

**Town of Milton  
Budget Committee Meeting**

Milton Town Hall  
Thursday December 15, 2016 6:00 P.M.  
Public Session Meeting Minutes

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Chairman Brown called the regular meeting to order at 6:05 pm and welcomed everyone.**

**Roll Call:** Maureen Steer, Tom McDougall, Bob Carrier, Chairman Larry Brown, Lue Snyder (School Board Representative), Stan Nadeau (Water District Commissioner), Denis Wing, Brenda Pabon (Recording Clerk), Mike Beaulieu (Selectmen Representative) excused.  
Quorum was present

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

**Milton School Board:** Chairman Doug Shute, Peg Hurd.

**In Attendance:** Tim Eldridge (Transportation)

**Old business: Review School District Budget for 2017-2018 and Default Budget/possible action**

L. Snyder wanted to thank the School Board, she stated that everyone at the school has worked extremely hard. D. Shute has put in more hours than any other chairperson on the School Board ever. L. Snyder would like to thank each one of the School Board Members, she is so very proud of all of them and she wanted to acknowledge that out to the public because she knows what a tightwad she is and she does not think she can squeeze another nickel out of this budget. E. Sussman, N. Castle, Ann Kebler, S. Currier, J. Safina,, B. Adams and Peg Hurd, L. Snyder just wants everyone to know how proud she is of this team, they have far exceeded and gone beyond, and like she said people know she is tight on budgets and you all have done a fantastic job and she is proud of every single one of them,. She wants the Budget Committee to know how hard these people have worked, if the truth be known and things that had to be added because of the new laws, this is less than last year, this is a tight Budget. They went back last week the Budget Committee talked with them and they cut and cut and the scissors got very dull and she didn't think the scissors could not cut anymore that's how proud she is of each, and every one of them and she wanted to acknowledge this publicly.

B. Carrier stated that this School Board has done something that the past two committees couldn't do was to bring that SAU here, stand alone, that took a lot of work, thanks to Mr. Sussman. The other savings we got out of this was Mr. Sussman is taking on two other positions and that is a big cost savings, and the other part is we have our SAU office, we don't have to buy any land, we don't need to

put a building up, it's right at the school and the school owns it. The only thing that it's going to cost us is the renovation, but that will come out of the capital reserve fund. The other thing that is a cost savings put that is also pushing the budget a little bit is the Partnership Program. B. Carrier thinks that A. Kebler explained it quite well and what the consequences were going to be if we did not get into it. These are just some things that the School has done quite well, he stated that A. Kebler was very good at Student Services.

L. Brown Stated that at the moment the discussion as to the general texture and accomplishment of the budget as planned, how it has shifted and changed as the district has become a single unit stand alone. L. Brown also has a few observations. Originally, they were a 57/43% expenses which does not equal 43% of the expenses as a standalone district that they had from the previous budget. When this began almost two years ago, Superintendent Tursey suggested that the district could work with an 80%, 4 day a week Superintendent, a director of pupil personnel services and a business manager which at \$80,000 a piece which would be somewhere under \$250,000. Last night at the School Board Meeting, J. Safina talked about the Distributive Leadership Program that the district is developing, which means we have a competent elementary school principal of some years' experience, we have a high school principal at some years' experience, we have an assistant principal at both schools and we have five support personnel and what he presumes will be a pupil student services personnel which will be competent to administer special Ed as he does not feel that there is a special administrative certification for special Ed, he asked if that was correct. J. Sussman stated that they have to have a director. A. Kebler stated that it was the director of special education and they have to have certification, its special Education administrator.

L. Brown stated that we have a change that brings a superintendent to a board which is intensely directed and is starting to mirror the school board he observed from his contacts in Wakefield. As he understands it they will have a full time superintendent and that bothers him structurally because he does not expect this superintendent, for all good reasons, to stay more than a year. In a year, they will be looking at full time superintendent and as he understands it that is the interest of the board, he asked if he was correct. P. Hurd asked L. Brown to define a year. L. Brown stated July 1, 2018. D. Shute stated that they still have to look things over. L. Brown asked if there was a contract in place that extends through July 1<sup>st</sup> 2018. D. Shute stated he cannot make that decision for the rest of the board. L. Brown asked if there was a public document contract in place extending past July 1, 2018. D. Shute stated no. L. Brown asked if there was a signed contract in place for the coming years starting July 1, 2017. D. Shute stated yes. L. Brown asked if that was a one year contract.

L. Brown stated that we are now at the discussion of the default budget and the final district budget.

S. Nadeau stated that he would like to start off by thanking them for doing the default budget. It is great to have a request, made by myself for it, and its fulfilled without any fighting over it, and he has been going through it pretty quick here, it looks to him that it is somewhat accurate as he can see, that is his first note. Secondly last Thursday when they had a meeting they were over a \$300,000 increase and now they have taken out almost \$200,000 out of that increase down to \$168,306 below the default budget. He is going to say pretty much what L. Snyder was hitting on, that it must have taken a lot to get almost \$200,000, a lot of work, out of the budget. He understands that with a new SAU being by yourself there is going to be additional costs and so we can't expect the budget to be level funded, he thinks that its

more within reason that this is a 1.5% increase. He would like to ask if the raises are still in this new budget and what was the big hitters that took the hit.

J. Sussman stated that the kindergarten class this year has 12 students and 14 students in another class. Currently they have three classes in first grade, looking at these numbers they determined that they would not need 3 teachers in first grade with only 25 students move up even if they get a few extra students they still would not need 3 because that would put just 8 kids per class. After the discussion at the board meeting they decided to make a personnel cut and as you know when there is a personnel cut that also cuts the retirement, FICA and insurance benefits, J. Sussman also stated that with all the kind words from the Budget committee he also wanted to state that he thinks the Budget Committee also gave them some good ideas, he thinks that the board looked into the lines, N. Castle has a list of all the suggests that were brought up and they went through it and they actually met with each of the departments. A. Kebler also went through her budget and found that one of the ABA's could be moved to the grant which will save about \$40,000. So, between the teacher being cut and moving the ABA to the grant that is almost \$100,000 right there. He also stated the S. Currier went through his budget and found things that could be taken out as well. J. Sussman stated that thanks to the collaboration of the Budget Committee they meet with T. Eldridge from transportation to discuss the WEX program to see how this program will work for the school and if it was something that the school wanted to do. After T. Eldridge explained what they had learned the School has decided to go forward with using the WEX program which will save them money as well. In all J. Sussman stated that the School Board and School members ran with all suggestions that were made to them by the Budget Committee.

L. Brown stated that if he remembers specially the WEK card is specific to the vehicle and that it requires a pin to be entered by the employee and is tracked by time and amount of purchase. T. Eldridge stated that was correct. L. Brown stated that the bills come out on the first of the month to be paid by the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the month. There was concern about a late fee, L. Brown did some quick math and stated that 1,000 gallons @ \$2.60 (State pump rates) a gallon = \$2,600, 1,000 @ \$1.80 (WEX Program rates) = \$1,800 that is a difference of \$800.00 so they can pay 1% late fee on \$1,800 and still have \$620 left in savings.

T. Eldridge stated they the WEK program was very clear that the bill had to be paid on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and since the School Board only meets every other week it may throw off the schedule to get it paid on time. D. Shute stated that to levitate that problem the Board decided to change their meeting dates to the first and third week of the month so that they will have a meeting before the bill comes due. If a problem does arise the board members could come in and sign the manifest if needed.

S. Nadeau state that it is important for the public to know that out of this \$154,000 increase over last year that just the State changing the retirement where the town must contribute more it is now at 17.6%, he asked what dollar amount does that increase represent, N. Castle stated he did not know off the top of his head. S. Nadeau stated that just so the public knows that is one of the factors of this increase that the School Board had no control over. J. Sussman also stated another factor was the food increase of \$39,000. N. Castle also stated that the federal grants went up about \$40,000 from last year, S. Nadeau stated that we do not need to raise and appropriate it just needs to be in the budget so it can be spent.

L. Brown stated that on that note that represents the basic will of the legislator to fund the majority of the cost of the state budget through the residential property tax, if you do charts even presented by mildly nonpartisan conservative tax assessment organization our real-estate property tax is running just about as high as New Jersey which may be in first place or fiftieth place depending on how you want to

track it. The business Profit tax (BPT) has gone down to under 7% from about 7.2% it met projections for income, the jury is out as to whether or not that was the overall economy of NH but its 2.3% unemployment rate or a direct factor of the Business Profit Taxes being lower. Business taxes will impact your property taxes, the state has sent those costs down to the towns. L. Brown had a question on the ABA position being imbedded into the special Ed Budget, his understanding was that the IDA grant was for practical rather than for supervision and you were able to finesse that. A. Kebler stated that the ADA is an anticipated tutor for next year and is not a current tutor, they can't take anything that is supported by the operating budget and move it into a grant. Her concern about the IDA grant is that they have \$159,000 this year and each year that she has been there it has gone down so they have to be careful. L. Brown asked if the cost in Special Ed come close to the top is the emergency transportation fund accessible short of an emergency, can it be tact as a regular operating expense to help out the Special Ed budget. A. Kebler stated that her understanding of the trust is that you can have it if you have significantly increased your Special Ed costs to cover out of district placement irrespective of the existing budget cap.

M. Steer also commented on how much she appreciated the work the School and School Board have done and it shows very clearly in the budget how hard they worked. She thanked them for their hard work.

S. Nadeau stated again what he had said last week that he does not feel he can sit there and tell them to cut this line cut that line, he stated that they know their business better than her does, he is just a numbers guy and he appreciates the fact that they went back and put all this effort into reducing it over 50% increase. It's a bottom line budget so even if they say cut this line in half, you could do what you want with it anyway. Again, he stated that due to the increases that where beyond that control it can't be a flat budget anyway, he is trying to figure out what the retirement increase alone is.

D. Wing stated that he wanted to echo what everyone else has stated, he is quite impressed, just glancing at the variances he sees a lot of parenthesis which is a good thing. The fact is like S. Nadeau stated is that the proposed budget is \$67,000 less than the default, we got to get that out and let people know that we don't want defaults, he said good job.

J. Sussman stated that he would like to thank everyone for the kind words on behalf of the administrator team and the School Board.

L. Brown stated that they have the School Board budget as presented for fiscal year18 (July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018) proposed with a grand total of \$10,397,573.15, the default budget total is \$10,565,878.96. A motion was made by L. Snyder to accept the 2018-school budget as written. S. Nadeau stated that he still had a question that was not answered, are the 2% raises still in the budget? D. Shute stated yes, they were. M. Steer seconded the motion. Discussion; D. Shute asked if the motion could include the amount. L. Brown restated the motion as follows, L. Brown motioned to accept the Milton School District fiscal year 18 proposed budget to the total of \$10,397,573.15, moved by L. Snyder seconded by M. Steer all in favor, motion carries 7-0-0.

L. Brown asked if the Budget Committee votes to approve the default budget as he could not remember, Board members stated no they do not.

L. Brown asked about the discussion on warrants and whether they are waiting to discuss them with their attorney to get the language down right, D. Shute stated that they are waiting on their attorney and will need another date to bring the warrants to the Budget Committee. L. Brown stated that they have another meeting scheduled for December 20<sup>th</sup> if the School Board thinks they will be ready then they could attend that meeting. D. Shute stated that they don't think they will be ready and would request a later date.

S. Nadeau stated for the record out of that increase of \$154,000, \$54,410 is represented by the retirement increase by itself.

L. Brown stated that only 5.6% of the increase was from the controllable part of the budget, those increase where; supplies, repairs, building maintenance, books, dues, equipment, software, and furniture.

D. Shute asked if they would be dealing with the teachers' contract. S. Nadeau stated that it would have to be a warrant article, D. Shute stated that the at least have the figures that they can go over with the board at this time. P. Hurd presented some information on the teachers' contract. The School Board decided last night to approve the teachers' contract. The estimated increase for next year (2018) is \$164,255.18, they agreed to a two-year contract. The second year (2019) is \$ 97,123.99. This includes a \$500 increase for both each year plus step movement each year, there has been no increase for two years. Just looking at different areas and what the average salary is, Milton is towards the bottom. The major agreements that saved them some money, in addition to their current insurance plan they offered a high deductible/lower premium plan, they will not know until open enrolment how many people will take advantage of this plan, they think that most people that are mostly healthy may opt for this plan because it is a lower premium. Insurance buyout was reduced from \$3700 to \$3000, there is currently 15 people taking this. The total between the two is about a \$25,000 increase. Longevity was in the contract, they put it in so that the person has to work in the Milton School District for 15 years to receive this Longevity check, there are about 6 people whom where receiving it and now are not going to be getting it till they hit 15 years.

#### **Minutes Review/Approval:**

Motion was made by M. Steer to approve the November 15, 2016 minutes with noted corrections as needed, seconded by S. Nadeau, Discussion; none, all in favor, motion carries 7-0-0.

Motion was made by M. Steer to approve the November 29, 2016 minutes with noted corrections as needed, seconded by L. Snyder, Discussion; M. Steer stated that on page 2 M. Shipmen should say R. Shipman. Page 5 second to last line under Solid Waste Budget is plew a word? L. Brown stated it should be plume. B. Carrier stated that Caitlin Magargee should be listed under role call and marked as absent.

All in favor, motion carries 7-0-0

Motion was made by M. Steer to approve the December 1, 2016 minutes with noted corrections as needed, seconded by L. Snyder, Discussion; B. Carrier stated that on page 7 about 11 lines down the line starts with L. Brown asked, WEK should be spelled WEX.

All in favor, motion carries 7-0-0

Motion was made by M. Steer to approve the December 6, 2016 minutes with noted corrections as needed, seconded by L. Brown, Discussion; M. Steer stated that on page 3 half way down it says B. Carrier towards the right-hand side and then it says 9 vice, this should be (vice. S. Nadeau stated that he can give the secretary a copy of his as he has highlighted everything that needs corrections. B. Carrier stated that D. Wing was not absent he should have been marked as accused as his wife called to say he would not make it. M. Steer stated that on page 11 three quarters of the way down the line that starts with B. stated, this should read B. Carrier stated. T. McDougall stated that on page 2 the line that starts with T. McDougall the I should be an it. L. Brown asked if it was the agreement of the board that the clerical and grammatical corrections that S. Nadeau has noted be given to the clerk for her corrections, the board agreed.

All in favor, motion carries 7-0-0

Motion was made by M. Steer to approve the December 8, 2016 minutes with noted corrections as needed, Seconded by T. McDougall, Discussion; M. Steer stated that on page 9 at the top again WEK should be spelled WEX.

All in favor, motion carries 7-0-0

L. Brown talked a little about the meeting minutes according to Roberts Rule. He mentioned that once a board approves the minutes then the recording clerk notes the approval date and initials the minutes and sends it to the town clerk for recording rather than wait for the chair to get a clean copy and sign it. S. Nadeau asked that when we have a correction does the previous minutes get corrected or are they represented in the present minutes. L. Brown stated that they are changed in the previous minutes and noted in the present minutes.

L. Snyder stated to not forget to send a copy of the minutes containing the removal of Caitlin Magargee to Michelle Beauchamp as she has requested them to be sent to her for posting.

Motion was made by B. Carrier to reopen December 6, 2016 minutes for additional corrections. Seconded by L. Snyder. All in favor, motion carried 6-0-0

Discussion; B. Carrier stated that the motion to remove Caitlin did not mention why the removal happened and would like to have it redone, S. Nadeau also stated that it did not say whom made the motion. L. Brown restated the motion as follows; motioned to remove Caitlin Magargee with great thanks, under the provisions of RSA-32, as she has missed four consecutive meetings without notice to the committee. S. Nadeau also stated to put in whom made the motion.

Motion was made by B. Carrier to accept the new motion for Caitlin's removal, seconded by L. Snyder All in favor, motion carries 6-0-0

**Adjournment:**

- Motion was made by S. Nadeau to adjourn at 7:15pm, seconded by T. McDougall all in favor, motion carries 6-0-0

**Respectfully Submitted by:**

Brenda Pabon – Recording Clerk

Date Approved: 12/20/2016 BLP \_\_\_\_\_

These are Draft minutes until approved by the Board of Selectmen