

**Town of Milton**  
**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**December 27, 2022**

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Members:** Laura Turgeon (Chair), Bob Carrier, Mike Beaulieu, Lisa Gautreau, Humphrey Williams, Kimberly Ward, Peg Hurd; Absent: Stephanie Mills

**Public:** ??

**SAU #64 Representatives:** Adam Houghton-SAU #64 Superintendent, Mackenze Campbell-Finance Manager

Laura Turgeon, Chair, opened the session at 6:01PM.

**1.) Pledge of Allegiance:** Laura Turgeon, Chair, led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2.) Roll Call:**

- a. Ms. Turgeon, Chair, led the roll call of members to determine if a quorum was present. Laura Turgeon (Chair), Mike Beaulieu, Humphrey Williams, Kimberly Ward, Bob Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Gautreau. A quorum was present.

**3.) BC Business Conduct and Participation:** Ms. Turgeon thanked everyone for attending.

**Discuss School Proposed Budget:** Ms. Turgeon explained Mr. Houghton had previously sent requested information for number of PT/FT Custodians and insurance plans. Mr. Williams included information on the estimated cost/tax impact of proposed School Warrant Articles. Ms. Turgeon clarified discussions at tonight's meeting do not include the final vote; that will occur at an upcoming meeting.

**Line-items discussion:**

**MES Teacher Salaries**

Ms. Turgeon motioned to open for discussion. Seconded by Mr. Williams.

Discussion: There is a small increase of 4% over the 2022 Default. Salaries are part of the teacher's contracts and the step plan. According to Mr. Williams, total overall proposed salaries (not just MES Teacher line-item) is really a reduction from last year's Default. While some salaries like the MES Teachers increased, there are other salaries that decreased. This line-item falls under Regular Education which overall is a 1% decrease. Default is \$3.3; proposed is \$38,000 under.

**All were in favor of Regular Education.**

**Special Education**

Ms. Turgeon motioned to open for discussion. Seconded by Mr. Williams.

Discussion: Mr. Beaulieu asked how much was cut in Special Education? Ms. Turgeon – it is down again by ~\$70,000 or ~2%. Mr. Beaulieu asked Mr. Houghton how did they arrive at that number and where were the decreases to arrive at that large a cut? Mr. Houghton – we worked with

department heads to get as close to what the actual costs are as possible. As he and Mackenzie Campbell, Finance Manager, worked through the budgets, they found random items were sort of just put into areas. Mr. Williams explained the course reimbursements, contract services and an individual insurance policy change all helped to reduce this area. Ms. Turgeon said there were also some salary changes which reduced related expenses such as FICA. Mr. Houghton said they also concentrated on better organizing between the high school and middle ~~school to reflect expenses more accurately~~ ~~more accurately reflect expenses~~ between the two.

Ms. Turgeon motioned to approve and move forward Special Education. Seconded by Mr. Beaulieu.

**All were in favor of Special Education.**

**Special Education Medicaid:** These have decreased.

Ms. Turgeon motioned to approve and move forward. Seconded by Mr. Beaulieu.

**All were in favor of moving forward.**

**Vocational Programs:**

Ms. Turgeon said this has increased slightly. Ms. Turgeon motioned to move forward for discussion. Seconded by Mr. Williams. Mr. Beaulieu asked what caused the increase? Mr. Houghton said it was tuition; overall the area increased by ~\$6,600 (~\$5,600 by tuition). This is tuition to attend Somersworth, Rochester, and Dover Vo-tech programs ~~Schools~~. Ms. Turgeon asked for the number of enrolled students in the programs - ~25-30 students; typically, sophomore-senior years. Mr. Beaulieu said this is essential to have to offer students. Ms. Turgeon motioned to approve and move forward; seconded by Mr. Beaulieu.

**All were in favor of Vocational Programs.**

**MES – Other Instructional Programs:**

Ms. Turgeon said this has decreased slightly from last year, but still matches the default. Ms. Turgeon motioned to open for discussion. Seconded by Mr. Williams.

Ms. Turgeon asked for additional clarification if the Farmington/Nute football would fall into this area? Mr. Houghton said it should although the topic arose after the original budget was put together. The School Board is considering the parameters of the contract and whether changes will be made. Ms. Turgeon understands Farmington is asking Milton to provide uniforms and equipment and wondered how this would all fit. Currently ~15 students will be participating which means Milton will be footing more of the overall costs. Ms. Turgeon said her main concern is where the additional monies will come from. According to Mr. Williams it's estimated to be ~\$4,500. Ms. Turgeon said the \$300 for each student to play is probably already included in this area; it's added expense for uniforms and equipment. Mr. Williams said the biggest difference in this area is ~~really~~ due to umpires/referee retirement.

Ms. Turgeon motioned to approve and move forward; seconded by Ms. Ward.

**All were in favor of MES-Other Instructional Programs.**

**Guidance:**

Ms. Turgeon said the salary and software increased. She asked for additional information. Mr. Houghton explained salaries had been underbudgeted in previous years. They also are part of the step-plan. A Guidance Secretary was also hired. Software increased as well. Overall, this

increased from \$1,400 to \$2,800. Ms. Turgeon clarified Guidance Software for MES will be \$2,800 and the same amount for the high school – total \$5,600. Overall Guidance is under the Default (\$900); however, it is \$45,000 over last year's budget; an increase of 14%.

Ms. Turgeon motioned to approve and move forward; seconded by Ms. Gautreau.

**All were in favor of Guidance.**

**Nurse's Salary:**

Ms. Turgeon asked if there one nurse split between schools or does each school have a nurse?

Mr. Houghton said there is a nurse for each school. He said the nurses had been previously underbudgeted; this budget reflects bringing the nurses' salary up to where it should be. Ms. Turgeon clarified the nurse's salary is already at this level due to step increases and longevity; rather it is increasing the budget to reflect actual numbers. Ms. Gautreau said next year's expenditure reports should be more accurate. The area reflects a 7% increase over last year but stays within the default.

Ms. Turgeon motioned to approve and move forward; seconded by Ms. Gautreau.

**All were in favor of Nurse's Salary.**

**Improvement of Instruction:**

Ms. Turgeon asked for information to help improve her understanding of this area as this is a larger increase. Mr. Houghton said it's important to understand this is all contractual. Per their contracts, teachers are allowed to use up to \$400 per year to attend workshops and access to two courses each year through UNH. **Teachers are also required to have a specific number of hours for professional development. This is all part of the teachers contracts.**

Ms. Turgeon motioned to approve and move forward; seconded by Ms. Gautreau.

**All were in favor of moving forward Improvement of Instruction.**

**Library Salary:**

Ms. Turgeon said the budget reflects a 4% increase. Her understanding the Nute Library's librarian salary is paid through the Nute trust ~~ees fund~~. According to Ms. Hurd, the librarian that works from 3-7PM is paid via the trust ~~ees fund~~. The actual day librarian is paid through the school's budget. Ms. Gautreau clarified the library is open to the public during after-school hours or when the school is closed. The increase does match up with last year's Default.

Ms. Turgeon motioned to approve and move forward with Library Salary; seconded by Ms. Gautreau.

**All were in favor of moving forward the Library Salary.**

**School Board:**

Ms. Turgeon asked Mr. Houghton to explain the decrease. Mr. Houghton – we had previously budgeted for School Board Elected Officers for which there are none; the line-item was removed. Ms. Turgeon motioned to approve and move forward with School Board; seconded by Ms. Gautreau.

**All were in favor of moving forward the School Board.**

**Superintendent:**

Mr. Williams asked for clarification around the Maintenance line-item. Mr. Houghton said the

biggest expense is for their accounting software. Mr. Williams asked if it should be in the software line-item which currently has nothing in it. Mr. Houghton said this is just where it had been put in before. Mr. Williams suggested the software be moved to the Software line-item, especially for tracking purposes. Ms. Turgeon asked what the advertising line-item was for? Mr. Houghton said it is used to advertise for open teacher positions. The line was dropped from \$1,500 to \$250. Ms. Turgeon questioned why the significant drop? Mr. Campbell said previously the line-item was heavily overextended. Dues and fees more than doubled. Mr. Houghton said this is for his membership in NH School Administrator's Association.

Ms. Turgeon motioned to move forward. Seconded by Ms. Gautreau.

**All were in favor of moving forward the Superintendent.**

#### **Principal Salary:**

This is an area of definite increase. Ms. Turgeon asked if there are Principals at all three schools? Mr. Houghton – there is a Principal at Elementary and a Principal at Middle/High School. The Middle/High Principal is tracked separately. Ms. Turgeon asked if there is a secretary position for each Principal or is there a split between Principals? Mr. Houghton said there are two secretaries assigned to each building. He said the increase could be due to their overall salary analysis of positions; administrators did receive a 2% increase. Ms. Hurd said the secretary salaries had been overspent the last couple of years. Mr. Williams said the Curriculum Coordinator increase which is due to the position changing from part-time to a full-time position has had a direct impact on the overall line-item increase. Another increase is in the copier/print line-items. Mr. Houghton said their analysis showed they have over 90 copiers/printers spread throughout the buildings. They are working to establish better controls. The overall line-item increased from \$5,200 to over \$14,000. Mr. Williams recommended tabling the Copier Lease Agreement so additional information could be gathered.

Ms. Turgeon motioned to table the MES Copier Lease, Principal Mid/High Maintenance Agreements. Mr. Houghton asked how they should provide the follow-up information to the committee? Ms. Turgeon requested they send the information directly to her.

**All were in favor of tabling MES Copier Lease and Principal Maintenance Agreements.**

Ms. Turgeon asked about the increase in Books line-item. Mr. Houghton – they are Agenda books that the schools purchase for the students. Ms. Hurd said this is a line that typically is over-expended on a regular basis. Graduation expenses increased by \$500. Mr. Houghton said this more in line with where they should be. Ms. Turgeon said the increase in the Office of the Principal is mostly due to the Curriculum Coordinator position; this position is very important to the School District.

Ms. Turgeon motioned to move forward; tabling the copier and maintenance agreements until additional information is gathered.

**All were in favor of moving forward.**

#### **Custodial:**

Ms. Turgeon said there are a lot of questions regarding this area. She had asked how many custodians in total are there with a breakout of full-time and part-time custodians. There are 7 total custodians: 6 full-time and 1 part-time. Ms. Turgeon asked for explanation to the 3 line-items for the custodial salaries. Mr. Houghton said one line is for the Elementary School and the other

two are for the split between Middle and High Schools. Facilities lines indicate many of the splits between the three schools. Maintenance Supervisor line-item – that is for the Facilities Director (which is also split between the 3 buildings). Mr. Beaulieu asked if there was a decrease or increase for the Facilities Director position? It is a decrease. Ms. Hurd said the previous Interim Facilities Director position was given a huge bump in salary at the time of hiring which had not been approved by the School Board. Ms. Turgeon said between 7 other custodians there is an overall increase. Ms. Hurd said this is part of the Employee Retention Program. Ms. Gautreau said this matches the Default. Maintenance Fuel has doubled; electricity & gas have increased. Mr. Houghton reminded the committee that the schools are currently going through the LED conversion project and is hopeful this will have a positive impact and savings on electric costs. Mr. Williams said the fuel is the biggest impact – about a 40% increase. Mr. Beaulieu requested the LED Conversion project line-item be tabled for now; he is gathering information and will have questions in the future. Ms. Hurd said the project is not in the budget. Mr. Beaulieu asked if it was a Warrant Article and where exactly does the project show up? Ms. Hurd said savings from Eversource goes directly to paying down the lease. Ms. Turgeon asked about the total cost of the project and when does the rebate currently being sent to Affinity end? Mr. Campbell – the rebates come to the school who then use that to pay off the lease. As the rebates reduces in amount the budgeted electric costs help pay the lease; once the lease is fully paid the School District will then own the equipment. The lease term is 7 years. Ms. Turgeon asked if there is a total cost amount over the 7 years of the lease? Mr. Campbell said he could send that to Ms. Turgeon. Ms. Turgeon said the information being presented currently is very different than the original presentation she attended and does not recall any discussion around a 7-year lease. Ms. Hurd said the other option was to pay the \$300,000 up front. Mr. Beaulieu said the \$300,000 up front would have additional savings over the years. Mr. Campbell said that may not be so as the systems being used have ongoing savings through decreased electric use. Mr. Beaulieu said he would still like to table the overall discussion. Mr. Williams – while the project is not in the budget, this could be discussed further. Mr. Beaulieu asked how is the project currently being paid for? Mr. Campbell – through electric savings. Mr. Williams – total electricity increase being proposed is \$9,099; the school is accounting for their savings. One concern is if the electric can be increased in the Default; because it is a school this might be allowed. Mr. Houghton said because they are legally mandated to be open, they are allowed to do this. Mr. Williams said overall total electricity is about 11%. Half of the increase from last year is due to fuel and electricity. Ms. Turgeon motioned to move forward; seconded by Ms. Gautreau. All were in favor moving forward Custodial.

#### **Transportation:**

Ms. Turgeon said it looks like this is for all transportation. Mr. Houghton said this area is for all in-house transportation, although they do sometimes use 3<sup>rd</sup> party transportation depending on the student need. Ms. Turgeon questioned if they had removed the athletic driver salary from the overall area? Mr. Houghton said they tried to build a budget based on where the related expenses resided; information was broken out based on which lines the drivers were on (ie. elementary, vocational, high school, etc.). Some drivers transport student from multiple groups. All drivers are hired within the SAU. According to Mr. Houghton this system is much better overall for the students based on district whose transport services are provided via 3<sup>rd</sup> party. Overall, the line is down 10%. Mr. Carrier asked how many buses are leased? Mr. Houghton believes two of the

larger buses and one of the smaller buses are leased; although Ms. Hurd thinks it's just two buses leased. Fuel is currently purchased through a state program. According to Mr. Houghton, for elementary and middle school's the associated fuel costs can be part of the default while the high school cannot; the district is not required to provide transportation to high school students. Ms. Turgeon motioned to move forward Transportation; seconded by Ms. Gautreau.

**All were in favor moving forward Transportation.**

**Transportation Special Education Contract Services:**

This decreased significantly due to purchase of a specialized van to provide services.

Ms. Turgeon motioned to move forward; seconded by Ms. Gautreau

**All were in favor moving forward.**

**Field Trip Curriculum:**

There were no changes. Ms. Turgeon motioned to open for discussion; seconded by Ms. Ward.

Ms. Turgeon motioned to move forward; seconded by Ms. Hurd.

**All were in favor of moving forward.**

**IT Services:**

This area has decreased by close to \$36,000. Some of the items previously found within this area have been shifted to other areas. Ms. Turgeon questioned what was remaining in the area. Mr. Houghton – the school ones are to replace student Chrome Books.

Ms. Turgeon motioned to move forward; seconded by Ms. Hurd.

**All were in favor of moving forward.**

**Support Services:**

This increased slightly overall. Workers' comp has been split between the buildings.

Ms. Turgeon motioned to move forward; seconded by ?? Ms. Gautreau

**All were in favor.**

**Bonds:**

All were in favor of moving on.

**Transfer to Food Services:**

This is for the grant items which are gone. No changes.

Ms. Turgeon motioned to move on.

**All were in favor.**

**Transfer for Grant Expenditures:**

All were in favor of moving on.

**Food Services:**

Ms. Turgeon – there is a large increase and asked for clarification. Mr. Campbell – YTD the school is already at \$200,000. Mr. Beaulieu asked what specifically is the increase for? Ms. Turgeon – it is contracted services. Mr. Houghton said it is reflective of what the current contract is with one more year left in the contract. Mr. Beaulieu asked if the school participates in the 24-hours of

hunger? Mr. Houghton said they are benefactors of the **End 68 Hours of Hunger** program; many students do receive weekend food bags. The school usually does food drives one to two times every year which usually goes toward meeting student needs. Mr. Campbell said they also support many teachers who take a reduction from their paychecks to support the program. Mr. Williams – currently while the school is at ~41% of the school year, they are already at 61% expended which amounts to a 150% increase in overall costs. Ms. Turgeon said everyone is experiencing an increase in food costs. She asked if the school receives any monies back from the federal government? According to Mr. Campbell, yes because the school participates in the national school lunch program and the elementary school participates in the fresh fruits and vegetables program. Ms. Turgeon asked if overall costs may level off further into the year? Mr. Campbell – hopefully yes although there continues to be unpredictability. Ms. Turgeon motioned to move forward; seconded by Ms. Hurd.

**All were in favor of moving forward.**

Mr. Beaulieu said he does not remember ever being able to move through the school Budget as fast as this year. Mr. Williams thanked Mr. Houghton and Mr. Campbell for making it easier. The Budget Committee thanked them for their hard work and presentation. Mr. Campbell thanked the committee for their support.

#### **4.) School Warrant Articles:**

Ms. Turgeon thanked Mr. Houghton and Mr. Campbell for sending over the Warrants. This is for general discussion only; there is no voting on the articles at this meeting. Mr. Williams recommended not having any Warrant Articles specify wording that indicate the Article would raise money from utilizing the town's general fund; this fund has been depleted which has caused an increase to next year's tax rate. Ms. Gautreau said it's important to help voters understand how Warrant Articles are paid for and the related impact on the town. Total Warrant Articles add up to \$151,000.

Article #3: 5,000 to purchase media for Nute High School & Library

Article #4: \$50,000 for the Capital Reserve Fund – Building & Maintenance Fund (current balance of \$162,000)

Mr. Houghton – it would be helpful to him when crafting Warrant Articles to have common/standard language between the School and the Town to help reduce possible confusion amongst the voters. **Mr. Campbell stated that** last year the school returned ~\$500,000 to the town **last year**; what does happen to that money? Mr. Williams said the monies go into the general fund and helps cover expenditures from the general fund; the unassigned fund balance is part of the general fund. The past few years, there have been large amounts of money used to offset taxes. **And a large amount of money from Warrant Articles written to be taken from the unassigned fund balance.**

#### **5.) Review / Approve Minutes:**

**Minutes of December 13, 2022:**

Ms. Turgeon motioned to approve the December 13, 2022, minutes with corrections. Mr. Williams seconded the motion.

All were in favor- **Laura Turgeon, Lisa Gautreau, Humphrey Williams, Mike Beaulieu, Kimberly Ward, Mike Beaulieu** voted Yes. Motion Carried – 6/ 0/ 0

**6.) Town Expenditure Reports:** There was no discussion.

**7.) Other business that may come before the board:**

a.) There was none.

**8.) Public Comments or Questions on Budget Committee Meeting Topics:** There was none.

**9.) Next Meetings: January 10, 2023**

Mr. Williams suggested having an additional meeting on January 5<sup>th</sup> for budget finalization. Ms. Turgeon will add this to the schedule.

**10.) Adjournment:**

a. Ms. Turgeon motioned to adjourn at 8:30PM; Seconded by Ms. Gautreau. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Amy Winslow-Weiss, Recording Secretary – Budget Committee**