

Town of Milton
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
August 22, 2023

ATTENDANCE:

Members: Laura Turgeon (Chair), Bob Carrier, Renata Gamache, Peg Hurd, Kim Wischnewski, Stephanie Mills, Claudine Burnham, Mike Beaulieu

Public: Mackenzie Campbell- SAU #64

Laura Turgeon, Chair, opened the session at 6:00PM.

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), Kimberly Wischnewski, Bob Carrier, Peg Hurd, Renata Gamache, Stephanie Mills, Claudine Burnham, Mike Beaulieu. A quorum was present.

3.) BC Business Conduct: Ms. Turgeon addressed the Budget Committee conduct and said it's important not to speak over each other, raise hands, be polite to one another and to stay on tasks. If there are any concerns, a committee member should contact Ms. Turgeon privately for further discussion.

4.) Review/Approval of Minutes:

Ms. Hurd motioned to approve the July 25, 2023, minutes with corrections. Ms. Wischnewski seconded the motion.

Laura Turgeon, Peg Hurd, Mike Beaulieu, Bob Carrier, Renata Gamache, Kim Wischnewski, Claudine Burnham voted Yes. Stephanie Mills abstained. Motion Carried – 7/0/1.

5.) Town Expenditure Reports: Ms. Turgeon has spoken to Mr. Williams, BOS Chair, regarding expenditure reports and specific line-items within the report. YTD line-item overages include warranting additional research: TA PT Salary (could be reporting error), Legal Services (Ms. Burnham said this line is holding steady), TA Contract Services (slightly higher), TA Postage (as other departments are using, postage is now in single line-item), TA Employee Functions (Ms. Burnham said this is food for lunches during lunch and learn programs), TC/TX Professional Services (the current Town Clerk has been taking classes), TC Office Supplies (slightly higher).

Fire Department Overages: Ms. Burnham explained last year's decision to not pay for part-time line-item through the revolving account, as done in previous years, as it's important to get a true understanding of the department's overall costs. The PT line-item is higher since it has been providing 24/7 services since 2020. The full-time salary line is also higher due to increased overtime to fulfill the hours.

Highway Department: Overages were expected due to additional work required because of earlier

storms. Grant funding may be used to help offset the increased costs. An excavator has been rented to help with road repairs. There has been discussion regarding purchasing an excavator in the future and approval has been given to receive quotes. Ms. Burnham said this has been included in this year's CIP.

The Welfare line is over as there has been an increase in residents requesting assistance. The food insecurity is currently very high.

6.) School Expenditure Report, Revenue and Grant Reports:

Ms. Turgeon thanked Mackenzie Campbell for attending the meeting to answer questions or provide additional information regarding the reports and line-item overages. Ms. Turgeon asked about refunds and where do those monies go – do they go to the town or spent elsewhere? Mr. Campbell said that money goes back into the school's expense account. Asking for further clarification, Ms. Mills asked if that money was deducted from the next month's bill to the town as the school receives money on a monthly basis which is then used to pay its bills. Mr. Campbell said the money is applied back into the specific line-item. Ms. Turgeon – when this happens and the money is now in the line-item, does it sit in the school account till the end of the year or is it expended again? Mr. Campbell said the school is not trying to overspend. Ms. Turgeon assured Mr. Campbell the committee is not accusing Mr. Campbell of doing anything improper, it's just important to understand how monies are expended and the numbers do not seem correct. Ms. Turgeon wondered if next year's budget could be decreased by \$1M, because it looks as though that is how much will be remaining. Mr. Campbell had indicated the budget will be under by ~\$800,000. Mr. Campbell said it's important to note the school was severely understaffed this past year. He does understand the goal of the Budget Committee is to be fiscally conservative in their decision making.

Further review of the expenditure reports, Ms. Mills said it does appear there has been an increase in redundant lines. Mr. Campbell agreed and said there is redundancy throughout the reports; however, he noted this probably happened since they have to report the cost per student to the state and in the past having so many line-items did make the reporting easier. He and Adam Houghton will continue to review the reports and streamline as can be done.

Ms. Turgeon said reviewing the reports it looks like the school will end up ~90% expended. Mr. Campbell said for this year, Mr. Houghton has focused on hiring and overall has done much better than last year to be as full-staffed as possible. The budget templates have been sent out to school departments and they should have a good idea of what to expect for next year's budget. Ms. Mills asked if exit interviews are done to help decrease turnover. Mr. Campbell acknowledged huge losses in staff this past year, especially ones like the Transportation Director (offered an opportunity closer to his home). Ms. Turgeon said staff/teacher turnover is not just an issue for Milton. Ms. Hurd said Mr. Houghton is working on incorporating exit interviews into the process. They are also going into the teacher contract negotiation process. Ms. Turgeon thanked Mr. Campbell for attending the meeting.

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

Capital Improvement Program Committee Members:

Stephanie Mills – Budget Committee representative
Renata Gamache – At large member
Claudine Burnham – BOS representative

Ms. Mills said the next CIP meeting is scheduled for September 6th with the public hearing tentatively scheduled for September 20th. They are working on board presentations.

8.) Public Comments or Questions on Budget Committee Meeting Topics: There were no public comments.

**9.) Next Meetings: September 14, 2023 – Joint BOS Meeting
September 26, 2023 – Regular Budget Committee Meeting**

10.) Adjournment:

- a. Ms. Hurd motioned to adjourn at 8:00PM; Seconded by Ms. Mills. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Winslow-Weiss, Recording Secretary – Budget Committee