

Approved as amended \_\_\_\_\_

TOWN OF EPSOM

BUDGET COMMITTEE

DECEMBER 16, 2010

**Present:** Marylou LaFleur-Keane, Chairman; Joyce Heck, Vice-Chairman; Brad Keyes; Penny Graham; Bob Sawyer; Keith Cota, Selectmen's Representative; Mike Wiggett, School Board Representative

**Not In Attendance:** Carol McGuire; Virginia Drew; Kevin Reeves; Mona McGraw; David Fiorentino

**Other Attendees:** Peter Aubrey; Patrick Connors; Dick Frambach; Mary Frambach

Marylou opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

**Review Minutes of December 9, 2010**

The minutes of December 9<sup>th</sup> were reviewed and amended.

**Bob motioned to accept the minutes of December 9, 2010 as amended, Brad seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Marylou noted on December 30<sup>th</sup> the Meetinghouse would have a presentation and then the Warrant Articles would be discussed. Keith noted the Selectmen would be able to present a default budget at that time also.

**School District**

Pat Connors, Principal, presented the school budget. He noted the budget process starts with what the staff feels is required. They then work with the SAU staff to determine the budget.

**Line 8 – Teacher Salaries** - The teachers' contract is currently being negotiated. The contract will be a Warrant Article for vote in March.

Keith asked if class sizes would need to be adjusted. Mr. Connors noted the 5<sup>th</sup> grade was made part of the middle school. The teachers teach 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades or 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades. The class size in the middle school is 18 to 25 or 26 students with the lower grades being 16 to 19 students.

**Line 29 – Tuition to Other Districts** - Tuition to Pembroke Academy was reviewed. It is proposed to increase 5%. Keith asked who the Epsom representative to the AREA School Meetings. Mike thought it was Gordon Ellis. Keith is concerned with the increase and if Epsom is being represented with these concerns addressed.

**Line 23 - Maintenance Agreements** - Computer maintenance and the software were discussed. The school does not have any social networking on its computers. Costs have increased as grants previously received are no longer available.

**Line 56 – Textbooks** - The school currently has all up to date reading and math materials. Consumable books are required each year.

**Line 86 – New equipment – Music** - Mr. Connors noted the music teacher is very technologically talented. He has the students compose their own music using the computers.

**Line 91 – replace Computers** - Mr. Connors noted the replacement would be for 15 laptops and 30 desk tops and one server.

**Line 96 – Special Programs** - This is based upon children with needs from age 3 to 21. There are 62 children identified in the program. The number of aides is based upon the needs of the children, it may be individual or in groups. If there is a child in the high school who has an aide, Epsom is responsible for the cost. There are under 10 children in out of district placements.

**Line 101 – Summer Program** - The summer programs are for special needs children who may regress during the summer if they are not continually educated. There are camps that some of the children might attend.

**Line 117 – New Equipment – SPED** - This line was reduced as it is equipment that relates to a specific child. It may be a one time purchase.

**Line 143 – SPED Diagnostic** - This line is for special education testing, used to determine a child's needs. The school shares a psychologist with another district. Most testing is completed within the school. The Special Ed Coordinator and Assistant Superintendent put these lines together.

**Line 126 – Cocurricular Salaries** - Keith asked the number of stipends the school has. Mr. Connors listed many of the clubs and sports that have stipends, noting there are 21 stipends paid.

**Line 172 – Assembly** - These costs are for the end of the year assembly where students are recognized and receive awards.

**Line 182 – Course Reimbursement** - The reimbursement is for teachers taking courses. There are not as many teachers taking courses as the school has many veteran teachers.

**Line 220 – Advertising** - The school uses Ed Jobs for advertising vacancies. It helps to reduce expenses. If a person cannot be found to fill a vacancy via that site then the position is advertised by other means.

**Line 250 – Attorneys** – This amount is determined by the SAU staff based upon what they feel the need will be. The default line is high due to the use of attorneys in a previous year.

**Line 255 – S.A.U. 53** - The amount for this line is based upon a State formula. The figure is computed using valuations and student population. Epsom's share will be 16.3% next year; it was 16.2% last year – valuation went down and student population has increased.

**Line 260 – Principal Salary** - The principal's salary is on a three year contract; Mike noted they are negotiating a new four year contract. The assistant principal is on a similar contract cycle.

**Line 268 – Secretary Salaries** - Two secretaries are under contract with the other two not being under contract. The increase is based on the two secretaries under contract; the other secretaries' salary increases are included in line 372.

Keith noted the increases are approximately 3% for the principal's salary and 3.3% increase for the secretaries under contract.

Mr. Connors noted they have a telephone system where students/parents can be notified either by specific groups or the entire student bodies.

Some school information is available on-line. However, some parents do not want their child's names on the Internet therefore not all the information is on the web site. The school newsletter is sent home with the youngest child in the family with a condensed version on-line

**Line 298 – Custodian Salary** - The school has four custodians. The adjustments to these salaries are under line 372. Less work was completed last summer reducing the total salary costs for the year.

**Line 308 – Oil** - Mr. Aubrey noted no one knows what the price of oil will be next year. He estimated the costs at 2.79/gallon based upon information from the supplier.

**Line 321 – Field/grounds Improvement** - The money spent this year (\$100,345.00) for grounds maintenance included the work done this summer, the parking lot repaving, etc. Maintenance costs are higher as EYAA is unable to raise all the funds required to maintain the fields.

**Line 336 – Contracted Services (Pupil Transportation)** – Bus service is contracted with Dail Transportation. There is a limited market for obtaining bus services.

**Lines 341/342 – Summer Transportation/SPED Transportation** - These lines are for students who cannot ride the normal buses or attend another school. These costs are mandated by Federal law. They involve 10 to 13 children. It is based on the number of students and what facility they are attending.

Keith noted the Board of Selectmen is attempting to meet with our State Representatives to discuss town concerns; the School Board may want to do the same. Mike noted the School Board had met with the representatives last year with no good response. Keith noted there are different representatives this year and the School Board may want to meet with the new representatives.

Mr. Connors noted there is a proposal to the Town of Pembroke to accept a charter school that would be technologically based. The cost would be approximately 80% of Pembroke Academy's tuition. Epsom students could also attend this school. It could open as soon as next September. Discussion ensued regarding charter schools.

**Line 358 – Health insurance** - There is a large jump in the cost of health insurance. The SAU is looking for better rates. Brad asked the number of people covered. Mr. Aubrey noted the number is continually changing due to spouses losing jobs or insurance and the employee is taking out the coverage. Currently there are 61 employees covered. Retirees are covered in another pool.

**Line 367 – Teachers’ Retirement** - No teachers are expected to retire this year. The town’s cost is increasing due to the State putting less into the retirement system than in the past.

**Line 398 – Transfer to Food Service** - This line has a deficit. Most food service lines are running a loss; the lines have to be either zero or end with a surplus per Federal mandate.

The total budget has increased 5.43%. The difference between the default and operating budget is \$20,646.00.

The revenues have increased \$192,582.00.

Keith noted Food Service is being supplemented approximately \$50.00 per student per year. Mr. Connors indicated the number of students with free or reduced lunches has greatly increased. Mr. Connors noted anything to do with the kitchen or serving food has to be in the food service line, i.e. new refrigerator, computer software, etc.

Marylou asked when the Committee would be seeing the School Warrant Articles. January 6<sup>th</sup> was scheduled for this presentation as all articles except the teacher contract would be completed. Also a year to date expenditure report will be presented at this time.

Keith noted in the CIP the school indicated the purchase of a pickup truck in 2011. Mr. Connors noted they wanted to rewrite the trust fund Warrant Article so that money could be used for this purchase.

**Old Business/New Business**

There was no old/new business.

**Mike motioned to adjourn, Joyce seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Marylou adjourned the meeting at 9:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Bosiak  
Recording Secretary