

**TOWN OF ALTON
BUDGET COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

**DECEMBER 14, 2006
APPROVED**

PRESENT: Steve Miller, Chair; William Curtin, Vice Chair, Virgil MacDonald;
Elizabeth Dominick; Terri Noyes (School Board Representative);

GUESTS: Normand Tanguay, Superintendent; Kathy O'Blenes, Business Manager,
Deb Burton, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent;
Pam McLeod, Director, Technology; Michael Tocci, Interim Principal;
Cathy Dix-Herndon, Director, Special Education

ABSENT: Steve McMahon; Laurie Boyce

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at approximately 6:10pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Miller asked Ms. Argiropolis to take roll call.

III. NEW BUSINESS

JMA Budget Committee meeting on 12/15/06 at 6PM. Mr. Miller asked who would be in attendance. Mr. Tanguay stated that Amy Ransom, Russ Holden, and a couple of JMA School Board members. Mr. Holden will respond about who will be attending.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes to approve.

VI. REVIEW OF SAU #72 BUDGET

Mr. Miller stated that accounts may be completed today but if not, it may go later. Mr. Miller explained the process and then invited Ms. McLeod to make a statement.

TECHNOLOGY (1140)

Ms. McLeod spoke about the new state standard that mandates the integration of technology in the classroom by means of a portfolio. There has been a huge increase in technology because of this plan. Mr. Miller asked Ms. McLeod what changes were needed to meet the new requirements. Ms. McLeod explained that it means more than just keyboarding now but would include technology in every subject. Technology tools are now used in everyday. Mr. Miller asked if there were any specific hardware or software requirements. Ms. McLeod stated that the state had no mandates but they were in good shape for the hardware requirements. She stated that they are using existing software, such as Microsoft Office. Ms. McLeod spoke about centralizing data and other initiatives that drive the statement. Mr. Miller noted there was a 77% increase in the budget and asked what had been cut from the budget that was presented. Ms. McLeod responded that the budget, as presented, was \$163,618 but the Board had increased it when they reviewed and approved the budget.

Ms. McLeod spoke about the new technology assistant position. The employee who is going to be filling this position is currently working part-time as a receptionist and part-time in technology. There was a discussion about the qualifications of the individual.

Mr. Miller asked if there was a hard number on the health insurance. Ms. O'Blenes noted that the increase was 7.6% for this year, which results in a \$68,613 decrease from what was figured in the draft of the budget.

The Committee reviewed the line items of the budget concerning Dental Insurance, FICA, Retirement, Tuition Reimbursement, Unemployment Compensation, Workers Comp, and Employee Benefits. There were no questions.

Mr. Miller asked about Tech Support (\$7,000), which was at \$2,000 in the previous years. Ms. McLeod spoke about the benefits of having three employees take the course, which would include herself, the assistant, and Guidance.

Mr. Miller asked about Repairs and Maintainance. Ms. McLeod stated that the computers were getting older so that this was needed. The line item is for parts and service. She stated that she usually orders a part and replaces it herself but that there are times, like with wiring that you bring someone in.

Ms. McLeod spoke about Software and the justification for this line item. She stated that the spy ware that they had was free but that Microsoft was going to start charging for the licenses. She spoke about server software that they would be purchasing, which will entitle them for all upgrades until 2009. There is an upgrade going on with Office, from 2000 to 2003. Ms. McLeod noted that there is a new version of Office coming out and that they will be two versions behind. She spoke about the prioritizing of the upgrades and explained that the entire building is never done all at once.

Ms. Dominick asked about the cuts to be made by the Director. Ms. McLeod stated that the cuts were off the bottom line but that she would prioritize the cuts by the line items.

Mr. Miller asked about in the anticipation of the change in the insurance, since they over budgeted in this area, that if they could add to the Technology budget. Mr. Tocci explained that they would have to do it for all departments. He explained that they are building a budget a year ahead and priorities or needs could change with other departments, such as Special Education.

Ms. McLeod spoke about the New Equipment line item. She explained that they were going to get flat screen (LCD) monitors to replace the old CRT monitors, which are taking up a lot of space on the desks in the Computer Lab. Optical mice are being ordered to replace the old mice, which are failing. Mr. Miller asked about what they used that was wireless. Ms. McLeod stated that mobility was not needed but that some of the personnel were using wireless products. Ms. McLeod spoke about the projector that she is planning on ordering – it will be a ceiling projector and will cut down on class prep time. The wireless controller will be for the laptops and are from Cisco, via grant money. Mr. Miller asked why so much new equipment was needed this year. Ms. McLeod stated that last year; new computers were needed for administration but that the priorities had changed. Mr. Tocci added that if Mr. Miller could review the technology plan that had been submitted, that he would see the direction they were going in and what was driving the budget.

Mr. Miller noted that Computer Replacement (\$19,000) was increased. Ms. McLeod spoke about the printers that are needed and that the Board had added money back into the budget. The printers are old and obsolete, so it is getting difficult to find parts when repairs are needed. A computer cycle has been implemented, which will mean that 20 computers per year will be replaced, according to the plan. There are 250 desktop computers; some are donated from the Federal Government, with an XP OS from 2001. She stated that she was hopeful they could get some grant money for funding and to meet their needs.

Ms. McLeod spoke about the Dues & Fees (\$14,648). She stated that this covered licenses, Internet subscription, etc. Mr. Miller asked about the increase in Internet cost and Ms. McLeod stated that this was to make it better or faster to use because things slowed down when a class was on the Internet at once. She spoke about the Firewall or content control. There were no other questions. Mr. Miller thanked Ms. McLeod for her presentation and stated that he felt she had done a good job.

[Recorder's Note: Mr. Tanguay left the meeting at approximately 6:45pm.]

SPECIAL EDUCATION (1200):

The Special Education budget includes the PMHS budget and the ACS budget. Ms. Noyes spoke about the MOU, which defines routine costs, that are paid for by Alton.

The Committee reviewed the Salary, Retirement, and Health Insurance. Ms. O'Blenes stated that the budget had decreased by \$12,982 in the Health Insurance line item, from what was budgeted for. Dental Insurance, FICA, Tuition Reimbursement, Unemployment Compensation, Worker Comp, Admin Employee Benefit, Professional Services – Elementary, Other Consultants, and Other Professional Services. Ms. Dix-Herndon noted that the Other Professional Services really went over to the high school. Mr. Miller stated that the increases seemed to be in fixed line items, such as retirement and insurance.

The Committee reviewed the other budget line items, such as Supplies, Travel, Tuition, Repairs and Maintenance. Mr. Miller asked if any of the software was mandated. Ms. Dix-Herndon stated that some of it was, especially for communication. The Committee asked why some of the

technology items in the budget were not included in the Technology budget. Ms. Dix-Herndon spoke about some of the software needs for students. Mr. Tocci stated that if a computer were for a specific student, then that department would be responsible. He stated that this needed to be distinguished in the budget because it was for a student and the computer needed to go through school with the student. Mr. Tocci stated that every school in the state uses a similar format. Ms. Noyes stated that she, as a Board member, always wanted to know what Special Education was costing them and this was a way they could track it. Ms. O'Blenes stated that there is annual reporting on special education costs for the district that have to be reported that this would capture those expenses.

The Committee reviewed the Dues and Fees (\$500) and it was noted there was a decrease in this line item. Ms. Dix-Herndon noted that this was based on what they really were spending, and felt this amount was a better reflection of their needs.

Ms. Dix-Herndon spoke about the other services, such as physical therapists or nursing services that are needed because of the students who are moving from the elementary school to the high school. She spoke about some of the mandates that applied to Special Education students, such as tuition (private source), other professional services, summer school (special education) and equipment. There were no questions and all areas were felt to be covered.

IMPROVEMENT OF INSTRUCTION (2210):

The Committee reviewed the Improvement of Instruction budget (\$6,250). Mr. Tocci spoke about how grants work and how matching finds have to be available. Mr. Miller stated they were spending \$4,000 to get \$3,000 in grant money. Mr. MacDonald asked about how they knew how much the contract would be. Ms. Burton stated that they budgeted at the current contract amount but that if there was a contract it would be in the warrant article and that would become part of the budget.

Mr. Tocci spoke about the Professional Development for on-site training. He stated that when he came onboard that there was nothing in place for this. He spoke about how money can be spent to send individuals out for training. He stated that programs and training, across the curriculum, was very beneficial. There was discussion about the benefits of training.

LIBRARY & MEDIA (2220):

The Committee reviewed the Salary, Retirement, Health Insurance, Dental Insurance, FICA, NH Retirement, Unemployment Compensation, Repairs and Maintenance, Copier Rental, and Supplies. There were no questions.

Mr. Miller asked how many books were in the library. Mr. Tocci stated he did not know for sure. Mr. Miller asked what percentage of the shelves was filled. Mr. Tocci stated he did not but he had asked if there was room in the library for the new book and he found that it was so. He spoke about how the library is managed and how books need to be replaced due to age, loss, or usage.

The Committee reviewed the remainder of the budget, including Furniture, Dues & Fees, etc. There were no questions.

SCHOOL BOARD (2310):

The Committee reviewed the proposed budget for the School Board (\$45,766). Mr. Miller asked how much money had been spent on legal fees to date. Ms. O'Blenes report that \$6,500 had been spent.

The Committee reviewed the remainder of the budget. There were no questions.

SAU EXPENSE (2320):

Ms. O'Blenes spoke about how raises are showed in the budget, as the support staff could get up to a 5% increase but they did not get COLA or incentives.

The Committee reviewed Retirement, Health, Dental, FICA, NH Retirement, and Tuition/Conferences. There has been no money spent this year in Tuition/Conferences. The line items for Workers Compensation, Program Improvement, Professional Services, Rental Security/Pager System, Telephone, Postage, Advertisements, Printing, Travel, Supplies, Books/Publications, Equipment Replacement, and Computer Replacement. Ms. O'Blenes spoke about the need for a new server. There were no questions.

PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE (2410):

The Committee reviewed the Salary, Secretarial Overtime, Other Personnel w/Retirement, Health Insurance, Dental Insurance, FICA, and NH Retirement. Mr. Tocci stated that the office had been de-centralized. A receptionist had been taken from the office to be used for technology part time and it is not working out. A full-time receptionist is needed. The administrative assistant of the vice principal is filling in as a receptionist and is not able to get her duties done.

Postage, Rentals, Tuition Reimbursement, Transport Services, Advertisements, and Printing line items were reviewed. Ms. Burton noted that nothing had been spent but there would be orders soon for things such as stationary. The stated that the master plan for Staff Development is being re-done statewide and updated forms would be needed.

The remainder of the budget was reviewed. There were no questions.

BUSINESS SERVICES (2510):

The Committee reviewed the budget line items for Business Manager, Health Insurance, Dental Insurance, FICA, NH Retirement, Tuition, Unemployment Compensation, Workers Compensation, Admin 2% Employee Benefit, Other Professional Services, etc. Mr. Miller asked what caused the increases in the budget. Ms. O'Blenes stated that they would be getting a new copier and that made up for much of the increase. There were no other questions.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE (2600):

Ms. O'Blenes spoke about the custodians, supply clerk, and their duties. Mr. Miller asked how much overtime there had been to date and Ms. Burton stated there had been no expenses in this line item yet.

There is a contract for Snow Plowing (\$12,000). Mr. Miller asked how much the numbers had been rounded up, if it was by \$200 or \$300. Ms. O'Blenes stated that Karl Ingoldsby had called to

confirm the numbers of the line items to make sure he was close to what would be needed, for accurate projection in the budget.

The Committee reviewed the remainder of the budget. There was discussion about the Repairs and Maintenance and there was a question on whether the budget was adequate. Mr. Miller asked if the School Board had reviewed the budget. Ms. Noyes stated it had and that it had been cut. Mr. Curtin asked if the school was a member of the Our Town Energy Co-Op. Ms. Noyes stated that the heating oil was bid on and Fuller Oil had won the bid for this year but OTEC had not bid. Mr. Miller asked about the white board and pointed out that ten white boards were \$1,245 last year, but that five white boards were \$1,245 in this budget – same cost but at half the quantity. Mr. Miller stated that this could be a typo but asked it was checked into it. There was discussion about how the white boards and the file cabinets were not included in the departments' budgets but in this budget.

TRANSPORTATION (2721):

Ms. Burton noted the contract for transportation was up this year. There were no further questions.

TRANSPORTATION (2722) (Special Education):

There were no questions.

TRANSPORTATION (2724) (Athletics):

There were no questions.

TRANSPORTATION (2725) (Field Trips):

There were no questions.

FOOD SERVICES (3100):

The Committee reviewed the budget line items for Salary, Retirement, Health Insurance, Dental Insurance, FICA, NH Retirement, Unemployment Compensation, Consultants, Printing, Food, etc. There were no questions.

DEBT SERVICES (5100):

There were no questions.

There was a short break.

[Recorder's Note: Mr. Ross and Mr. Tocci left the meeting.]

VII. REVIEW & APPROVAL OF BUDGET

It was the consensus of the Committee to review the budget line items that were not hard expenses, such as FICA or Retirement.

GENERAL FUND 1100 - \$5,939,904

Mr. Miller asked about the value of the artist in residence and Mr. MacDonald stated that he felt it was a good program. There was no motion.

Mr. Miller stated he would like to see the money for the part-time nurse assistant to be put into the Science budget line item because he felt that some of the equipment had been lost to the high school when PMHS had opened. He stated that some of the schools did not have a full-time nurse, such as Concord, which he said he was told had a practitioner. He stated that they could suggest what could be done about certain line items. Ms. Noyes stated that was up to the Board. Mr. Miller said that Mr. Tocci would consider some of the suggestions. Ms. Noyes stated that Mr. Tocci would not be there next year. Ms. Burton stated that purchase orders were not done until the end of year.

Mr. Miller motioned to allocate \$11,208 to the Science Department to use and Mr. Curtin seconded the motion. The Science Department's budget was cut \$8,503 before the school board reviewed the budget. Mr. Miller withdrew his motion and Mr. Curtin withdrew his second of the motion. Mr. Miller motioned for an additional \$8,500 for the Science Department and Mr. Curtin seconded the motion. Mr. Miller asked if Ms. Noyes felt they were out of line and she confirmed that she felt they were. She stated that they could make the changes but that she could not promise that is where the money would go. Mr. Miller stated that Mr. Tocci had told him that if they did not support the assistant (nurse's assistant) that he would see to it, to the best of his ability, that the money would be used appropriately. Ms. Noyes noted that Mr. Tocci had supplied them with a list of schools with more than one nurse or which had an assistant and had been an advocate for the position. Mr. Miller stated that he was going by what Mr. Tocci had told him during the break. The motion passed by a vote of four to one (yes - SM, WC, ED, VM / no - TN)

Mr. Miller motioned to reduce Books Replacement Science 1100-56440-13 (\$37,500) by \$3,600 and Mr. Curtin seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of four to one (yes - SM, WC, ED, TN / no - VM)

Mr. Curtin motioned to reduce 1100-57330-18 by \$404 and to move those funds to Building and Maintenance 2600, because it was for filing cabinets and white boards and Mr. Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

TECHNOLOGY 1140 - \$163,618

There was discussion about the Technical Support line item but no motion.

There was a discussion about the New Equipment line item and the LCD monitors vs. the CRT monitors. There was no motion.

There was a discussion about Computer replacement and the priority of the cycle. Mr. Curtin stated that he figured that it would take twelve years to replace 250 computers. There was no motion.

SPECIAL EDUCATION 1200 - \$1,396,872

There was no discussion and no motions were made.

GIFTED & TALENTED 1280 - \$97,703

The Committee reviewed the budget and no motion was made.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES 1410 - \$30,670

Mr. Curtin motioned to reduce the Food to \$1,100 from \$1,500 and Mr. Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of four to one (yes - SM, WC, ED, VM / no – TN)

STUDENT ATHLETICS 1420 - \$39,732

There was a brief review and no motions.

SUMMER SCHOOL 1430 - \$8,036

There was a brief review and no motions.

GUIDANCE 2120 - \$187,891

There was a brief review and no motions.

HEALTH SERVICES 2130 - \$73,788

Mr. Miller motioned to reduce the Salary line item 2130-51120-00 from \$11,280 to zero and Mr. Curtin seconded the motion. The motion passed by a vote of four to one (yes - SM, WC, ED, VM / no – TN)

There was a discussion about the justification of the position. Mr. MacDonald motioned to reinstate the Salary line item 2130-51120-00 from zero to \$11,280. The motion passed by a vote of four to one (yes - TN, WC, ED, VM / no – SM)

SPEECH SERVICES 2150 - \$78,208

There was a brief review and no motions.

IMPROVEMENT OF INSTRUCTION 2210 - \$75,200

There was a brief review. Mr. Miller motioned to reduce line item 2210-53290-00 Staff Services Improvement \$5,000 to \$1,500 and Mr. Curtin seconded the motion. The motion failed by a motion of one to four (yes – SM / no – WC, ED, MV, TN)

LIBRARY & MEDIA 2220 - \$122,384

There was a brief review and no motions.

SCHOOL BOARD 2310 - \$50,266

Mr. Miller motioned to reduce the Legal line item to \$5,000 but there was no second.

SAU EXPENSE 2320 - \$229,236

There was a brief review and no motions.

PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE 2410 - \$317,914

There was a discussion about the full time receptionist position. The Committee spoke about the printing expenses that were being anticipated this year.

Mr. Miller motioned to change the budget line item for Food to \$1,000 and Mr. Curtin seconded the motion. The motion passed (SM, VM, WC, ED, TN)

BUSINESS SERVICES 2510 - \$92,356

There was a brief review and no motions.

BUILDING MAINTENANCE 2600 - \$665,494

Mr. MacDonald motioned to increase 2600-54300-00 by \$19,000 and Mr. Curtin seconded the motion. Motion passed. (Yes – WC, VM, TN / no – SM, ED)

[Recorder's Note: A motion was made in General Education to add \$404 for filing cabinets and \$411 for cork boards to this department code.]

TRANSPORTATION 2700 - \$434,565

There was a brief review and no motions.

FOOD SERVICES 3100 - \$260,664

There was a brief review and no motions.

DEBT SERVICE 5100 - \$11,309,444

There was a brief review and no motions.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business

IX. PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

X. NEXT MEETING

There will be a meeting will be on 12/21/06 – CIP.

XI. AJOURNMENT

Mr. Curtin motioned to adjourn and Mr. MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at approximate 10pm.

Respectively Submitted,

Krista Argiropolis, Recorder
Public Minutes