

Town of Milton
SPECIAL BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
January 7, 2021

ATTENDANCE:

Members: Humphrey Williams (Chair), Peg Hurd, Lisa Gautreau, Bob Carrier, Claudine Burnham, Larry Brown, Danielle Marique

Absent: Mike Beaulieu

Staff: Ernie Creveling, Town Administrator

Public: Representatives from the Milton School Board: Doug Shute and Paul Steer

Representatives from the Milton SAU 64: Nate Castle – Business Administrator, Jan Radowicz – Nute Middle-High School Principal, Robert Qua – Special Ed. Director and Bob Adams – Maintenance Director.

Humphrey Williams, Chair, opened the session at 6:00PM.

1.) Pledge of Allegiance: Humphrey Williams, Chair, led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2.) Roll Call:

a. Mr. Williams, Chair, led the roll call of members to determine if a quorum was present.

Humphrey Williams (Chair), Peg Hurd, Lisa Gautreau, Bob Carrier, Claudine Burnham, Danielle Marique, Larry Brown: A quorum was present.

b. Public participation: Representatives from the School Board. Mr. Ernie Creveling, Milton Town Administrator

3.) Review School Warrant Articles:

Article I: Election of Officers: Because of extenuating circumstances dictated from the state government, the election, currently scheduled for March, may not occur at that time. The elections for this year may move and occur anywhere between April to July. Current representatives will remain in those positions until the vote occurs.

Article II: Vote to approve the Operating Budget. This vote has already taken place at a previous Budget Committee meeting.

Article III: Vote to create a Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of purchasing and maintaining maintenance vehicles for the School District, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 to be placed in this fund.

Ms. Hurd made a motion to approve Article III allowing the sum of \$5,000 to be placed in the Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of purchasing and maintaining maintenance vehicles. Ms. Marique seconded the motion.

Discussion: Mr. Brown questioned if this article would prohibit the school from purchasing other vehicles? Ms. Hurd stated this is specifically for a pickup truck with snowplow and a dump truck maintenance vehicle. Bob Adams, Maintenance Director explained that the current plow and dump trucks were donated and need a lot of maintenance and will soon need to be replaced.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Ms. Marique, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Article IV: Vote to allow the School District to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 to purchase library media for the Nute High School and Library.

Ms. Hurd made a motion to approve Article IV and allow the school district to utilize \$5,000 to purchase library media for Nute High School and Library. Mr. Brown seconded the motion.

Discussion: There was no discussion.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Ms. Marique, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Article V: Vote to allow the School District to use unreserved fund balance and raise and appropriate up to \$50,000 for the expendable fund trust for the education of educationally disabled children.

Ms. Hurd made a motion to approve Article V and allow the school district to utilize up to \$50,000 for the education of educationally disabled children. Ms. Marique seconded the motion.

Discussion: Ms. Hurd explained during this current year there has been a significant increase in the amount of expenses dedicated to special education, primarily due to students moving into the local school district. Ms. Burnham questioned what specifically are these monies used for and are additional monies given by the state to help with this? Special Ed. Rep, Robert Qua, explained the specific special education services are determined by individual IEP and are mandated by the state. The school district does receive yearly grants to help offset these unexpected costs.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Ms. Marique, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Article VI: Vote to allow the School District to use unreserved fund balance and raise and appropriate up to \$50,000 for the purpose of repairing and maintaining school buildings.

Ms. Hurd made a motion to approve Article VI allowing the school district to utilize up to \$50,000 for the repair and ongoing maintenance of school buildings. Mr. Brown seconded the motion.

Discussion: Ms. Marique questioned if Damon House is included in this area? School Board Chair, Doug Shute. explained yes, Damon House (SAU 64 Admin Building) is included. Previous projects included boiler replacement, roof repairs, and asbestos and lead removal. . Ms. Marique also questioned if there are specific plans for the coming year? It should be noted this fund is more for contingency use to help address those unexpected and unplanned problems. Mr. Adams explained that if the boiler at the Nute High Scholl had to be replaced, it alone could be about \$50,000. Mr. Brown stated it's always good to have a reserve fund as you never can predict when issues might arise.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Ms. Marique, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Article VII: Vote to allow the School District to use the unreserved fund balance, and to raise and appropriate up to \$15,000 to be placed in the expendable trust fund for the School Bus Trust Fund.

Ms. Hurd made a motion to allow the school district to place \$15,000 in the School Bus Trust Fund. Ms. Marique seconded the motion.

Discussion: There was no discussion.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Ms. Marique, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Article VIII: Vote to allow the School District to use unreserved fund balance, and to raise and appropriate up to \$10,000 to be placed in the Technology Expendable Trust Fund.

Ms. Hurd made a motion to allow the school district to place \$10,000 in the Technology Expendable Trust Fund. Ms. Marique seconded the motion.

Discussion: Ms. Hurd explained there is a rotating system in place to replace the computers.

Mr. Williams stated there is a definite need to upgrade the systems.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Ms. Marique, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

At the conclusion of reviewing and voting on the School District's Warrant Articles, Mr. Williams thanked everyone involved for their hard work, applauding their actions to ensure the budget would come in under the default.

4.) Town Budget Amendment due to required MS-4 Contract:

Due to the MS-4 contract, an additional \$59,600 will be added to the Town Administrator line item. Even with this increase, the proposed budget will still come in under the requested Default.

Ms. Hurd made a motion to approve the increase of \$59,600 to be added to the Town Administrator Contract line item specifically for the MS-4 contract. Mr. Brown seconded the motion.

Discussion: Ms. Hurd expressed a concern and questioned if the contract is dated November 20th, why is this information only becoming available now and asked for a reason for this delay? Mr. Creveling explained that MS-4 stands for Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System and the town has been behind on this permit for 3 years and because this is mandated through government it must be addressed. According to Mr. Creveling, as each year passes the EPA increases requirements, the town falls further behind. This amendment would bring the town back into line with mandated regulations.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Ms. Marique, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Ms. Hurd made a motion to accept the bottom-line operating budget of \$4,584,619. Mr. Brown seconded the motion.

Discussion: The new bottom-line budget, which now includes the increase of \$59,600 in the Town Administrator line-item, is still \$4,099 under the default.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Ms. Marique, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Mr. Williams again thanked the town and all town departments for developing budgets that come in under the default. The proposed budget will be posted on the town website for residents to review.

4.) Review and Vote on the Town Warrant Articles:

Article 2: Operating Budget

Ms. Hurd made a motion to approve the proposed operating budget of \$4,584,619. Mr. Brown seconded the motion.

Discussion: There was no discussion.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Ms. Marique, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Article 3: Highway and Road Construction Fund

Ms. Hurd made a motion to approve the Highway and Road Reconstruction Fund of \$155,000.

Ms. Gautreau seconded the motion.

Discussion: Mr. Creveling explained it's important to understand the roads will deteriorate if they are not maintained. Ms. Hurd noted, this will have a positive impact, however, the article did not pass last year.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Ms. Marique, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Article 4: Employee Retention Plan:

Mr. Williams stated the committee will not be voting on this article, but there is no current Pay and Retention Plan in place and this plan will ensure that in the future, pay raises are per the plan, including during any year that a Default Budget is in effect. This plan will ensure that everyone, including the public, understands the town employee pay scales and the Budget Committee may properly project and plan for town employees' salaries for upcoming years, without having guess or ask what raises may have been given out during Default Budget Years.

Article 5: Bridge to Capital Reserve Fund

Ms. Hurd made a motion to approve the amount of \$25,000 to be placed in the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund. Mr. Brown seconded the motion.

Discussion: Ms. Marique questioned if the fund balance information could be provided to committee members. Mr. Williams stated that is the MS-9 Reports and Mr. Creveling noted he would provide that information. Ms. Hurd stated it would be helpful to have that information.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Ms. Marique, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Article 6: Municipal Building Capital Reserve Fund

Ms. Hurd made a motion to approve the amount of \$50,000 to be added to the Municipal Buildings Capital Reserve Fund. Ms. Marique seconded the motion.

Discussion: There was no discussion.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Ms. Marique, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Article 7: Boat Ramp Repair

Ms. Hurd made a motion to approve the amount of \$5,000 to be used for boat repair ramp. Ms. Gautreau seconded the motion.

Discussion: Mr. Williams stated this is an ongoing situation and the boat ramp is in serious need of repair.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Ms. Marique, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Article 8: Milton Free Public Library Capital Reserve Fund

Ms. Hurd made a motion to approve the amount of \$25,000 to be placed in the Milton Free Public Library Capital Reserve Fund. Mr. Brown seconded the motion.

Discussion: Mr. Creveling explained from the 2014 fund, there is \$360 available and from the 2005 fund, \$1600 is available.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Ms. Marique, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Article 9: Technology Upgrade Capital Reserve Fund

Ms. Hurd made a motion to approve the amount of \$1,500 to be placed in the Technology Upgrade Capital Reserve Fund. Ms. Gautreau seconded the motion.

Discussion: Mr. Creveling explained last year \$2,500 had been approved and was added to the current available amount of \$20,000. The technology fund also covers phones, upgrades, conference call capability, and the ongoing streaming issues would be addressed through this fund. Mr. Marique mentioned that the computer systems had recently been replaced. Mr. Williams asked if there were any specific plans for the current funding of \$22,500. Mr. Creveling stated there were no specific plans at this time.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham all voted Yes. Ms. Marique and Mr. Williams voted No. Motion Carried – 5 / 2 / 0**

Article 10: Geographic Information System:

Ms. Hurd made a motion to approve the amount of \$2,500 for continued upgrades of the web-based Geographic Information System (GIS). Ms. Marique seconded the motion.

Discussion: Mr. Creveling noted the current balance is \$2,600. The ongoing upgrades are very important and the GIS is a valuable tool for the town.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Ms. Marique, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Article 11: Eradicate Invasive Plant Species

Ms. Hurd made a motion to approve the amount of \$5,000 for the purpose of eradicating invasive plant species. Ms. Marique seconded the motion.

Discussion: As Mr. Williams noted, this is a serious ongoing issue and that the Three Ponds Protective Association, along with Milton, Lebanon and New Hampshire and Maine Department of Environmental Services are working together to eliminate E-Naiad. He continued, treatments

have been successful and that this is decrease of \$5,000 from previous years due to reduced costs for the treatments.

Roll call vote: **Ms. Gautreau, Mr. Brown, Ms. Marique, Mr. Carrier, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Burnham, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Article 12: Establishment of Independent Capital Improvement Program Committee

There is no vote needed from the budget committee.

Article 13: Cemetery Trust Fund

This is previous Warrant Article 9 from 2016. The language is being developed for a current Warrant Article and this is not for voting on by the Budget Committee

Article 14: Milton Town House Special Revenue Fund

As explained by Mr. Williams, this article does not need a vote from the budget committee. It is recommended this article be sent back to the BOS for language adjustment.

Article 15: Tax Cap Amendment

As explained by Mr. Williams, this article is not for voting on by the Budget Committee.

Article 16: Paving of Bolan Road

As explained by Mr. Williams, this article is not for voting on by the Budget Committee.

Mr. Williams thanked the Board of Selectmen, all town department leaders and the Budget Committee for ensuring the proposed budget comes in under the default.

5.) Next Scheduled Meeting:

January 16, 2021. This will be the public hearing on the Town and School Budgets and the proposed Warrant Articles. This meeting will be held at the Town Hall.

6.) Adjournment:

Mr. Williams stated he would entertain a motion to conclude the meeting.

Ms. Marique made the motion to adjourn at 8:20PM. Seconded by Ms. Hurd. All were in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Winslow-Weiss, Recording Secretary – Budget Committee