Gail Cromwell motioned to adjourn at 8:29 p.m. John Robertson second. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok