

TOWN OF EPSOM
BUDGET COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 26, 2019

Present: Marylou LaFleur-Keane, Chairman; Joni Kitson, Vice Chairman; Gary Kitson, Water District Representative; Len Gilman; Joyce Heck; Virginia Drew, Selectmen's Representative; Tony Soltani; Mary Frambach; Bill Yeaton, School Board Representative; Meadow Wysocki; Linda Hodgdon

Not in Attendance: Penny Graham

Other Attendees: Patrick Connors; Amber Wheeler; Nancy Wheeler; Peter Warburton; Deb Sargent

Marylou opened the meeting at 6:30 PM.

SCHOOL REPORT

Mr. Connors reviewed the School Report Card. The enrollment this year is 405 students. Currently there are 164 students at Pembroke Academy.

Mr. Connors noted the extracurricular activities students may participate in.

Linda asked about attendance. Mr. Connors noted that until they receive the necessary paperwork from the parents a home-schooled student is marked absent.

Mr. Connors noted they have employed a second counselor to work on special situations children may have.

Virginia asked if there were numbers for class sizes. Mr. Connors noted the class sizes. The fifth grade is a large class.

Mr. Connors noted the teachers are negotiating a contract for the March ballot. They are in the last year of a three-year contract.

Mr. Connors noted the Title 1 money is mainly for additional student reading support. There are some funds for extra math support.

Linda asked about vacancies. Mr. Connors noted there is a teacher on long term medical leave, a para professional position and an ESOL position are also vacant.

Mr. Connors explained the test comparisons listed in the report. He noted that there were many students in 8th grade that opted out of taking the test for the 2018-2019 school year

for the State Assessment Test. This is reflected in the schools scores. Mr. Connors noted that the Star test is easier than the State Test.

Tony discussed and clarified a Highly Qualified Teacher status. Mr. Connors noted that this status has been removed by the State.

Tony asked why the test numbers are not raw or in a ratio. Virginia noted that the school does receive the percentile figures. Mr. Connors noted that the last page indicated a comparison for the SAU schools. The State has not released the state wide report. Tony thanked Mr. Connors for the information he provides.

Amber Wheeler noted the year was closed out with a \$97,000.00 surplus. There were areas where they received additional revenues not expected that Ms. Wheeler discussed.

Tony asked if the monetary impact of the salaries is measured (salary plus benefits). Bill noted they tried to compute this, but it is not available.

Ms. Wheeler noted the expenditures. She noted the tuition to Pembroke Academy. She discussed the reimbursement Epsom received from Pembroke for overpayment due to a reduction in tuition costs, etc.

Mary asked about the costs for line 2630 (fields/grounds improvement). Ms. Wheeler noted drainage and other repairs were completed. Virginia asked what the School Board expense was for line 2310 (School Board). It was discussed there were classes, etc. the Board members could attend. Mr. Connors noted they have also brought computers to allow for electronic signatures, (payroll, etc.) rather than have paper checks going from the SAU Office, School, Treasurer and Board members. Mr. Connors noted that it is not a program that should be on a home computer due to security.

Ms. Wheeler noted that the Total Surplus after the Warrant Articles was \$199,171.22. The money put into the Trust funds was reviewed. There currently is \$124,000.00 in the Special Education Fund without this year's deposit and \$50,000.00 in the Building Maintenance Fund without this year's deposit.

Ms. Wheeler noted there is an issue with Medicaid. She discussed the situation indicating that there may be no payments for the first half of the school year. Mr. Warburton noted that there are conversations with the State regarding this item.

The School Budget presentation for the 2020/2021 year was scheduled for December 12. Marylou noted at the Budget and Finance Workshop it was suggested the Committee members visit the school. She asked who might like to attend, several members indicated they would like to visit the school. She noted that she would like to schedule one day for the visit.

Virginia asked if the Pembroke Academy tuition could be better estimated as it has been higher than used the last two years.

Tony asked who administered the Town Forest, being told the Conservation Commission. He asked the number of members, no one knew. Virginia noted that they just significantly increased the forest size.

Minutes of June 20, 2019

The minutes of June 20, 2019 were reviewed and amended.

Joni motioned to approve the minutes of June 20, 2019 as amended, Len seconded the motion. The motion passed with one abstention.

Marylou reviewed information for the Website asking if members would like their e-mails and telephone number numbers listed.

Marylou provided the Committee with a handout for the School Default and Proposed Budget with the increases for the Default Budget for the years 2013/2014 to 2019/2020. She also gave the Committee a handout from information provided at the Budget and Finance Workshop. Items on this handout were discussed.

Linda discussed the recommendation from the Workshop (Page 44) the Undesignated Fund Balance. She asked to obtain the cash (liquid) balance of the Undesignated Fund Balance. Marylou will obtain for the November meeting the balance as of October 31, 2019.

Virginia noted the Selectmen are beginning the budget process, there will be a difference as there are 27 payroll periods in 2020. The Town Budget will be presented on November 12th to the committee.

TOWN BUDGET

Joni asked if Barbara had been paid out of the Office Part-Time Line (01-4130.2-150); Nancy indicated she was.

Nancy discussed the Computer Support Expense (01-4150.1-342). The office purchased a new software program with support.

Linda asked why the Planning Board Legal Line (01-4191.1-320) was overspent. Nancy explained they had a situation where legal advice was needed. Linda asked if there would be more coming or if it was an unknown. She will ask the Planning Board Chairman.

Linda asked about the Overtime (01-4210.2-140) for the Police Department. It is due to the lack of a full-time officer.

Meadow asked about the Road Agent Health Insurance Buyout (01-4311.1-215). Nancy

noted that at the time the Selectmen set the default budget they did not know the new Road Agent would be taking the buyout. It will be offset by the bottom line.

Mary asked about Highway Department Rental and Leases (01-4312.2-260). Nancy noted rather than hiring out the ditching the Road Agent rented equipment with the Department completing the work.

Len asked if the Town had purchased a truck. Nancy noted it was still at Patsy's being worked on.

Marylou adjourned the meeting at 8:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Bosiak
Recording Secretary