

**Town of Milton  
Budget Committee Special Meeting  
School Board Presentations  
Milton Town Hall  
Thursday December 1, 2016 6:00 P.M.**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Chairman Brown called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 pm and welcomed everyone.**

**Roll Call:** Mike Beaulieu (Selectmen Representative, on phone) Maureen Steer, Tom McDougall, Bob Carrier, Chairman Larry Brown, Lue Snyder (School Board Representative), Stan Nadeau (Water District Commissioner), Denis Wing, excused, Caitlin Magargee absent.

Quorum was present

**SAU Administration Unit #64:** Interim Superintendent Earl Sussman, Business Administrator Nathan Castle, Student Services Ann Kebler, Facility Director Bob Adams, Transportation Director Tim Eldridge, Principal Nute Middle/High School Scott Currier, Principal MES John Safina.

**Milton School Board:** Chairman Doug Shute, Peg Hurd, Paul Steer, Stephanie Berry.

**In Attendance:** Ann Walsh:

**Presentation of the Proposed School Budget FY 2017-2018:**

Nathan Castle gave an overview of the general items and proceeded to give an overview of the controllable and uncontrollable costs.

**General Items:**

- The proposed budget excludes warrant articles.
- Function 2320 SAU expenses have been added to the operating budget.
- Non-affiliated employee salaries are based on a 2% increase.
- Teacher salary increases are not included due to current negotiation.
- Health insurance is based on an increase of 5.9% over 2016-2017 rates.
- There are no changes to dental insurance over 2016-2017
- The retirement rate for teachers increased to 17.36% and support staff increased to 11.38% due to the state portion going down.
- The proposed budget has an overall increase of \$201, 401.84, which is a 1.97% increase FY 17.

**Controllable/Uncontrollable Costs**

- Uncontrollable costs is 90.7% of the budget (\$9,478,308.76) this covers salaries, benefits, contracted services, utilities and tuition.
- Controllable costs is 5.6% of the budget (\$585,250.42) this covers travel, supplies, repairs, building maintenance, books, furniture, dues, equipment, software, etc.

## 12.1.16 BC SPL MTG

- Grant Expenditures offset by grant revenues which is 3.7% of the budget

Total budget \$10,444,969.18

Interim Superintendent E. Sussman stated that Special Education mandated cost have risen 200%, however the part that they can control has gone down to \$119,000. He stated that most of the budget lines have gone down with the exception of the Special Education mandated costs which they have no control over.

N. Castle stated that the first 8 pages of the packet corresponds with the actual budget itself which starts on page 9, there are notes imbedded in the lines for easier references, back up paperwork and longer lists that would not fit In the actual proposed budget are also included.

L. Brown asked about the redevelopment of the SAU office to the Damon House, and wanted to know where they stand with Wakefield's disaffiliation from Milton.

P. Steer discussed the Damon House and how this will save money once it is renovated and they will no longer need to pay rent at the office they are at now.

L. Snyder stated that they will be requesting to see if Strafford County Community Corrections Program could help the SAU physically move into the Damon House which will save money.

E. Sussman stated with the Milton and Wakefield split they will be taking inventory of all the assets and have it appraised and they will decide who gets what.

S. Nadeau asked if the increase of \$201,410 included the dedication from last year's SAU separate budget? N. Castle stated that it did come off.

S. Nadeau asked what the SAU warrant article was last year. N. Castle stated it was \$410,000.86. S. Nadeau asked if this is already taken into consideration and that their budget now is in this budget, N. Castle stated yes, and proceeded to explain where the information was in the packet to help further understand.

S. Nadeau stated they are still over \$201,000. P. Steer stated that their controllable costs are down \$119,000 and that their Special Education is up \$330,000. He stated that they took out everything in the controllable costs that they absolutely didn't need, they can't cut Special Education cost.

A. Kebler whom has a great deal of contact with multiple grant sources and Special Education programs and the IEP which mandate services that must be provided to a child who requires the service. She explained the cost of the Special Education and the new Partner Program which is for behavioral issues and how money was saved with this new program even though there was an increase, she also went into detail of how the programs work.

J. Safina Stated that data was performed for the first quarter and the data showed that there were 10 to 12 students with 6 or more referrals and 3 where in the Partner Program and now they are down to 4 or 5 and none are in the Partner Program. So there is a decrease in Behavioral issues due to this program. The bottom line is that the uncontrollable costs where reduced due to finding an alternate way of providing mandated services through a different provider.

S. Nadeau asked if the support staff received an increase in pay this year, D. Shute stated that they got a 7% increase on a default budget.

T. McDougall asked about the data for the Special Education and the Partner Program and what they are comparing their statistics with. J. Safina stated that they are comparing the first quarter with Last year's

data to show that there has been a decrease in lost time due to this Partner Program. T. McDougall stated in the back up data in the packet he notices that 6 students are now are in the program but there are nine seats, A. Kebler stated that there are only 7 seats so there is one extra, he also asked if next year comes and there are only 4 are they still obligated to pay for all 7 seats of instructional, A. Kebler stated yes they are, if there are extra seats they can reach out to other districts to fill them just not fill all of them, T. McDougall also asked if that was to happen what other ramifications are there to the program other than the spare seats being used, A. Kebler stated that there would not be any other ramifications.

A. Kebler explained more how they are cutting the Special Education but it is not noticeable till after the first year, each year thereafter you will start to see the savings.

L. Brown stated how he interpreted the cost savings, In terms of how you calculate the staff and instructional program savings over the quarter. If you do a simple task in time analysis dividing the hour in 15 minute blocks you can assign instructional or disciplinary walking the student down the hall to that 15 minute block adding those up become the definition of where the savings are for the quarter.

L. Brown asked If somebody comes in the ABA program I'm assigning a skill set to the ABA specialist, a student comes in our own district requires services no problem it's within the skill set. A student comes in from the outside and requires different services it's not a problem it's still within the competency of the service provider

A. Kebler stated; the partner program is an ABA program we have some students in the private program that also require therapeutic program.

A. Kebler stated; we should be able to get catastrophic aid for the partner program. The catastrophic aid is the cost that is incurred above the amount the Dept. of Education set, last year it was \$55,000. If we spend over \$55,000 on a student that money came back to us. We have to submit the partner program a breakdown of the cost for next year.

L. Brown asked; is the catastrophic aid a limited pool or if you submit what the expenses are you will be reimburse.

A. Kebler stated that you submit what your expenses are and anything above what rate they set.

Tom McDougall: This partner program is a contracted service where's the administration for this program come from?

A. Kebler: what we get from the New England Center for children they give us \$140,000 and next year it will be more because we didn't program for July and August last year we will this year. What we get for that a master level special education teacher trained in ABA that is from the New England Center for Children they are employed by the N.E.C.

We employ the ABA tutors so the supervisory piece for us of the partner program is the ABA tutors. The other pieces are the supervisor through the N.E.C. and it's a yearly contract.

M. Steer stated that this is showing 9 students, should we be changing this number to 7 or was there a potential for 9?

A. Kebler stated that there was a potential for 9, we currently have 7 students in the partner program and the 8<sup>th</sup> Student which is what they call Affiliate student. The student that came in our Middle school has a case manager which is a Milton employee but the N.E.C. and the partner program consult together to provide programs for that student.

M. Steer asked if there is a seat open now. A. Kebler stated no.

M. Steer asked if we need space for 6 we have space for 7 because of unique circumstances but in general you're moving forward with the 6 students. A. Kebler: we're also providing for that middle school student.

M. Steer asked what happens if 2 more students move in. A. Kebler stated we do not have the capacity to grow that program there is a range of age that you can be that a student can be in the program.

D. Wing stated; looking at some of the salaries in the Regular ED most of the salaries have come down how does that play in the contract negotiations?

N. Castle stated the reduction in salaries compared to last year is turnovers teachers leaving, retiring or whatever the circumstances are. We get someone else to replace that position at a lower salary.

D. Wing stated when you take those 8 of 10 out and you zero them out of the bottom line it would increase by \$72,000.

N. Castle stated we're negotiating the current salaries which is what is in the proposed budget so that would not go up.

The school calendar year is from July 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 to June 30<sup>th</sup> 2017. The town's fiscal year is from Jan 1st to Dec. 31st. The current contract ends June 30<sup>th</sup> 2017.

D. Shute stated that the teachers have not voted on their contract yet. If the contract doesn't get passed by the voter's there will be no increase.

N. Castle stated that the \$74,000 would be a savings.

L. Brown stated the raise that the town employees gets starts in July 1<sup>st</sup> and is for 6 months and then picks up 6 months again in the following year.

S. Nadeau stated that the Elementary Sped director which was previously the Elementary Sped Coordinator what was the reason for changing the 3 lines?

N. Castle stated that we changed these lines because it's a position that's setup for all 3 schools.

S. Nadeau asked does the Elementary Coordinator line still exist.

Supt Sussman stated it's a new language.

S. Nadeau asked why we have such an increase.

L. Brown stated that the statutory or district set qualifications of the individual may run that.

With the withdrawal you're moving to 1 special Ed director. Right now you have 1 Student Service Director whom services both Wakefield and Milton, and next year what you will have is 1 person. You have to have a director.

The Coordinator is being eliminated because it's a director position.

S. Nadeau: We have a 100% increase on the first one.

A. Kebler stated that currently you pay 50% Sped coordinator salary out of the IDEA . You cannot pay a directors salary out of the IDEA grant, so when you go to 1 person and it's a director won't be able to use that IDEA money to pay that salary.

S. Nadeau asked if we have lost that grant money.

A. Kebler stated No, You can't pay the director out of IDEA, so that the 50% that you we're paying that Sped coordinator can be used for other things.

A. Kebler explained the IDEA grant (Individual disabilities Education Act) which is a Federal act requires us to provide programming for Sped Ed. This year Milton has \$155,000 that we get from the Federal Government that we can spend on allowable cost under the IDEA Grant. They've changed it and it's now will be a 2 year grant, so the IDEA Grant for this year through next year we will get another allotment in the fall it will continue till September 2018. The money has to be spent by 2018 and then we will get another 2 year grant. Historically when it was a 1 year grant any money that haven't been spent can be carried over into the second year, now they're not doing the carrying over their just spreading it into a 2 year period.

S. Nadeau asked if this is part of the grant that you had money in the budget and later you found out the grant existed.

Supt Sussman stated that they had found out about grant months ago it's the DHHS grant. It was for \$180,000 for the 1<sup>st</sup> year it was \$80,000 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> year a \$100,000 for 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

A. Kebler stated in addition of not having that 50% of the coordinator as your director out of IDEA there is a raise for that position that person is getting an increase that position is absorbing what I do.

S. Nadeau asked if they're getting compensated for additional duties plus the 2%.

N. Castle stated it does not include 2%.

S. Nadeau asked what the added Sped secretary duties for Elem why?

Supt Sussman stated its 10 extra days, you have roles that this person has to fill in an assist for Medicare reimbursements and high cost items like Sped Ed and things like that.

S. Berry stated in order for us to eliminate these positions from the SAU that covers these duties, We had to ask existing staff members to add to their job duties, so that's why their getting a 2% raise and some jobs have tripled with the expectation of what they have to do. This is where the raises come from because we have all the employees that are currently now at the SAU, that is doing those jobs.

S. Nadeau stated that he was glad he asked the question as anyone looking at that line would think that they are getting a big raise with no explanation behind it.

N. Castle explained where the information for that line is in the hand out as there is back up information explaining the increase.

D. Shute stated that when they combined the jobs, they took the old job and put it in black and when they combined the jobs they put it in red, so they took two people and put it into one job and that person was compensated, they also did this in the schools.

S. Nadeau stated that the board would like a copy of that so that they know when looking over the budget they have that documentation.

S. Nadeau Stated that the High Sped support salaries had a \$60,000 increase, why?

A. Kebler stated that they would get back to him with an answer.

A. Kebler stated that they are down \$83,000 in elementary special education support, so these are kids that are moving from the elementary to the High School.

S. Nadeau stated that the elementary Sped tutor salaries increase by \$167,520.

A. Kebler stated that it was the ADA tutors and explained more with the backup pages.

S. Nadeau stated it would be good to have separate supporting documentation showing why such a big increase, A. Kebler stated she would get that for them.

S. Nadeau stated that there is a line for new position of a middle school sped tutor salaries, why?

A. Kebler stated that one of their ADA tutors is in the middle school.

S. Nadeau asked if the \$176,000 is not the total cost but in addition to.

A. Kebler stated yes.

S. Nadeau asked about the snow removal last year there was \$1 on that line and this year it is at \$1,000, what changed?

The School Board stated that every other year there seems to be a snowy winter so they plan for snow removal on the roof every other year.

D. Wing asked about the Elementary spec contracted services line being up and down over the last few years and would like to know why.

A. Kebler stated that this year it is the Partner Program as it is considered contracted services.

M. Steer asked about the IDEA Grant where it went from one year to two years, are they still getting the \$155,000 or is that going to double.

A. Kebler stated that we will get the \$155,000 this year and another allotment in the fall of 2017 and the full two allotments will need to be spent by the September of 2018. This grant is changing as they speak.

S. Nadeau asked about the Drug Grant that he had brought up earlier; he asked where it was in the budget and what it was under, the expenditure part of it, how much the grant for is.

N. Castle stated the grant was for \$80,000, he stated it was not represented in the budget.

S. Nadeau asked why?

N. Castle explained where the grant will be coming out of and that he forgot to update the figure.

S. Nadeau asked if there was going to be an \$80,000 credit.

N. Castle stated that it would show as an expense.

S. Nadeau asked, the money that was allocated in last year's budget did it get put back in this year's budget or did it get taken out because of the grant money, because if they had left it in then whatever was in there plus this year's additional \$80,000.

L. Snyder stated that the school was only paying half of a position after March and after the budget was approved they went to a full expenditure by the school that was voted on by a majority of the school board. So you never saw the whole thing in the budget for the position. They have taken that \$40,000 away from that position because the complete pay is \$80,000 so it does not show up.

L. Brown asked what the position title is and to which group of kids the services are for.

S. Currier stated that it was for student assistant's counselor, which is for kids with a high risk for drug and alcohol abuse.

L. Brown asked about where funds are for that position (Student Assistants Counselor) starting July 1<sup>st</sup>, will grant money be available for that position. Does that grant fully cover the position?

The School Board stated no.

L. Brown asked what line it comes from in the operating budget, how much is there.

S. Nadeau wants to know if in fact the original money was in the budget and voted on by the people, a) that money was obviously part of the money that went back to the town, b) where is the money in this budget showing that the town isn't carrying it.

N. Castle explained where in the budget, states that it is on the line for Middle School Teacher Salaries and High School Teacher Salaries and benefits, at this point they do not have a budget for the additional \$40,000, they are working on it, they will get that to them as soon as they can.

L. Brown stated that in the next discussion they will have a line item that will show what the grant and district contributions will be for that position.

M. Steer asked what year the \$180,000 was for and what year the \$80,000 was for.

N. Castle stated that the \$80,000 for the rest of this fiscal year and the \$100,000 was for this budget.

T. McDougall asked what the expected enrollment would be for Elementary, Middle and High School.

L. Snyder stated that it has been around the same enrollment for the last 15 years with a few years up and a few years down but level for the most part.

T. McDougall asked about high school public tuition how it went from \$13,000 to \$0 and if they should keep \$1 on the line to keep it open, A. Kebler stated that would be a good idea.

T. McDougall asked about the Elementary supplies, they dropped it \$16,000, why.

S. Carrier stated that was because the supplies, Elementary Equipment replacement, and elementary digital learning resources were distributed among other lines where they are supposed to be instead of putting them all under one line of supplies as they did not fit into that line.

The School Board stated yes.

T. McDougall asked what BD Contracted services were.

A. Kebler stated it was Bright Beginnings Preschool Program, T. McDougall asked why they are renting a copier and aren't there other copiers in the school they can use, A. Kebler stated it was because they are out in the portable and so they have a small copier as they need to copy IAP's which are large documents.

T. McDougall wants to know why the Ball field Maintenance was \$8,000 when a previous year was only \$2,000 why such a change from one year to the next.

B. Adams stated that it was higher for this year anticipating for higher ball field maintenance.

L. Brown asked if they see an upward trend because of the age and the tenderness of the buildings or do they anticipate the repair and maintenance being flat lined with small changes.

B. Adams stated that the town voters have supported the capital reserve fund for maintenance, so the operating budget typically includes all of the normal things we would expect to do, they use the capital reserve funds to help out during the year for unplanned events as well as things that we can plan ahead for. In the CIP will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the school roof.

T. Eldridge spoke about transportation issues including one bus that will need to be replaced, maintenance increase a little due to the age of the busses.

L. Brown asked if they participate in the software program that DPW uses to track maintenance on vehicles or something similar.

T. Eldridge stated they have something similar using paper and pen no software.

S. Nadeau asked if on the Irving contract the town still has the opportunity to go on that as well, purchase under the school's contract.

School Board stated yes.

S. Nadeau asked when they think they will have the default budget made.

N. Castle stated that it was 99% done.

L. Brown asked if they used a plan like the WEX program the town uses to offset the cost of gas.

T. Eldridge stated that they use the State for Gas and they are not on a fixed price.

L. Brown asked if there are things that they see that you are content that the district budget is providing and are there any areas where you see a cost that at the very least should not go down or would go up. The School Board stated that they spent a considerable amount of time talking to the teachers and the staff members and making sure that they focused on things that they need.

T. McDougall wanted to know what the building automation systems controls at the schools.

School Board stated it controls the high school, middle school and the town library heat.

T. McDougall asked if they did not have the system would they have to use manual thermostats. And School Board stated that if they did not have that system they would have to have some type of thermostat that could do some type of automatic setbacks for you in the heating mode.

T. McDougall stated that between the middle school and the high school there is about \$8,500 being spent on the building automation. Are they seeing \$8,500 worth of savings or convenience out of the system?

L. Brown asked how many zones the main high school boiler now controls.

School Board stated that it ends up being split, some of the rooms have their own zones; there are 4 zones in the older building and a few in the newer one.

L. Brown would like to know how many teachers there were last year and this year, how many support staff there are, and the total salary value for those aggregated positions.

Next meeting will be on Thursday December 8, 2016 at the Milton Town Hall at 6pm.

**Adjournment:**

- Motion to Adjourn made by S. Nadeau seconded by M. Steer 8:27 pm. All in favor. Motion stands. 7-0-0

**Respectfully Submitted by:**

Brenda Pabon – Recording Clerk

Date Approved: 12/15/2016 BLP

These are Draft minutes until approved by the Budget Committee