

10/16/24 Hinsdale Budget Committee Meeting

Town Hall Community Room

Meeting called to order at 6:00

Budget Committee members present: Alex Duso, Ken Howe, Karen Johnson, Richard Johnson (Selectmen Rep), Dan Seymour, Bill Nebelski, Sean Leary, April Anderson (School board rep)

Excused: Mike Bomba, Dennis Nadeau, Taran Benedict

Others present: Kathryn Lynch (Town Administrator), Jodie Holmquist (Finance Director), Jane Fortson (School District Business Administrator)

Howe opened the meeting with discussion of the school district budget.

- Seymour asked a follow up question from a previous meeting regarding some salary lines.
 - Fortson provided an explanation around changes individual status around insurance.
- Fortson addressed the rumor of a \$1.9 million increase. That is incorrect. She provided additional information to help clarify. Unassigned funds, grant reimbursements, revenue updates - these all reduce that number. The town portion of the district budget will be around \$8 million, which is an \$800K increase, not \$1.9 million.
- The school board will meet with administration about the budget shortly after October 28th.

- Howe asked if the committee wanted to wait to set a joint meeting.
 - Anderson – Let's make sure we actually get the budget in hand before setting the date. The school board should know by the Nov 20th meeting. The thanksgiving holiday is the 28th.
- Howe suggested setting a tentative date for a December 4th meeting. That date can be confirmed or changed at the meeting on Nov 20. All agreed.
- Howe asked Fortson about grants.
 - Fortson informed the committee that the district did get a \$10k grant that the superintendent had applied for. Otherwise, it is all the standard grants that are applied for every year.

Howe asked if there were any further questions for the school Hearing none, he moved on to the town budget.

- Seymour asked about the formatting of the budget report. He asked how some of the salary lines could span two separate budget years.
 - Holmquist clarified. The lines are not covering two budget years. The new software counts months and is formatted very differently than the old report.
- Seymour stated that it looked like people were overpaid on the May 28th report.
 - Holmquist will review and get back to the committee.
- Seymour questioned certain salary lines for specific people. He asked how the selectmen determined what he was seeing.
 - Lynch explained that the hours had been allocated to the HR Director position, which no longer exists. Those duties were spread out to others. That budget was split up to compensate the other employees for the additional duties.
 - Duso asked a follow up question regarding the hours associated with the pay.
- Howe asked how the school handled their HR duties and pay when the joint position was discontinued.
 - Anderson replied that the duties were split up between other people but there was no corresponding pay bump.
 - Howe commented that it looked like the town spread that salary out to others while the school did not.
 - Seymour asked a follow up question regarding the duties in question.
 - Lynch gave clarification.
- K Johnson asked about the workman's compensation budget.
 - Lynch and Holmquist provided clarification. There was an error that will be corrected.
- Duso asked who (specifically) got the funds from the HR budget.
 - Lynch- The Executive Assistant, The Finance Director, and the Town administrator. The duties are performed during the regular hours of these people. There are no extended hours needed to perform the HR duties.
- K. Johnson asked about the assessing services.
 - Lynch- The old company was non-responsive. This necessitated a change to a new company. The rates of the new company are higher.
- Seymour asked about the Part-time Finance line. He asked how the town could expend funds on a non-existent line.
 - Lynch explained that there is a part timeline.

- Holmquist added that they are juggling between two software lines right now. The accounting is a nightmare. She then provided details and examples.
- Duso asked if the committee would have updated packets at our next meeting.
 - Lynch – Yes, but there will still be errors.
- K. Johnson asked about the community center, summer program and memorial budget grouping.
 - Lynch explained that lines have changed with the new system.
 - Holmquist provided further clarification.
 - K. Johnson stated that these lines should be spit out. It is hard to understand what these budgets actually are when they are grouped together.
- Howe asked why the town changed systems.
 - Lynch provided info and background.
- Seymour asked if the new system covered the tax office.
 - Lynch provided information. Hinsdale is one of only a few towns that does quarterly taxes.
- Seymour asked what the repercussions were for the new company who supplied this system that is not working out.
 - Holmquist stated that the town has not paid.
- K. Johnson asked about the full-time maintenance person salary coming out of the government buildings line.
 - Lynch stated that the town will probably split that salary line between the different facilities, with corresponding salary entries on those budgets.
 - K. Johnson stated that was not how the position was “sold” to the committee during the last budget season. Other budgets were supposed to go down with this position and now that is not happening.
- Lynch stated that she is working with the selectmen and the department heads to get budgets ready. Budgets should be available October 31st and she would like to start

joint meetings shortly afterwards. She would like to be done with all of the budgets by the holidays if possible.

- Howe stated that he would like to avoid multiple meetings per week like has happened in past years.
 - Nebelski stated that believes if the committee just has one meeting per week that the work would not be done on time.

Discussions took place around scheduling.

- Howe suggested joint meetings with the selectmen on November 18th at 6:30pm and 20th at 6:00pm.

Duso motioned to have joint meetings with the selectmen on November 18th at 6:30pm and 20th at 6:00pm.

Seconded by Nebelski

8-0-0 Motion passed.

Duso motioned to approve the minutes from September 18, 2024.

Seconded by Seymour.

8-0-0 Motion passed.

- Howe distributed copies of “Chapter 32. Municipal Budget Law” to the members of the budget committee.
- Lynch discussed meeting notices and deadlines. Notices must be given to Kim no later than Thursday in order to be posted for the following week.
- Duso revisited the distribution of the HR funds.
 - R. Johnson stated that the selectmen approved the distribution of funds.
 - Duso asked what meeting that was in. He would like to view the minutes.
 - Leary asked if that discussion would be in the non-public minutes since it involved specific personnel.

- Seymour stated that it should not be non-public since it is taxpayer money.
 - Leary stated that it might be in non-public because it is personnel and that is one of the categories that is permitted to be discussed in non-public under RSA 91-A.
 - Lynch stated that it might have been in non-public, but she would need to look back and see.
 - Duso asked how they could be viewed if they are non-public.
 - Leary stated that non-public minutes could be viewed through a Right to Know request unless the non-public minutes were sealed.
- Duso asked further questions on Town Administrator expenses.
 - Lynch provided the information.

Nebelski made a motion to adjourn.

Seconded by Anderson.

8-0-0 Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.