

Winchester, NH Budget Committee Meeting Minutes for Tuesday December 15, 2020

The meeting was held via Zoom.

Members Present: Chester Lapointe- Chair, Tiffany Melanson, Theresa Sepe, Ben Kilanski (Selectman Representative) Lindseigh Picard (School Board Representative)

School Board Members Present: Todd Kilanski, James Rokes Jr, Emily Holmes, Tina Perkins.

School Administration Present: Dr. Ken Dassau, Dave Jack, Ian Spencer, Val Carey.

Chester opens the meeting at 6PM.

Chester makes a statement that due to COVID-19 concerns and by an order from the governor, the Budget Committee can hold the meeting virtually.

Dave Jack is introduced. Dave works for Municipal Resource Inc. He will be answering questions for the school business manager. He is sharing Dr. Dassau's Zoom link.

Theresa makes a motion to accept the budget committee minutes from December 8<sup>th</sup> with the following corrections. The meeting that was held in Chesterfield was about budget issues for this year and was held on Zoom. Chester seconds the motion. Chester calls for a role call vote. Ben-yes. Lindseigh-yes. Tiffany-yes. Theresa-yes. Chester-yes. Motion passes 5-0.

Chester asks what the committee would like to discuss during the meeting.

Ben asked Dave what has been paid to date on the busing contract. Dave did not have an answer.

Chester asked if there were any additional proposed increases or cuts to the budget that the committee has not heard yet.

Theresa asked Lindseigh what the school default budget would be. Lindseigh answered \$11,610,865. Theresa would like to start at that number and then work their way up. Theresa would like to make sure that there is an additional kindergarten teacher, an additional preschool teacher, an additional floater position and an additional teacher for the grade that needs it. Theresa would like to see \$49,000 added to represent each additional teacher rather than the school's proposed figure of \$54,000.

Ben asks about the busing contract. Ben notes there is a difference between not providing high school transportation and the 4<sup>th</sup> bus for the elementary and middle school. There is also a yearly increase in the contract.

Principal Valerie Carey would like Theresa and the rest of the committee to know that if you change the amount in the teacher line, the NH Retirement line and the FICA line changes as well. Chester also notes that if additional teachers are hired, they will be hired at their skill level, not at a fixed number that is set by the budget committee. Lindseigh explained the formula that the school uses to put in the teacher line for a proposed teacher position. Lindseigh also notes that they are currently in negotiations with the teacher's union and depending on the proposed contract, the numbers can change again.

Ben asks how many days are in the school year. Valerie answers- 180.

Theresa asks about the custodial staff. What is the school looking for? Also, does one staff make more than a supervisor?

Ian responds that the employ in question has been with the district for 26 years. For next year, the district is looking to add one more custodian with a salary of \$26,000.

Ben asks if adding \$270,000 to the transportation line bring all the buses back for next year. Lindseigh answers- yes.

Theresa asks about the para salary SPED line. What is the average salary? Valerie- \$18,000.

Theresa asks about the business manager line. Is \$78,413 the proposed salary? Lindseigh- yes. Ben asks about the grant that has funded the line. Valerie answers that the grant was not an entitlement grant like Title 1 or IDEA.

Ben asks about the cost increase for a 2.5% raise. Lindseigh answers that the cost increases are \$18,488 for the 2.5% raises and \$12,531.33 for the 3% raises.

Theresa asks about the numbers in red on the revenue documents. Lindseigh answers that the are the estimated revenues from the state.

Theresa says if we pass a budget of \$12,800,000, the tax rate for the school portion will go up to \$22.40. Theresa thinks we must make hard decisions. If the budget committee and the school board work together, than maybe the budget can pass on election day.

Chester says he would like to see some action from the committee.

Theresa mentions that she is frustrated that she is the only one asking questions. Ben says he is looking at adding to the default number.

Lindseigh mentions that COVID-19 is still an issue for the staff and school. She finds it difficult to build from the default budget. She thinks if cuts should happen, they should work from the proposed budget. \$403,510 represents the addition of 4 ½ teaching staff positions. Val clarifies that for the three teachers mentioned earlier, they should budget \$54,000 each. Lindseigh asks the budget committee members to stay on camera. Tiffany says she would support the addition of the three teachers.

Theresa asks about the mill rate. It is \$334,000.

Ben proposes adding in the following. \$270,000 for transportation, \$26,000 for sports, \$30,000 for aid/paras, \$56,000 x3 for added teachers, \$18,488 for 2.5% raises and \$12,531 for 3% raises. Ben's total is \$12,130,865.99.

Lindseigh notes that if the committee were to take of the 4 ½ teachers for COVID planning, the figure is \$12,431,987.

Val mentions that retirement and FICA should be included for the three teaching positions. The total should be \$277,026.

Theresa mentions the tech support person at the school. That person is now being paid by the CARES grant.

Lindseigh wants the committee to know that they have not included and discussed the elimination of supply lines, professional development, and sports.

Ian would like the committee to consider the additional custodian. 160 hours of custodial hours is not sufficient to keep the school clean.

Ben notes that he added athletics into his proposal. The line is \$27,000. Ben's proposal is now \$12,275,366 which reflects a \$3 increase in the tax rate and a \$1 million increase in budget.

The budget committee recesses for 5 minutes.

Lindseigh goes over the proposed numbers. Her request is for \$12,431,987. The difference in her proposal and Ben's is \$156,617. She asks if the committee can agree to split the difference. That figure would be \$12,353,366.51. There is discussion on the final number. The number is corrected to \$12,353,676.

Theresa asks if the committee is ready to vote. Lindseigh makes a motion to approve a school budget amount of \$12,353,676. Ben seconds the motion. Chester calls for a role call vote. Theresa-yes. Tiffany-yes, Lindseigh-yes, Ben-yes, Chester-yes. Motion passes 5-0.

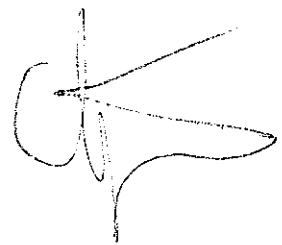
Lindseigh thanks the school board and administration for their budget work. Ben thanks everyone for working together.

Theresa asks Ben if he has heard from the attorney regarding the possible warrant article question about the town fund.

Theresa asks for an audited report from the school. Lindseigh says she will have more information at the school board meeting on Thursday.

Lindseigh makes a motion to adjourn. Theresa seconds. Motion passes 5-0.

Meeting is adjourned at 8:14PM.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Lindseigh', located in the bottom right corner of the page.