

Town of Brentwood
Budget Committee Meeting at Brentwood Town Office
Meeting Minutes of December 9, 2019

Present: Keith Levitsky (Chair), Liz Faria, Melissa Hanlon, Melissa Litchfield, Bob Mantegari, Kris Magnusson, Michelle Siudut.

Visitors: Elza Silva, Andrew Gray, Thad Riley, Allison Higgins, Scott Dennehy, Lisa Swasey, Kim Woods, Richard Wendell, Rusty Lyster, Brad Litchfield, Doug Cowie, Karen Clement, Ron Kew (Swasey principal), Mollie O'Keefe (SAU finance), Christopher Andriski (SAU office).

Keith called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

Motion by Kris, seconded by Bob to discuss the minutes of the November 25 2019 meeting. Due to discrepancy in minutes, motion by Bob, seconded by Keith to reopen Finance budget to affirm the vote. Motion by Bob, seconded by Keith to approve the Finance budget, passed 4-3-0.

There was discussion about clarifying the difference of budget amounts with and without the insurance line in the minutes as the health insurance line has been moved to Insurance Budget for the first time this year. In previous years, the insurance item was included in each department's budget. It was noted that the difference will be noted in each set of minutes. Motion by Bob, seconded by Kris to approve the minutes, as amended; passed 7-0-0.

Updates from Selectmen

A list of total compensation amounts for town employees was distributed.

Budgets

Recreation Department. Motion by Bob, seconded by Melissa L to discuss. Andy said the budget is level, with the exception of his salary which is a \$1 increase. Programs and attendance, along with P&L, were reviewed. There was discussion about the revolving fund and whether some of that \$46+K could come back to the town; per RSA and the original warrant article, those funds are not transferable. Is there a capital plan? Could we ask for donations for free programs? Some expenses are divided between Rec department and town (heat, oil, gas). Which programs are free and which are paid for? Duplicate participants 50%. Insurance covered under one insurance line (?). Fuel is paid by HD then each dept is billed; rec fuel comes from revolving fund. Motion by Bob, seconded by Melissa H to approve \$63,977, a 12% decrease (4.3% overall increase if health insurance amount is included); failed 3-4-0

Keith asked that any comments/questions regarding this budget be emailed to him by Friday, Dec 13. so we can provide them to Andy. Karen was asked to send the language of the original warrant article to the committee.

Debt Service. Motion by Bob, seconded by Kris to discuss. These debts are not debatable. Motion by Melissa L, seconded by Michelle to approve \$359,156, a 12.8% decrease; passed 7-0-0. It was noted that all capital impact fees should be used toward debt services when available.

Updates from School Board

Motion by Bob, seconded by Melissa L to discuss the Swasey budget. Melissa distributed several handouts. Melissa highlighted specific lines:

- Salaries of teachers - contractual increase and inclusion of STEM teacher (previously in a separate line)
- Up to 6 teachers qualified for early retirement, we did not offer that but this budget includes \$15K for the possibility of someone(s) retiring. Although it is listed under retirement it is really for the option of hiring a more expensive teacher if there are retirees. The early retirement would have been payment for the gap before they could receive medicare.
- This budget represents the third year of the current contract
- Mentor line includes the possibility of having retirees and therefore new hires
- 3% increase placeholder for support staff
- Substitute salaries increase (has been under-budgeted)
- Medicaid coordinator has been hired by SAU, the Swasey share has been included in the budget
- Guidance counselor includes step increase and is increasing to full time
- NH School Board Association - it was an SAU cost now we are paying for it separately
- Office of Superintendent. 30% increase. Some of the supers had negotiated benefits for additional education (no cap), also hired an assistant for the business administrator. Great concern was expressed over such massive increases at the SAU level.
- Custodial. 19.9% increase for 3 contractual Cooperative employees who work at Swasey. The town plows the Swasey parking lot; the lawn mowing is contracted out.

Budget as presented is \$5,955,301.05 an overall increase of \$161,082.16 and 2.78%, not including warrant articles.

It was noted that capital impact fees should be used to pay toward the bond.

Anticipated warrant articles:

- SPED \$10K (currently \$110,776 in this fund)
- Maintenance \$20K which may be used for appliances (currently \$101,486 in this fund)
- Safety & Security \$10K (currently \$10K in this fund)

Motion by Kris, seconded by Liz that Brentwood Municipal BudCom write a letter to the Joint Board expressing our sincere concerns about the increases the Coop and the SAU, for which we have control over. Motion withdrawn.

Motion by Liz, second by Kris to table; passed 4-3-0

Members agreed they wanted more time to digest the budget. Committee members were asked to provide questions to Keith by 10 pm Wednesday Dec 11 so they can be forwarded to the appropriate personnel on Thursday and returned for our next meeting.

Kris expressed a desire to have the Brentwood Municipal BudCom write a letter to the SAU16 and the Cooperative Joint Board expressing our sincere concerns about the rising budgets. Melissa L encouraged attendance at school board meetings.

Melissa L identified that the course reimbursement line was \$42,656. She also shared that the CFO and business administration salary line increased 54%, which includes a position being added.

Visitor Comments

Brad Litchfield asked why the committee argues about items that are contractual or have already been voted on; it seems like a waste of time.

Allison Higgins doesn't disagree with committee, but she felt that how things happened in the joint board meetings were surprising. She looks forward to the evaluations coming out and responding to that. She was grateful for what was expressed at this meeting in regards to the increases.

Motion by Michelle, seconded by Kris, to adjourn at 9:50 pm; passed 7-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Siudut, Secretary

Upcoming Meetings

December 16, 2019 at 7 pm - Budget Committee Meeting

December 23, 2019 at 7 pm - Budget Committee Meeting

January 13, 2020 at 7 pm - Budget Committee Meeting

January 20, 2020 at 7 pm - Budget Committee Meeting

January 27, 2020 at 7 pm - Budget Committee Meeting

February 10, 2020 at 6:30 pm - Budget Committee Meeting

February 10, 2020 at 7 pm - Budget Committee Public Hearing

February 11, 2020 - Snow date for Budget Committee Public Hearing