

Present: Dorianne Almann, Michael Carrier, Joe Conroy, Mike Darcy (selectmen's rep), John Hartnett, Mo Klein, James MacDonell, Lewis Major, Tina McCosker, Peter Zavorotny. Absent: Bruce Bellville, Joe Conroy.

Mr. Zavorotny called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm. He asked if any committee members had seen Mr. Bellville, noting that if a member misses four posted meetings the member is off the committee. He said he'd follow up with Mr. Bellville.

He noted the committee had minutes for Meetings 626 and 627 to address. As no one had edits to make to either set, Mr. Major made a motion to approve Meeting 626's minutes; he was seconded by Mr. Carrier. The motion carried with four abstentions (Ms. Almann, Mr. Carrier, Mr. Klein, and Ms. McCosker).

Mr. Darcy made a motion to approve the minutes for Meeting 627 and was seconded by Mr. Hartnett. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Zavorotny noted that the school budget had just been received. Ms. McCosker noted it is down \$55,739 from last year's and walked the committee through highlights, including:

Line Item #'s	Explanation	Change
100.2160.53000.20	New Estimate from WSD	(-\$462)
100.2320.52500.20	New Estimate from LGC	(-\$949)
100.232052600.20	New Estimate from LGC	(-\$559)
100.2320.53000.20	Drop business office purchase services	(-\$5,000)
100.2600.55200.20	New Estimate from LGC	(-\$7,446)
100.270055191.20	Lower fuel escalator estimate	(-\$5,000)
100.2700.57300.20	Drop driver's ed replacement car	(-\$22,000)
100.1300.55610.20	Reduce voc. tuition estimate	(-\$14000)
100.2126.53300.22	Drop Shipping	(-\$323)
Total reduced		(-\$55,739)

Mr. Major asked about driver's ed. Ms. McCosker replied the school board voted to drop purchase of a new vehicle. Mr. Hartnett spoke up, saying the price for the vehicle was high. He noted in the past the school bought a used vehicle that had a guarantee. Ms. McCosker said the school board is "exploring alternatives" and that the vehicle purchase the school makes "doesn't have to be a new car."

She commented that when New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC) visits a school as part of its accreditation process, laptops need to be provided to committee members.

Mr. Zavorotny said that when debt service is removed and one looks at the sub-total, the budget increase is 2.13%; much of this increase "has to do with insurance." He noted that grants and food service do not represent savings.

He asked if there were further questions or comments on the school budget or did the committee wish to hold off and look at the budgets more indepth before meeting again to discuss? Mr. Hartnett said he wished to look at the budget more closely, reflecting the committee's general feeling.

Mr. Zavorotny said that at the last meeting the committee talked about how to handle informing voters about the impact warrant articles might have on the tax rate. Mr. Darcy spoke up, asking if putting the information on a handout instead of the warrant would be acceptable. The committee's feeling is that making sure the information is readily available to voters is more important than how this is actually accomplished. Mr. Darcy will relay to the rest of the selectmen the committee's desire that voters receive a handout on the impact warrant articles might have on the tax rate.

The committee then had a general discussion on how the tax rate is affected or not. Money removed from the general fund specifically to pay taxes does reduce the tax rate. Money moved from the general fund into another fund, say, to help purchase a tractor, has no effect on taxes.

Mr. Zavorotny noted there are a couple of items to discuss pertaining to the town's budget.

Mr. MacDonell asked if the new water budget had been received. Mr. Darcy replied that the selectmen had met with Dennis Nadeau; his budget was up about \$1,000.

Mr. Zavorotny told the committee he asked TA Jill Collins about income. He then began discussing the town budget.

Highway and Streets (4311): \$597,264 total. No committee member had comments.

Transfer Staton (4324): up by \$400. No committee member had comments.

Health Agencies and Hospitals (4415): Mr. Darcy spoke up, saying the selectmen haven't yet had the opportunity to examine it. The town had just received letters on Monday (Dec. 16) from groups requesting funding. Southwest Community Services is one such group; they're requesting \$1,500.

Municipal Parks & Pool (4589): Mr. Darcy noted that safety equipment is needed; the selectmen will be revisiting the budget given the fact the Program Director has yet to be determined. In fact, the selectmen have yet to determine if the Program Director will even be one person.

With no further discussion on the budget, Mr. Zavorotny brought up the committee's meeting with the school on Jan. 8 at 6:30 pm. The meeting will take place in the SAU on the school campus. The committee agreed to meet on Jan. 7 at 6:30 pm in the Town Hall to discuss the school budget prior to meeting with the school board.

Mr. Hartnett asked if the school board planned to offer any warrant articles. No, replied Ms. McCosker. They are discussing how the Security Resource Officer will affect the school and town budgets.

Mr. Zavorotny told the committee he will pursue getting revenue sheets from TA Collins and followup with Mr. Bellville.

With no additional matters to discuss, Mr. MacDonell made a motion to adjourn, was seconded by Mr. Carrier, and the meeting concluded at 7:07 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Dorianne Almann
Recording Secretary