

**JOINT MEETING
SANBORN REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD
SANBORN REGIONAL BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

November 29, 2018

To view the video of this meeting, please visit our website at www.sau17.org and click on Budget Committee Videos under the Budget Committee Menu

A Joint meeting of the Sanborn Regional School Board and the Sanborn Regional Budget Committee was held on Thursday, November 29, 2018. Chairperson Annie Collyer called the meetings to order at 7:03 PM. The following were recorded as present:

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:

Peter Broderick, Chairperson
Dr. Pamela Brown, Vice Chair
Electra Alessio
Jim Baker
Larry Heath
Tammy Mahoney
Corey Masson

Adam O'Rourke-Student Council Representative

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Annie Collyer, Chairperson
Charlton Swasey, Vice Chairperson
Mary Cyr
James Doggett
Cheryl Gannon
Jack Kozec
Sandra Rogers-Osterloh

ADMINISTRATORS:

Thomas Ambrose, Superintendent of Schools
Michele Croteau, Business Administrator

1. CALL TO ORDER- Chair Collyer called the meetings to order at 7:03 PM.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE –Done at School Board meeting at 6 PM.
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – **Chair Collyer asked for a Motion to approve the Minutes of 11-7-18. Motion moved by Mr. Doggett and seconded by Ms. Osterloh.**

Ms. Gannon asked for an addendum of the Budget Presentation slides presented by Superintendent Ambrose to be included in the Minutes.

Vote: All in Favor

4. ADMINISTRATION ANSWERS TO BUDGET QUESTIONS

Chair Collyer explained that the process adopted unanimously amongst the Administration, School Board and Budget Committee has been to submit all budget questions and receive answers that clarify those questions this evening. Then, the School Board will make their recommendation to the Budget Committee next week. The Budget Committee will begin preparing their budget to be presented to the public in January. The public is invited to attend any or all of these meetings and public comment is welcome. Chair Collyer welcomed Superintendent Ambrose to the podium. Copies of the slides were distributed and will be available on the SAU website.

Superintendent Ambrose presented the [FY 2019-20 Budget Questions /Answers](#)

Additional questions:

Q2-(Ms. Collyer)-What if any corresponding reductions are being made to online coursework & equipment? (Answer- None).

Q4-(Mr. Kozek)-Do the 40 PC's have the software included? (Answer-Yes, we already own the software licenses). What is the average lease of PCs? (Answer- 3 years). Under purchase process, does the SAU buy through the *NH Bureau of Purchase and Property* for discounts? (Answer- Not through that agency, but we do try to bid out for best prices w/vendors)

Q19-(Ms. Gannon)-What does LEA mean? (Answer-Local Education Agency which has to do with Dual Enrollment & SST and a code for where we send students)

Ms. Collyer asked that account codes reference the questions (Answer, Yes, will do)

Mr. Baker-What are equity issues? (Answer -Financial need of the student or not)

Q22-(Ms. Cyr)-are these curriculum based or pleasure books? (Answer-both).

Q45-(Ms. Collyer) on wage increase, needs clarification. (Answer-wage increase does not mean a raise)

Q45-(Mr. Doggett) are custodians part of union? (Answer-No)

Mr. Baker explained what retaining funds means along with Michele Croteau.

Q61 (Mr. Baker)-why are revenue in 2015 (168K) larger than any other year? (Answer-Charter School in use)

Q62- (Ms. Collyer)-Why lease vehicles versus buy them? (Answer-standard practice at SAU)

Do you buy used? (Answer, No)

Ms. Croteau presented the [Default Budget Information](#). She explained that the Default Budget regulations and law is evolving and that the process, which used to be fairly quick to complete, is now calculated a bit differently. This is a first draft and it is based on the Superintendent's proposed budget. She explained the details of getting to the number. Contractual obligations approved by district and the voters affect the default number, e.g. Bond payment. There are no one-time appropriations taken out of the budget.

The draft Default Budget number is \$35, 618, 920.

Mr. Baker questioned the Debt Service reduction amortization. Would the interest decrease as the bond is paid? (Answer- yes, bond schedule is in budget book). Are the modular units at the Memorial School paid for? (Answer-yes, but it is not reflected in this budget)

Ms. Collyer clarified that the proposed budget presented by Superintendent Ambrose is about \$500K higher than the default? (Answer- yes.)

5. DISCUSSION ON IMPACT OF CURRENT GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS TO SIZE & BUDGET-

Superintendent Ambrose prefaced his presentation saying that this topic comes up and he thought it should be addressed. High School Principal Brian Stack presented on the topic.

To view the video, [please click here](#).

Dr. Brown commented that in the continuing work on EISA Committee, Mr. Turmelle has noted that universities are selectively pulling out critical course work done by students to develop a customized GPA which they use in the selection process. She questions some of the Sanborn electives offered.

Ms. Alessio commented that this issue presented is critical and she sees it as a function of the School Board not the Budget Committee, although we cannot at this time keep adding more responsibilities to School Board. They have the Budget to work on, 3 Collective Bargaining Agreements, the Middle School decisions and the Seminary property.

Ms. Cyr questioned the 3 different diplomas and whether our diplomas should reflect the Magna Cum laude, Summa cum laude and Cum laude. Couldn't the minimum standards be the NH Scholars requirement? (Answer- it is a Board Policy that was addressed through them. Ms. Leavitt (Guidance Director addressed the different populations that receive the diplomas and why).

Ms. Collyer asked the student-teacher ratio be added to presentation.

Mr. Baker commented that the DOE does those calculations for you on their website.

6. BUDGET PROCESS NEXT STEPS-

Ms. Collyer highlighted the following:

- ◆ School Board Budget Recommendations Due to Budget Committee on December 6
- ◆ Preliminary Default Budget Due to Budget Committee on December 6
- ◆ Budget Committee Meetings to Prepare Budget Recommendations on December 7 & 13

Ms. Collyer suggested that the Committee look at the MS-27 form and begin their work next week on the 1100-1899 (instruction) account numbers and to please submit questions or information needing clarification to Ms. Collyer by Monday, 12-3-18.

Mr. Swasey objected to sectionalizing the budget as it should be viewed in its totality.

Mr. Doggett agrees with Mr. Swasey but recommends itemizing it as well.

Mr. Kozec commented that going by sections is a good way to address things, as they did last year.

Ms. Cyr agrees with looking by section.

Ms. Osterloh agrees with looking by section but not closing the door on any of them.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kelley Cullivan (Newton)-Has 2 children/7th Grader and Kindergartener. She believes that the Budget Committee should not be discussing or defining graduation requirements and class size, that the School Board Administration should be involved in that. It is a conflict of interest if they do. That being said, she agrees with Ms. Alessio that the 2 major agenda items going on right now; where the children will be going to school and the Seminary property should be the focus of everyone in the room and everything else should be on the back burner. For years, money has been misappropriated and it is time to change that.

Tammy Gluck (Newton)-Echoes Ms. Cullivan's concerns and thanked Ms. Alessio for her comments regarding the many issues they are addressing. Ms. Gluck referenced the Superintendent's Budget

Presentation, page 3 and 4 of the *Definition of Student Success* which discusses (amongst other criteria) the completion of the NH Scholars program, etc. This definition is driven by academic curriculum that has options and the discussion tonight of class size and graduation requirements should not be on the agenda, unless you want to cut money /staff from the budget and lower taxes.

Ms. Collyer stated that Superintendent Ambrose asked for that item to be on the agenda, so it was not directed by the Budget Committee.

Mr. Ambrose commented that this work can either divide us or bring us together. Mr. Stack wanted the Committee to have the information because he is concerned about his classes being cut. Mr. Ambrose added that he is concerned that we are not putting the students first. He will do whatever it takes to help but we have 1.5M in needs for reading instruction that is not in the budget. We can fund that by reorganizing our facilities of which the high school is not the problem, but rather the elementary buildings which are costly, especially given the low enrollments. He cited the Durham School District which has 4 buildings but \$10M more in their budget. Everyone has valid points, so let's come together to focus on making decisions for the children.

Julia Fitzgerald (Newton) - Echoes what others have said. She would hope that before diplomas are addressed, people should listen to the Superintendent and put money and attention into Special Education. By law, the children need to be funded and it is drastically needed.

8. COMMITTEE COMMENT

Mr. Masson commented that only 15% of the questions tonight were directed to students, on outcomes or taking care of our children in general. He challenges the group to step back and remind ourselves about being fiscally responsible but also funding programs for the students.

Ms. Gannon appreciates the Superintendent clarifying the situation with the 4 schools and expressing the dire circumstances of why we need the money to educate the students. Do we want to put the money into buildings or into educating the students? We need to weigh our options and take our time. As we obtain more information on the costs, we need to continue the conversation. With the aging population, there is a burden on those taxpayers, so we have to look at our limited resources to figure out how best to serve the students. If that means sacrificing buildings, then that is a better way to sacrifice in order to serve the students.

Mr. Baker agrees with Ms. Cullivan about the misappropriation of funds; that we need to look at what our highest priorities are and where the money should be spent to be most beneficial. We have plenty of money in the budget and the cost-per-pupil is too high, so we just need to figure out where it needs to go.

It has not been done, although it has been approached, e.g. Professional Development which is making a big difference. We just need to take it further.

Chair Broderick commented that we have recently received the Excellence in Education award and are not going to lower our standards. He taught here for 20 years and is not about to lower them nor and he will fight tooth and nail to keep that standard.

Ms. Alessio commented that our taxes are a burden on all of us because of not having a viable business community like Exeter or Plaistow to relieve that. This means the district will have to continue to fund our schools like they have for as long as she has been here (more than 40 years) and she hopes they will continue to do so.

Dr. Brown commented that she is to blame for Mr. Stack's presentation because she had asked a question at a previous meeting. She agrees with Ms. Gluck on the specifics of the framework for Student Success. However, Mr. Turmelle has been going to conferences to ask about revising the framework to focus on GPA scores that universities want. So, we are not throwing out the framework, but evolving it. As a Community College professor, she wants to look at electives in order to achieve the goal of graduating students successfully and efficiently so they can on go careers and college. There is life after high school; there are many courses in which electives aren't offered, you can take them in the summer or at community college. The focus now is on the elementary grades in reading and math.

Mr. Swasey commented that Mr. Ambrose mentioned allocating community resources which he wants to add are finite community resources. Money and taxes are what it boils down to. Also, Mr. Stack referenced *student need* which is very subjective compared to what one is required to have. He recommended keeping an open mind. Priorities are also subjective, so when things get thrown out here tonight, they are not anointed. Again, keep an open mind for other valid priorities.

Mr. Ambrose clarified that when he spoke about priorities, he was referring to school board goals. When he makes decisions, he thinks about the *Definition of Student Success* and School Board goals.

Ms. Collyer addressed Mr. Masson's statement saying that despite dealing in budgetary issues, they care very much about the kids. Also, the DOE analysis data shows that compared to other districts in many areas, we are moving in the right direction. However, we are spending \$1500 more per child in the elementary schools. So we need to look at facility consolidation and get results for our students. The Budget Committee is charged with supplying the educational needs with respect to the resources of the community.

Ms. Cyr commented that we have 5 schools when you consider the Seminary Property.

Mr. Heath commented that following along with the *Definition of Student Success* will keep us on the right path.

9. NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING DATES

School Board- 12/5 at 6PM

Budget Committee, 12/6 at 7PM

10. ADJOURN

Ms. Collyer asked for a Motion to adjourn, moved by Mr. Doggett and seconded by Ms. Osterloh.

Vote: All in Favor

Minutes respectively submitted by:

Phyllis Kennedy
Recorder