**Budget Committee Meeting Minutes for December 5, 2023.**

**Committee members present included**: Brenden Hubbard-Chair, Kevin Bazan-Vice Chair, Theresa Sepe-Selectboard Rep, Michelle Dwight, Jake Blake-Schoolboard Rep.

Brenden Hubbard called the meeting to order at 602pm.

Michelle Dwight made a motion to accept the minutes from 11/18/23 with corrections. Theresa Sepe 2nd the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

Theresa Sepe asked the School Board about the reduction in tuition for students attending Keene High School. Lindseigh Picard advised the budget committee of some students now choosing to go to Charter Schools instead of Keene High School from grade 9 – 12.

Theresa Sepe also asked if students still having to share books and/or supplies. Megan Pouliot, Winchester School Principal, advised the board that the school is working to update their curriculums to digital now. Mrs. Carey, from the SAU added that every student has their own laptop for school which they received through a grant. Michelle Dwight asked if that’s what the $18,000 what in reference to. Mrs. Pouliot explained that the cost covered Pre-K through 8th Grade for digital lessons, manuals, and access for the entire school.

Michelle Dwight asked why the Life Skills line was consistently under spent and it’s now at $2,000. Lindseigh Picard explained that there will be more spent from that line moving forward it’s a work in progress.

Theresa Sepe asked why the Library Salary went down. Mrs. Carey advised that two positions had been merged into one. The Library and Language Teacher had both been made PT positions and one person now covers those two positions.

Brenden Hubbard asked about the Athletic Department; was there anything needed for that department? Lindseigh Picard advised the board that new nets for the fields are being purchased and other updates to much needed equipment, supplies, goals, etc. are being made.

Kevin Bazan asked the board what the job description was for the Bus Monitor from 1st Student and why that line seemed to be underutilized. Lindseigh Picard said that it’s a requirement from 1st Student for any student needing to be buckled into a car seat or help with seatbelts. That the driver isn’t allowed to leave the driver’s seat to assist the students; that is now the bus monitor’s job.

Kevin Bazan inquired about the two Special Education Transportation lines. Lindseigh said that those lines have been re-coded and broken down since last year. Michelle Dwight stated that the lines have been very underutilized in past years. Kevin Bazan asked that the board give more information on those lines at the next meeting.

Kevin Bazan asked about the IT Contracted Service line. Lindseigh Picard advised the board that the school got rid of the IT Director that was in house at the school and now contracted that service out. Mr. Bazan went on to inquire about the Social Security Tech line and Non-Teacher Retirement line under the IT services and said that since the IT Director position is now contracted out those two lines should come out of their budget.

Kevin Bazan asked the board about the Copier Lease/Maintenance line and if they needed more copiers. Lindseigh Picard said yes, new copiers to replace what they had as well as new copiers.

Kevin Bazan asked the board for clarification regarding the Information Access Fees line. Lindseigh Picard explained that it covers digital curriculum and state testing. Its not software driven but a digital program.

Brenden Hubbard asked why the line for Replacement Furniture has doubled. Kevin Seaman explained that the furniture is aged and $10,000 is conservative. The UDLC Seating Pan is $2500, the carpets need replacing per fire inspection but will have to be replaced a few at a time due to budget and this is just a small step toward a long-term plan for upgrades.

Theresa Sepe asked how many Special Education Students are in the school. Shane Bryant advised the board of the following: 83 at Winchester School, 32 at Keene High School and 7 were coming into Early Intervention which is a program for 3-year-olds.

Kevin Bazan asked why the Out of District line is over a million dollars & what was their plan for the out of district placements during 2024-2025 school year. Lindseigh Picard said this amount is for placement that hasn’t happened yet, and the board has spoken about having a Capital Reserve for Special Education which would cover placement. Shane Bryant explained there are not a lot of placements in the area, and they are preparing for the unique situation/placement coming up.

Michelle Dwight asked about the Custodians health insurance. Kevin Seaman said that the Health Insurance went up 25% this year. Lindseigh Picard added that the school is in a pool like the town. Brenden Hubbard suggested the school look it a health insurance agent to look for a better rate on their behalf. Cheryl Mayberry said that was a good idea and no harm in looking.

Brenden Hubbard asked why the Substitute Teachers line was under spent and Lindseigh Picard said they cannot find any substitutes.

Michelle Dwight asked why the Board NHSBA Dues & Fees line has been overspent already this year. Cheryl Mayberry said they will investigate it and come back to the board next week.

Brenden Hubbard asked for clarification on the Board Member Salaries line due to zero balance. Lindseigh Picard explained that the board voted to take their stipends by 1099’s.

Michelle Dwight asked if the Maintenance of Grounds line could be adjusted since it’s been underutilized in the past. Kevin Seaman said a lot has been set to the way side; there is a lot to be done and outside maintenance also includes plowing, so we want to wait until the Spring to start on the outside. Lindseigh Picard advised the board that Lawrence plows the school parking lot. Kevin Seaman said the custodians take care of the sidewalks.

Kevin Bazan inquired about the oil increase for the Ford Building and if it was still in use. Kevin Seaman said the increase was due to current rates going up. Lindseigh Picard advised the board that they are looking into renting out the building.

Brenden Hubbard asked for clarification on the Social Worker Wages. Mrs. Carey explained that the position was cut to 25hrs/wk. They are going back to 7 hr./days now and working with larger groups. Shane Bryant said the Social Work has been managing behaviors with a social/emotional curriculum.

Brenden Hubbard asked if the Budget Committee had any further questions. No further questions we mentioned. A few questions next week to follow up on and the Budget Committee agreed that they would vote on the School Budget next week.

Lindseigh Picard had some highlights to share with the board. The bond is paid off. The School Board is looking to submit similar warrant articles as they did last year, and they are looking into setting up a Capital Reserve for Special Education. Mrs. Picard then handed the floor over to Shane Bryant who informed the board of potential revenue that the school could and will be set up for by recouping Medicaid funds (ie: billable time for dispensing medication to students). Mr. Bryant has the Medicaid Billing up and running and expecting their first revenue to arrive soon. HE also gave an example of potential revenue: Hinsdale has received over $100,000 from this. A part time Medicaid Clerk for paperwork is covered by a grant. Mr. Bryant is looking forward to a stable revenue number to report in a few years. Mrs. Carey added that Title 1 grants don’t expire, and the part-time position is covered under that grant.

Lindseigh Picard said the School Board will have additional information for the Budget Committee next week so they can make their final decision and vote.

Theresa Sepe made a motion to adjourn. Kevin Bazan 2nd the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 716pm.

Meeting Minutes taken by: Monica Truesdell, T.A. Assistant

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Brenden Hubbard-Budget Committee Chair Date