

## Budget Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting of Wednesday January 14, 2020

Present: Lindsey Blake, Steve Diorio (Selectman Rep), Holly Kennedy (School Board Rep), Karen Johnson, James MacDonell, William Nebelski, Lisa Prince, and Peter Zavorotny

Absent: Dennis Nadeau, Ken Howe

Excused: Edwin Smith

Chairman MacDonell called the meeting to order in the Town Hall at 6:00 p.m

MacDonell distributed minutes for December 16, 2019 and December 18, 2019.

Diorio moved to accept the minutes as presented. Nebelski seconded and passage was unanimous.

MacDonell said the Selectmen are meeting on January 27 to complete their work on the outstanding departmental budgets. Based on that he scheduled a meeting for January 29 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall to take action on those proposals.

School Board Representative Kennedy indicated that the board had not met since the joint meeting with the Budget Committee and School Board, but she was prepared to have further discussions concerning the School Board proposed budget.

Prince asked about the added administration employee. Kennedy indicated the addition is needed so that a smooth transition can take place when the present employee retires.

Nebelski commented that the \$600,000 from the state and an increase of \$175,243 was excessive and some of this should be returned to the tax payers. Kennedy pointed out several years when the district had returned over \$400,000.

Johnson asked if some of the lower grades could live with larger class sizes. Kennedy indicated that larger class size often results in lower student success.

Blake asked what amount was returned to the town general fund as closing of the elementary school construction project. Kennedy will check on this.

There was discussion concerning the SRO program costs. It is presently not a full time position.

Nebelski asked about sport team being transported using hired luxury buses instead of regular school buses. Kennedy said she did not recall any time when that occurred. Diorio thought was possible that it had happened as part of long trips for state titles.

MacDonell asked about stipend levels for sports coaches, etc. Kennedy indicated these were part of the negotiated contract and she could check on just how many there were.

There was discussion about the cost of the ELO program. Kennedy outlined several occurrences where students show marked improvement in social skills.

Johnson commented that some summer programs, free meals, etc. are not really necessary but are nice to have which might be reduced.

Prince made a motion to reduce the bottom line of the budget proposal by \$175,243. Blake seconded and the motion carried with MacDonell, Diorio, Johnson, Prince and Blake voting Yes, Zavorotny and Nebelski voting No and Kennedy abstaining. This removed the added tax impact but left the \$600,000 state funding in place. Zavorotny and Nebelski felt was a low number and some of the amount realized should go to reduce the tax rate, not just leaving it flat.

As noted earlier, the next meeting scheduled is on January 29 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall.

Also a meeting on January 23 at 6:00p.m. in the Town Hall may be scheduled depending on further information from the Selectmen or School Board. The chair will advise.

Prince moved to adjourn. Blake seconded and passage was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55.

Respectfully Submitted  
Peter W. Zavorotny  
Vice Chairman  
Hinsdale Budget Committee