

Meeting of the Candia Municipal Budget Committee

November 30, 2016

Town Offices, Candia NH

Members present: Bob Stout, Dana Buckley, Selectman's Rep. Susan Young, Paul LeBlond, Chair Allyn Chivers, Susan Gill, Jodi Hedstrom, School Board Alt. Rep. Nicole LaFlamme

Members absent: Kevin Coughlin

Chairman Chivers opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Chivers announced that the tape recording of the meeting will hopefully be posted on the Town Website. She also introduced Sharon DeWitt as the new secretary. Selectman's Rep. Susan Young stated she was uncomfortable about the choice. Dana Buckley stated he was also uncomfortable due to comments made at the last School Board meeting. Chairman Chivers stated she hadn't intended to put it to a vote.

OLD BUSINESS

Approve minutes

School Board Alt. Rep. Nicole LaFlamme questioned when the minutes from the 11/9 meeting were posted to the website. Susan Gill stated she received confirmation back from the webmaster that they had been posted on 11/27.

Motion: Approve the minutes from the Nov. 9, 2016 meeting as presented. Paul LeBlond moved to approve the minutes, Bob Stout seconded it. **Passed 8-0.**

NEW BUSINESS

Review school budget and prepare questions for the joint meeting with the School Board, administration and SAU

Chairman Chivers reminded the committee that the meeting with the School Board, Administration and SAU will be held on 12/7/16 in the Media Center at the School. She noted that she will compile the list of questions compiled from this meeting on Thursday, 12/1/16 with the expectation members of the budget committee will review and respond with anything additional by Friday, 12/3/16

2017/18 School Budget

Susan Young asked to list some general questions first.

Susan Young requested:

- 1) the number of general employees at the school daily.

- 2) the number of parents who drop off their children daily.
 - 3) the hours of the Instructional day. Nicole LaFlamme answered that it was 8-2:45
 - 4) Will the teacher going on 3 month sabbatical next year be replaced? Nicole LaFlamme stated that the decision has not been made yet.
 - 5) Regarding the technology at the school: who has access? Type? Do they take them home? Grade Levels? Nicole LaFlamme stated that the Technology Plan for the school can be found on the DOE website as well as the school website. She reviewed use of technology in the school and stated that she will get a copy of the policy that students and parents sign regarding expectations/responsibilities for technology.
- Dana Buckley asked about the Common Core Facilitator position. Nicole LaFlamme clarified that while that position is no longer funded (there was a 3 year sunset clause), the staff member is still employed. She was in an existing position prior to the Common Core Facilitator position. Nicole will find out the employee's prior title and exact title now.

1100 Regular Ed Programs

Lynn Chivers questioned Health Insurance and the teacher's contract. Nicole LaFlamme indicated that the School Board was reviewing and voting on the contract at their 12/1/16 meeting. In response to a request from Dana Buckley, Nicole LaFlamme said it shouldn't be an issue to get the Budget Committee a copy of the contract (if passed) before the next meeting.

Jodi Hedstrom noted she was struck by the large cost of providing special education in our town.

Nicole LaFlamme noted the budget was up a little more than \$300,000 for a number of reasons but Special Education curriculum took up more than \$250,000 of that. Jodi Hedstrom clarified that these are mandatory costs and Nicole LaFlamme confirmed this as correct.

Insurance

The following questions were raised:

- 1) What percentage of premiums do employees pay now? Can we get the % listed by plan type (i.e. ind or family, etc)?
- 2) Do we know if the Cadillac tax will apply? Lynn Chivers answered that implementation has been delayed to several years in the future.
- 3) What is the percent increase in Health Insurance total cost?
- 4) What is the School Board doing going forward to negotiate to keep health insurance costs down?

1105 Reg Ed HS Tuition

- 1) How is this number computed?
- 2) What are the actual Capital Costs to Manchester with the Settlement agreement and where is it located in the budget? Nicole LaFlamme responded that Capital Costs have always been included in with Public Tuition.

Special Programs 1200

Nicole LaFlamme noted the Special Education Director did a nice job of giving the committee a summary sheet which included acronyms and answered basic questions on how things are handled. She noted that while the budget is completed a year ahead, changes during the year make projections different. For example, there were 11 new students at the start of this school year. Susan Young asked if we ever use

the Rainy Day Fund. Nicole LaFlamme stated that they did clarifying for Susan Gill that the Rainy Day Fund is a Warrant Article Trust. The following questions were raised:

- 1) What are the balances of all the Funds?
- 2) In what situations do you use the fund? Nicole LaFlamme responded that if a student comes in and is extremely expensive regarding services and such services are above what was budgeted for, the fund may be used.
- 3) Re: Board Certified Behavioral Services: why was it \$0 last year? How is the allocation determined? Is it a fee per student? Did these services just begin?
- 4) Catastrophic Aid and Medicaid Reimbursement: Do we get reimbursed? Nicole LaFlamme responded that it is in addition to our costs. It covers the balance of the service.

Extended School Year

Susan Young noted the expense went way up. Susan Gill asked what was included. Nicole LaFlamme responded that it is for students needing an education program all year long. In addition, some students receive extra help over the summer at the school. It was noted by Dana Buckley that most of the increase was tuition to private schools for special education students. Susan Young questioned why students who had graduated weren't taken off. Jodi Hedstrom pointed out the budget book provided by the school indicated that students are taken off when they graduate, are no longer eligible, have moved, etc. Susan Young noted that many students are covered until they are 21.

English Language Learner

- 1) What is the number of ELL students?
- 2) Why is there only a paraprofessional and not a teacher? Nicole LaFlamme responded that those students remain a part of the class and are not separated. They work with the regular teacher and a paraprofessional is assigned to work with those students in class. There is no ELL teacher or program specifically.

ALPS Advanced Learner

- 1) Will the Minds In Motion position be filled when the teacher is on sabbatical? Nicole LaFlamme responded that the decision has not yet been made.
- 2) Is the program available K-8? And does the current teacher also teach Social Studies? Nicole LaFlamme answered yes to both.

Athletics

Sue Young questioned if it was accurate that the students go from the school to the CYAA on a bus. Jodi Hedstrom clarified, yes, they are bussed to the CYAA for games only. Parents pick up after the games. Parents are responsible to getting students to practices. The students are usually out a little early from school so it is a bus that does a current run. The bus drops the students off at the CYAA and then goes back to the school to do its regular end of day run. Sue Young asked if the fee paid to the CYAA (\$6,000) is for school teams? The answer is yes.

Psych Services

Sue Young and Lynn Chivers questioned the increase. Nicole LaFlamme clarified that it is all part of Special Education.

SAU Services

Sue Young questioned if this line would go down with a new superintendent? Nicole LaFlamme stated that the pool of Superintendent applicants is very small. The School Board has been lucky in that the Superintendent's salary hasn't significantly increased since he began. Lynn Chivers questioned the \$4500 increase. Nicole LaFlamme said that Candia's portion of this line increased because our valuations went up more than the other towns in the SAU. 2017/18 budget includes the cost of the Superintendent Search.

Principal Services

Tuition Reimbursement: Paul Leblond questioned why the line had a request and why it was zeroed out. Nicole LaFlamme clarified that Principal St. Cyr has obtained his PhD

- 1) Lynn Chivers questioned the 4% increase for Principal / Assistant Principal Salaries. Nicole LaFlamme said she will check and get back to the committee.
- 2) Lynn Chivers asked the following question: Were there any COLA increases to any school personnel? What did they receive? For the 17/18 year, what raises did you budget and what did they represent? Nicole LaFlamme said she will get that info but that 2% was budgeted. Discussion ensued about COLA and its relevance regionally as it is a nationwide figure.
- 3) Susan Young asked what are the percent increases in wages for the last 2-3 years and can we have it broken out?

Maintenance

Susan Gill asked if the renovations to the parent drop off area are in this budget. Nicole LaFlamme said the Board is still working on that and it would most likely be a warrant article when it was time to present.

Regular Ed. Transportation

Nicole LaFlamme noted that they had taken some money out of the maintenance budget to put in the Pinkerton line for a bus.

IT

Sue Young questioned if it was just the IT person with a \$3,000 raise. Dana Buckley stated health insurance could be the reason for the increase.

Replacment Equipment

Lynn Chivers asked if any money is taken out of the Tech Fund for these expenses. Nicole LaFlamme said she thought most of it may have been expended last year. They need to look at the balance because they don't want to zero it out.

Tuition Reimbursement

Dana Buckley noted it is up. Nicole LaFlamme responded it is for courses the employee is taking. Dana Buckley questioned if there was a cap; Nicole LaFlamme replied no, but it needs to be approved by the Board. The technology plan is published on the DOE Website and the Moore School Website.

Wage Pool

Susan Young questioned Administration and other Salaries. Are those all of the raises? Are they additional to what we see in the line? Lynn Chivers asked how it was divided up. Nicole LaFlamme responded that everyone has a potential to get it but it is merit based. Lynn Chivers questioned if it was a one time payment. Nicole LaFlamme replied it was a wage increase.

Dana Buckley asked the following question: Last year, how many people got wage increases? What is the distribution / number of people? Nicole LaFlamme clarified it is only administration, the facilities director, etc. No one in the Union receives this.

Lynn Chivers noted that the 2014/15 budget was a little over \$7 million as was the 15/16 budget. However, during that time, the student population decreased by approximately 34 students. The budget is up about an extra million dollars. Can you give us a general idea of where the money goes. Nicole LaFlamme pointed out that costs are going up. For example, with the Opiate Crisis, we see children born with more challenges. These things affect the Special Ed budget. Our Special Ed costs are high but are consistent with other communities. Health care costs have increased. You also don't get any break in building costs whether you have 324 students or 354 students. You still have to heat the building.

Nicole LaFlamme reported that the Budget is up a little over \$300,000 and about \$250,000 of that is from Special Ed costs.

Susan Young asked:

- 1) What percentage of the budget is SPED costs? Paul LeBlond said it is about 20%

Bob Stout noted that for both the 14/15 and 15/16 budgets, we budgeted \$7.7 million and expended \$7.1 million. Nicole LaFlamme stated that a lot of that difference is because many families were paying Private Tuition for HS. Jodi Hedstrom noted that we legally have to provide these services.

Unresolved Questions

- 1) Teacher's Contract
- 2) Dana Buckley stated he asked for legal fees and only received for this current year. Nicole LaFlamme said that it was a lot of info to compile and it wouldn't help to answer or forecast for the upcoming budget. Discussion ensued. Lynn Chivers asked if Nicole LaFlamme was saying they were not going to give us the info. She stated that the School Board gave them legal fees for the current year. Lynn Chivers stated it will be noted in the minutes.

Motion to adjourn

Paul LeBlond motioned to adjourn; Dana Buckley seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sharon DeWitt