

TOWN OF ALLENSTOWN
Budget Committee
16 School Street
Allenstown, New Hampshire 03275

Minutes of Budget Committee Meeting on December 22, 2010

Present at the meeting: Carl Caporale, David Coolidge, Don Chaput, Fern Bissonnette, Jason Tardiff, Jerry McKenney, Jon Richardson, Larry Anderson, Lisa Komm, Mike Frascinella, Penny Touchette, Sted Holton, and Sandy McKenney

Others present: Joseph M. Vignola, Vice Principal, AES/ARD; Lynn Allen, Principal, AES/ARD; Peter Aubrey, SAU53; Tom Irzyk, Allenstown School Board; Peter Warburton, Superintendent, SAU53; Lynn Bissonnette, Resident.

Sandy McKenney opened the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Review 2011 School Budget.

Sandy turned the floor over to Tom Irzyk, Chairman of the Allenstown School Board. He began by referring Board Members to the revised FY 2011/2012 Proposed School Budget packets he had provided them, pointing out that the School Board had managed to make cuts and get their Proposed Bottom Line under \$10,000,000.00, as requested. It now stands at \$9,966,039.00. Should Warrant Article #2 be approved (salary and benefit increases for teachers), the School Budget will be \$9,932,939.00. Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the proposed teachers increases. Dave raised the issue that Social Security recipients have not had a cost-of-living increase in 3 years. He questioned how such residents with fixed incomes, as well as employed residents who had not had a raise in several years due to the economy, were supposed to find more money in *their* budgets so that the teachers could get this raise? It was pointed out, too, that this impact would be felt for several years to come, as the proposed increases are disbursed over the next 4 years in increasing percentages, as follows:

- Year 2011/12- 1.5%, or \$56,542.00
- Year 2012/13- 1.5%, or \$75,770.00
- Year 2013/14- 2.0%, or \$65,362.00
- Year 2014/15- 2.5%, or \$100,021.00

When asked how our district's pay rates compared with surrounding municipalities', Tom stated that Allenstown's teachers averaged about the same rate of pay now, following the last 4-year contract period, which is coming to a close this year. Various questions and discussion passed several more minutes, but the primary concern of the Budget Committee, collectively, was the controversial issue of the proposed pay increases for teachers.

At this point, Carl made a motion to approve Warrant Article #1, the School Operating Budget, with a bottom line in the amount of \$9,932,939.00. Penny seconded the motion. Took a roll call: Carl-yes; Dave-no; Don-yes; Fern-yes; Jason-yes; Jerry-no; Jon-yes; Larry-no; Lisa-abstained; Mike-no; Penny-yes; Sted-yes; Sandy-no. Motion passed.

Next addressed was Warrant Article #2, the proposed 4-year increase package for teaching staff. Sted made a motion to approve Warrant Article #2 in the amount of \$56,542.00. Penny seconded the motion. Took a roll call: Carl-no; Dave-no; Don-yes; Fern-yes; Jason-yes; Jerry-no; Jon-no; Larry-no; Lisa-abstained; Mike-no; Penny-yes; Sted-yes; Sandy-no. Motion failed and not recommended by the Budget Committee.

Announce Public Hearing.

Before excusing the School Budget-related attendees from the meeting, Sandy made mention of the upcoming Public Hearing by the Allenstown Municipal Budget Committee. Agenda topics include the 2011 Allenstown School Budget/Warrant Articles, and the 2011 Allenstown Town Budget/Warrant Articles. This Public Hearing is slated for Saturday, January 8, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. at the Allenstown Elementary School. A snow date is set for January 15, 2011 at 9:00 a.m.

Reminder re: Budget Committee Sign-Up.

Sandy reminded the Budget Committee members that several of them are due to sign up for another term in 2011. They are Larry Anderson, Don Chaput, Mike Frascinella, Fern Bissonnette, and Dave Coolidge. The dates to sign up, if they plan to, are between January 19 and January 28, 2011. The available terms are: 4 for 3-years, 1 for 2 years, and 1 for 1 year. Sandy said she will be sure to remind everyone again.

Discuss questions raised re: several line items shown on Sewer Department's Proposed Budget.

Sandy told committee members that it had been brought to her attention *after* the Budget Committee's 12-9-2010 vote on the Sewer Department Budget that Sewer Department employees were given end-of-year bonuses, their birthdays off as a paid holiday, and an "Employee Appreciation Day", none of which she had as yet verified with the Sewer Department Commissioners. She questioned committee members as to what, if anything, they thought should be done about this. Members again referred back to RSA 149:I-8 which states (in part) that surplus money which is not relegated to a Capital Reserve fund with a specified purpose may be used to offset the taxpayers rate. This raises the question of where the money for bonuses and special holidays, etc. is coming from. Subsequent discussion led to the idea of issuing a 91A Request to the Sewer Commission for answers to these questions, even if just to raise awareness about these issues, seeing as the budget had already been passed by vote and it was too late to make changes.

Larry made a motion to submit a 91A Request to the Sewer Department for clarification on the issues of bonuses, special holidays/birthdays, and Employee Appreciation. Jerry seconded the motion. Took a roll call: Carl-yes; Dave-yes; Don-yes; Fern-no; Jason-yes; Jerry-yes; Jon-abstained; Larry-yes; Lisa-yes; Mike-yes; Penny-abstained; Sted-yes; Sandy-yes. Motion passed.

Larry made a motion to adjourn at 7:34 p.m. Fern seconded the motion. Voice vote with all members in favor; meeting adjourned.

Date approved:_____

Sandra McKenney, Chair
Allenstown Budget Committee