

Minutes for the budget Committee
Thursday Dec. 30, 2019

Board Members present:

Lindseigh Picard- School Board rep, Chester LaPoint - Chairman, Ben Kilanski- Selectman rep, Tiffany Melanson

Absent:

Theresa Sepe

Available for comment:

Mary Henry - (Via Phone)- Winchester Business Manager, Kevin Bazan- Tina Perkins- School Board

Meeting Called to order at 6:06 PM

First Order of Business: Approve minutes from Dec 19th- Lindseigh requested that the vote be tabled for clarification- The request was discussed and agreed upon.

Second order of business:

Lindseigh briefed the committee about her conversation with Mary regarding KHS tuition and the longevity of the cost remaining the same. Ben agrees that is something that is not negotiable.

Ben acknowledged his gratitude that the School Board took time to review the proposed budget after the last meeting. Lindseigh stressed that the School Board has and is currently working diligently on the budget since October and feels it would be irresponsible for the committee to makes cuts unnecessarily. She stressed her belief that it is the School Board's job to advocate for the budget.

Chester mentioned it is the job of the committee to ask questions to be sure the budget is necessary.

Lindseigh again stressed the budget that has been presented is what the School board feels is necessary and asks that the committee keep an open mind during the meeting.

Chester feels that the budget has to be cut and mentioned that teacher positions may be a place to look.

Lindseigh mentioned the importance of classroom size. Tina Perkins reminded Chester that he needs to consider the number of students that may have an IEP in each classroom.

Mary stated that the classroom size is average.

There was a brief discussion about revisiting Dr. Dassau's recommendation of reducing the Special Ed. reserve. It was decided by the School Board after looking into the matter more closely this would not be recommended.

Chester feels his past recommendations are feasible.

Ben asked Mary for specifics regarding aged out student. Wants to know if those students are identified as Special Education.

Chester- Asked for explanation regarding a \$10,000 increase for smart boards

Lindseigh explained that the S.B implemented a 4 year plan to replace the boards at a cost of \$2200-\$2700 each.

Ben asked about funds for food service and if they appeared in multiple line items. . Mary explained the funds are not yet available and they are not included in any other line items. Yes, it does include the cost of food.

Lindseigh stated the district is tentatively expecting a profit for food service.

Chester- asked about the copiers and phones being an additional cost.

Mary explained that the district has new lease contracts that require upgraded software to help with network security.

Chester- Would like explanation of increase for info access fees

Mary explained that fee's for Power school were not paid.

Tiffany and Lindseigh discussed musical instruments. Tiffany asked if Lindseigh feels this may be an area the district could use as potential revenue. Lindseigh wants the audience members to know that budgeted line item is \$2452.

Tiffany asked about the increase for field trip expenses.

Mary explained that there was a missed payment.

Lindseigh said the students have fund raisers to help with the expense.

Ben asked what the default budget is expected to be
\$12,680,630. (\$160,000 less than proposed)

Chester called on the public for any questions or comments.

Annie Day- asked if he amount of the school budget increase and what does the tax payer receive in return. Explained that the average tax payer will have an increase of \$600 a year in taxation.

Lindseigh explained the town receives adequacy aid to help offset the cost.

Steve Brackett- asked to confirm the amount the school receives in adequacy aid and when the school receives the funds. Also asked about how the state determines the amount that will be given.

Lindseigh explained that the school receives about \$3800 per student and the school does not know when they will receive the money. If the amount in aid remains the same, the school will receive the same as the prior year and will receive it about the same time as prior.

Steve stated he understand the burden on the tax payer and unfortunately there isn't a lot that can be done. He suggests for the residents to try and invest in ways to find revenue such as the school hiring a grant writer.

Lindseigh discussed that unfortunately there aren't any grants available to offset the cost that the town has to incur. One topic of discussion during the interview process with possible superintendents.

The School Board has invested in improving the buildings and has been seeking ways to utilize the third floor of the high school.

Joe Goodrich- Would like to know what the actual budged numbers are instead of the proposed amounts.

Ben- Was expecting actual numbers he had inquired about and would like to know when he should expect to see them. Ben stressed he needs to see the information prior to being able to finalize the budget and the warrant articles also need to be addressed.
Mary stated she would send those tomorrow.

Lindseigh wants the public to know that \$800,000 is nonnegotiable costs for Special Education. Kevin Bazan stressed he hears the towns concern and also has an increase in his taxes. Unfortunately, many of the expenses are contractual obligations that were negotiated prior to the current board members.

No motions were made during this meeting.

Motion to adjourn- Lindseigh- Second- Ben-4/0 motion passes

***NEXT MEETING Jan 10th 6PM School Library**

**JAN 14TH 6:00 PM BUDGET COMMITTEE WARRANT ARTICLE TOWN HALL
Public Hearing 6 PM- Warrant Articles to follow**

FEB 6TH SCHOOL DELIBERATIVE (THURSDAY)

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Rhodes January 5, 2020

