

Budget Committee Meeting

3/16/2020

Attendance

Budget Committee:

Roxanne Tufts-Keegan, Chair

Bonnie Gagnon

Mary Knapp – School Board Rep

Scott Ferguson – Vice Chair

Laura Parker

Joe Varga – BOS

Absent:

Rebecca Brownell-Smith, Secretary

Janet Kalar – Village District Rep

Jon Hotchkiss – Board of Selectman Rep

6:31 pm – Meeting called to order by Roxanne Tufts-Keegan.

Pledge of Allegiance

Old Business:

New Business:

Roxanne stated that the April budget committee meeting would include the Public Hearing for the SLVD. The notification for the public hearing will need to be posted at least 7 business days prior to the meeting.

The next order of business was the electing of the officers for the current year. Scott Ferguson nominated Roxanne Tufts-Keegan for Chair of the budget committee; Bonnie Gagnon seconded the nomination. The vote was 3-1-2. Scott Ferguson nominated Laura Parker for the Vice Chair position; Bonnie Gagnon seconded the nomination. The vote was 3-1-2. There was discussion regarding the secretary position, specifically the taking of the minutes of each meeting and this has been tabled until the April meeting.

Roxanne will reach out to Becca Brownell-Smith regarding her position and status on the budget committee.

The minutes from the 2/17/2020 meeting were reviewed. Mary Knapp made a motion to except the minutes as read, Scott Ferguson seconded the motion. The vote was 6-0-0. There was discussion regarding the warrant article for the salt shed with the revote at the 2/17/2020 meeting and how it was reflected in the MS-737 form.

School Budget:

School Board updates provided by Mary Knapp:

Mary stated the School Board met on 3/13/2020. At that meeting the planning board requested CIP (capital improvement plan) from the school board. Currently there is a budget freeze for school spending. The projected fund balance for this year is zero. A new TV has been placed in the library that was purchased with funds from a grant. A kindergarten teacher has been hired for the remainder of the school year. With the current coronavirus issue, the school board discussed online programs and

discontinued field trips. The School Board agreed the SAU should decide whether the school would be open or closed. Lunches will be provided, and they will be delivered to students.

Tracy Donovan-Laviolette commented about the January School Board meeting. She asked about wages for the 2018-2019 school year and where the money came from for the raises the teacher's received when the budget that was passed did not include a raise. Mary will follow up with Kathy O'Blene.

There was discussion about the voting at the School Deliberative session, individuals who were eligible/non-eligible. It was recommended that voting cards be provided to make it clearer when voting.

How long should we wait for a response from the SAU regarding questions from the budget committee? The committee stated a day as a reasonable response time.

Roxanne Tufts-Keegan had sent an e-mail to Kathy O'Blene requesting if any of the teachers in the MES has a child in the school. Kathy's response was no, there are none. It was commented that the wording should have stated "staff" and not "teacher".

There was discussion on how to monitor students who may be attending MES that lives out of the district.

Mary Knapp commented that the MES school budget is prepared and completed by the SAU office. The budget is reviewed at the school board meeting.

Town Budget:

Total expenses for the town are approximately at 13.7% for the year. The town should be at approximately 15.13% for this time of the year.

Scott commented about the Prosecution line having spent \$5,500. It was stated this is an annual fee. This is \$1,000 less than what was budgeted. He commented that Strafford County adjusted the fees for this year. Scott asked Joe if this was a decreased amount.

There was a question regarding the what expenditure(s) come through the Police communication line. Joe Varga will follow up with Kathy Blaney.

There was discussion about the on-call pay for all departments along with how on-call is handled in each department. The budget committee asked how many incidents that highway department had last summer. Joe Varga is going to gather this information. Questions were asked regarding the fire department/EMS calls and how members get paid for calls and who gets paid. Joe Varga stated this is on the lists of items the selectmen need to discuss.

Joe Varga commented about the current state of the country with the coronavirus and what kinds of impacts this may cause for residents, specifically residents who are in the service industry and how this may impact tax collections.

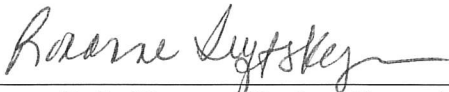
Joann Coskie stated she was willing to volunteer with preparing the Town reports next year.

Scott Ferguson said his neighbor would help with the town website. There was discussion as to

whether this would have to go out to bid. Laura Parker commented that only “jobs’ where a selectmen would be doing potential work had to go to bid, all others did not. Joe Varga stated the contract with Waste Management was up at the end of June. The contract automatically renews unless notified. Waste Management requires a 90 notification of a change to the contract. Scott commented that he had previously provided information regarding rubbish removal to a former selectmen and he would provide Joe with this same information.

Bonnie Gagnon made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 pm, seconded by Mary Knapp, the committee voted, the motion passed. (6-0-0)

Respectfully Submitted by



Roxanne Tufts-Keegan, Budget Committee Chair

Middleton Budget Committee Questions 3/16/2020

1. There was a reference to the January School Board meeting. The wages for the 2018-2019 school year and where the money came from for the teacher's received when the budget that was passed did not include a raise?

The budget is a bottom line budget. The wages were charged to the appropriate lines during the year and the district did not over expend the budget, nor did the district ask that the school hold off on making any purchases so that the wage lines wouldn't cause the budget to be overspent.

2. There was a question about the deliberative session voting. It was suggested that there be "voting cards" used.

The moderator would be the person to bring this up to. Jack Savage was elected as the write in. He can delegate the district clerk to have these prepared for the meeting.

3. Roxanne had asked about any teachers having a child in school using services. What about any "staff" member?

There are no children of any employee that live out of town who attend Middleton Elementary School.

4. They wanted to make sure there was strict monitoring of students in the school that do not reside in Middleton but use a Middleton address.

Yes, the district uses all of its resources to monitor students, on a daily basis in some cases. Every indicator is followed up with the administration. In fact we have a current situation where the parents are disputing the residency and the protocol is to bring the case to the NH Department of Education. This case is pending.

5. I explained the spending freeze. They questioned the zero fund balance at the end of the year.

There will be no fund balance at the end of the fiscal year due to the expenditures to date and the anticipated expenditures between now and the end of June, 2020.