

Town of Milton
Special Joint Budget Committee – School Board Meeting
DECEMBER 14, 2021

ATTENDEES:

Budget Committee: Humphrey Williams (Chair), Claudine Burnham, Peg Hurd, Larry Brown, Bob Carrier, Mike Beaulieu, Laura Turgeon, Lisa Gautreau

School Board Representatives: Doug Shute (Chair), Peg Hurd, Abigail Rooney, Emily Meehan, Travis Corriveau

SAU 64 Representatives: Jerry Kiesman- Administrator in Charge of Superintendent and Business Services of SAU #64; Jennifer Leavitt- Principal of Nute Middle High School, John Safina- Principal of Milton Elementary School

Meeting was called to order at 6:00PM by Mr. Humphrey Williams, Chair of the Budget Committee.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Budget Committee Roll Call to open the meeting: Larry Brown – Yes, Bob Carrier – Yes, Mike Beaulieu – Yes, Laura Turgeon – Yes, Lisa Gautreau – Yes, Peg Hurd – Yes, Humphrey Williams – Yes. A quorum was present. Ms. Burnham arrived after the Roll Call vote.

School Board Roll Call to open the meeting: Peg Hurd – Yes, Abigail Rooney – Yes, Emily Meehan – Yes, Travis Corriveau – Yes, Doug Shute - Yes. A quorum was present.

Mr. Williams explained before the actual presentation and discussion begins, the School Board must vote on their budget before proceeding.

Mr. Shute apologized that the proposed budget which had been reviewed at the December 8th meeting was incorrect.

Mr. Shute motioned to approve an Operating Budget of \$11,339,390.12. Ms. Hurd seconded the motion. Motion passed 5/0/0. Peg Hurd- Yes, Emily Meehan- Yes, Abigail Rooney- Yes, Travis Corriveau- Yes, Doug Shute- Yes.

Mr. Shute motioned to approve a Default Budget of \$11,381,028.74. Ms. Hurd seconded the motion. Motion passed 5/0/0. Peg Hurd- Yes, Emily Meehan- Yes, Abigail Rooney- Yes, Travis Corriveau- Yes, Doug Shute- Yes.

The School Board proposed Operating Budget is \$41,638.62 below the Default.

Mr. Williams noted he had received questions regarding the Budget Committee's role in establishing budgets. Are they an advisory or whether they are the "official" Budget Committee? He explained they are not an advisory committee; they are responsible for the budget. According to RSA-32 they are responsible for establishing both the town and the school budget which then goes to voters to decide

between the default and operating budget. After that the individual boards are then responsible for working within the approved budget. He further explained they are late this year with the budgeting process as January 11th is the final day to post notices for the January 18th public hearing. This does not give extensive amount of time to get through everything. He also noted the Budget Committee still needs to vote on the Town budget as well. For this evening's meeting, he would like to review the budget and allow opportunity for questions and discussion. Mr. Brown asked for clarification and said the Budget Committee is responsible for setting the Operating Budgets for the town and the school. The Default budgets are set by the town and school.

2022-2023 School Budget Presentation and Discussion:

Mr. Williams explained this year, the Budget Committee has really focused on using historical data in the budgeting process. He said with the school budget, this has been more difficult since there has been no expense reports provided since June. Since the online reports also contained mistakes, there has been some guesswork involved and has made the process more difficult. As an example, the November Library budget line-item includes information that was not in the approved budget last year. Mr. Williams stated that expenditure report lists the \$5,000 Warrant Article as part of the approved Library budget. Ms. Hurd asked where it should be listed. Mr. Williams stated that approved Warrant Articles should be listed in their own section for tracking, like the town budget does it. He further stated because what the School Board proposed as the operating budget is not correct, the Budget Committee has had a tough time working through the budget. Mr. Shute acknowledged information is outdated and does contain mistakes, some of which he believes have been corrected. Line-items which appear to be incorrect include building improvements and transfer to trust. Mr. Williams said the overall ~~goal~~ goal should be to present a fiscally sound and accurate budget and because the November 30th expense report posted online is not accurate, along with a five-month gap of not receiving expenditure, revenue, and grant information, it is making this process more difficult. Mr. Williams asked if the Budget Committee will get an updated and accurate budget, along with correct expense report prior to the next meeting scheduled for December 21st? According to Ms. Hurd, Nate (PT Business Consultant) is working on the expense report and budget trying to get everything accurate. Unfortunately, she cannot guarantee that all will be cleaned up by meeting time.

1.) Regular Education:

Contracted Services: What does that include as an increase of \$5,000 for the high school is projected? Jen explained this is for ESL, Social Worker, etc.

High school supplies: Increase of 71%. Jen – the cost of all supplies has increased. Some of this is needed in various classes just to sustain the class.

Middle-school Travel: Questioned the decrease. John Safina – this was not cut on purpose and should remain at the \$300 (used for teacher's conferences).

Books & Digital Resources: Mr. Williams showed the June 30, 2021 Expenditure Report and asked what was done with the over \$95,000 in Encumbered funds for Books & Digital Resources? Now you're asking for additional \$30,000. If \$95,000 in extra money was spent, the expectation should be this line-item would be less. Jen and John provided explanation of curriculum purchases including new Science and Language Arts curriculum. Mr. Williams – not questioning what was really needed; however, with that much money encumbered, plus an additional \$54,000 plus for the middle and high school, this should bring this year's request down – this appears to be a large jump in resources. This doesn't need to be cut completely,

just based on what is really needed. Can this be reduced to \$15,000? John – Yes. He just needs to know a final amount to help him in negotiations with booksellers. Mr. Brown requested specific breakdowns and details of requests.

MES/HS Furniture: Another situation of having encumbered funds and requesting increase. In June there was \$12,000 allotted to replace furniture. What is this new request for?

2.) Special Education:

Contracted Services: What does this include? For Elementary and Special Ed. Is this separate from transportation? Peg Hurd – this covers Transportation Contracted Services – i.e., transportation services for student requiring use of van with wheelchair accessibility.

3.) Medicaid: no changes.

4.) Vocational Programs: The changes total \$0.27 and are only due to rounding calculation in the program. Mr. Brown questioned if people were satisfied with the range of services currently being provided and if more monies were available could that be used to expand services. Emily Meehan – in general she agrees with expanding services if able. Mr. Williams – this was increased last year.

5.) Other Instructional Programs: Total increase for this area is 0.5%.

6.) Guidance: Decrease by \$34,000. Peg Hurd – decrease in salary line-item mostly due to turnover.

7.) Nurse: Question about the \$3,000 increase for equipment. John Safina – this is for updates needed in the Nurse's office. Mr. Williams questioned if there might be Covid related funds available for this. John Safina – they will look for funds. This line-item was put back to the default amount of \$300.

8.) Improvement of Instruction: There were no changes.

9.) Library: Elementary Library – Health insurance nearly doubled. Peg Hurd – new Librarian is now on a two-person policy vs. previously a one-person policy. Mr. Williams – questioned the huge increase in the Library Furniture/Fix from \$320 to \$9,475. John Safina – the new Librarian feels the existing setup is very cramped and is proposing creating a learning space that is adaptable to who is using the space. Mr. Williams – if this is a one-time purchase, why not include this as a Warrant Article (policy of one-time purchase exceeding \$5,000 normally is a Warrant Article). Mr. Shute is concerned they will put forward too many Warrant Articles. Mr. Williams questioned Budget Committee members for their recommendations. They agreed this one-time purchase should be a Warrant Article. Ms. Meehan is concerned that voters may say no to a Warrant Article and then nothing happens. The Budget Committee recommends a Warrant Article and will keep this line-item at \$320.

10.) School Board: There were no changes.

11.) SAU Expense: Ms. Turgeon – questioned the increased pay for Superintendent salary of nearly \$36,000, along with adding a Business Administrator back into the budget. Mr. Shute – the School Board is looking at possible restructuring which may include hiring of BA. Mr. Williams – what specifically is the School Board doing today about the two positions, focusing on the line-item money and not specific individuals. Mr. Shute – unable to discuss currently yet. Mr. Williams – we want to work with the School Board but, as a reminder, the Budget Committee can make the budget decision and it would then be up to the School Board to decide how to spend it. If the School Board is looking to separate the position, there should not be an increase in the Superintendent line item. The School Board is asking for monies to finance two positions without making a decision to have the two positions. Mr. Shute – at this point, due to

contractual agreements, unable to discuss. The Superintendent is recommending adding a BA – not sure whether it would be FT or PT. Peg Hurd – if the position is FT then would need Retirement added back in. If PT position, then no Retirement would be added. Mr. Beaulieu – this is unacceptable; either you know you are going to have a BA or not. Mr. Shute – we are aware there are issues. Mr. Williams – again, we want to work with the School Board. This is tabled to the next meeting; the vote will happen based on all the information provided.

Ms. Turgeon – why was the Dues line-item nearly doubled? Peg Hurd – for Superintendent, NHIAA and School Board Association. Mr. Williams stated there are line items in the School Board budget for those dues. Jerry Kiesman – stated it was not his number. The Budget Committee tabled this line-item for next meeting; asking Mr. Kiesman to get information for the committee.

- 12.) Office of Principal:** There are no changes. Mr. Williams thanked both Jen and John for their work.
- 13.) Operations and Maintenance:** There was money encumbered at the end of June, and again, now asking for an increase. The amount encumbered was \$76,955. What was the money used for and where do things stand? Peg Hurd – this was used for the roof and siding at Damon House, the pad under the freezer at MES. The Budget Committee asked for a list of what the encumbered funds were for. Ms. Hurd will bring the list of items to the next meeting.
- 14.) Transportation:** Question about the leases. The agreed upon lease is a contract and should match the Default. Peg Hurd – not sure but will find out and bring information to the next meeting. Mr. Carrier questioned if the \$45,000 is for a special van? Peg Hurd – Yes, this van has wheelchair accessibility. Transportation Health – is that for all? Peg Hurd – Yes, this is not separated like other categories.
- 15.) Special Ed Transportation:** Peg Hurd – they would like a Warrant Article for the purchase of a van with wheelchair accessibility.
- 16.) Field Trip/Co-Curr:** There are no proposed changes.
- 17.) Technology Services:** Mr. Williams questioned if things were getting caught up as a result of Covid related funding, as he knows they needed equipment, but the committee hasn't seen any updates on the Grant Reports. Peg Hurd – Nate is currently working on the grant report.
- 18.) Support Services:** No changes.
- 19.) Transfer to Food Service:** No changes
- 20.) Transfer for Grant Expenditures:** Mr. Williams again pointed out the items listed in the 2022 Approved Budget were not part of that approved budget. Mr. Shute acknowledged the mistakes.
- 21.) Transfer to/From Trust Funds:** No changes.
- 22.) Food Service:** Everything is OK.

Mr. Brown – For the Budget Committee, are there any specific topics they would like the School Board to provide detailed information. In addition, this proposed budget is for the time period of 7/1/2022-6/30/2023. Does this budget include any monies for students and transportation if the decision is made to move out of the school? Mr. Williams – this budget is based on students remaining where they are. Mr. Shute agreed the transportation money was the students remaining at the school. Mr. Beaulieu – even if the decision is made to move to another school, it ultimately would require time and since would not happen this or next year should not be reflected in the budget.

Mr. Shute questioned what the Budget Committee would like for the meeting on December 21st. Mr. Williams – an accurate expenditure report, a decision on the Superintendent and Business Administrator positions, Warrant Articles and answers to the other proposed question. Ms. Hurd - The Warrant Articles are approved except for Teacher Contracts and Operating Budget, all others have been approved and she will forward them to Mr. Williams. Mr. Williams – the committee just needs to know what the Warrant Articles are; they will not be voted upon at next week's meeting. Mr. Shute explained the tax rate for the school is expected to be \$0.25 decrease.

Mr. Williams – the Budget Committee continues to work with the town and school on their budgets and is hopeful with each year, the process gets easier. He emphasized at the December 21st meeting, everyone should remember this is business, it is not personal. He also acknowledged this has been a tough year.

Public Comment or Questions: There were none.

Next Meeting: December 21st. The Budget Committee is scheduled to meet December 28th. At that time, they will be finalizing to vote on the Town budget.

Adjournment:

As there were no additional questions nor items for discussion, Mr. Williams, Chair of the Budget Committee, asked for a motion adjourn the meetings.

Mr. Shute motion to adjourn the meeting of the School Board. Seconded by Peg. Peg Hurd – Yes, Abigail Rooney – Yes, Emily Meehan – Yes, Travis Corriveau – Yes. School Board meeting was adjourned at 8:35PM.

Ms. Turgeon motioned to adjourn the meeting of the Budget Committee. Ms. Hurd seconded the motion. All were in favor. The Budget Committee meeting was adjourned at 8:35PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Winslow-Weiss – Budget Committee

Minutes Approved on December 28, 2021