

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD
MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE
January 5, 2010
MINUTES**

Call to Order

6:00pm: Chairman~ James Spillane called the meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Chairman Spillane asked all to rise and pledge allegiance to the Flag.

Present:

James Spillane~ Chairman, Don Daley~ Vice Chairman, Richard Pitman, Tom Dillon, Harriet Cady, Kevin Briggs, Liz Murphy, Peter Menard & Bill Carbonneau

Also Present:

Alan O'Neal~ Board of Selectmen Representative, Peter Warburton~ Superintendent for Schools, Peter Aubrey~ Business Administrator, Greg Williams~ School Board Representative, Katherine Whitaker~ Special Education of Deerfield Community School, Paul Yergeau~ Principal, Gigi Klipa~ Assistant Principal and Nese Farrell~ Recording Secretary

Absent:

Kevin Briggs, Bill Carbonneau and Bonnie Beaubien~ School Board Representative

Citizen's Comments:

None

Answers to Questions of the 12/15/09 MBC Meeting:

Chairman Spillane referred to the question on whether the Municipal Budget Committee (MBC) could receive color coded student numbers by class at Deerfield Community School (DCS); the answer is that they sent those electronically before the Christmas break.

He referred to the question of whether the MBC members could receive copies of the "end of year" Deerfield Financials; the information was provided by SAU #53 Business Administrator, Peter Aubrey in the attached file titled "Projected Year End - Deerfield Fiscal Year of 2008/2009". Mr. Aubrey was available to answer any questions.

He referred to the question of whether the School District would work with the Town of Deerfield to secure lower oil pricing; the answer is that Mr. Aubrey will be in touch with the Town Officials prior to next year's School District oil bid decisions.

He referred to the question of whether the Administrator at DCS could contact a Verizon representative to investigate using Verizon (as the Town does) rather than Nextel; the answer is that DCS Principal, Paul Yergeau has a Verizon contact and will be discussing a change.

He referred to the question of whether the SAU could provide language on the "Building Repair Trust Fund"; the answer is that there will be a warrant article to follow on Monday.

He referred to the question of whether the SAU could provide information on the following: 1) The increase of Para Professional salaries. 2) The number of school employees given raises approved by the School Board for the fiscal year of 2009/2010. 3) The amount of increases approved by the School Board for the fiscal year of 2009/2010. The answers were given in a document titled "Deerfield Proposed Budget/ December 15, 2009 MBC Meeting".

Chairman Spillane summarized the attached document. The breakdown of increases for the Para Professional salaries were \$12,365.00. Susan Swick/\$128.00, Jaclyn Duhamel was under budgeted for fiscal year 2009/2010 (roster population error is increased \$790.00), Kathy Poole was budgeted for the fiscal year 2009/2010 as a Preschool Special Education Aide and her position changed at half-time. There was more than one Preschool Special Ed and halftime regular Preschool Ed, which was a \$5,968.00 increase. Kimberly Conotti was a new halftime Kindergarten teacher at \$5,479.00; a position was created to support her additional Kindergarten program, brining the total to \$12,365.00.

He referred to how many school employees were given raises; it was ten as a full fledged School Board. He referred to the amount of increases approved by the School Board; it was \$8,382.00 for the current 2009/2010. He noted that the total amount of increases as a full fledged School Board was around \$20,700.00. There was discussion on the current Default Budget.

Selectman O'Neal referred to the first Para Professional Salary Breakdown of \$12,365.00 and asked if the budget print changed at all. He stated that there was a longevity increase of \$1,185.00 that was still part of this. Special Education of Deerfield Community School, Katherine Whitaker said she was almost sure that the top four were separated out; noting the Para Professional corrections and the salary raises. Selectman O'Neal

said that on the budget print it had an explanation of \$1,185.00 and the \$12,365.00 didn't seem to include the longevity. DCS Principal, Paul Yergeau said it is not necessarily longevity for those people, but depending on which Para had reached that point, then they would get some longevity.

Mrs. Cady asked if longevity is figured at the beginning, middle or end of the year. Mr. Yergeau confirmed it is at the end of the year; every year of service. Peter Menard stated that he thought the School Board was comp \$2,400.00; and the usual was to try to not take from the increase, as it was built in somehow and could not be extracted. He asked if the \$1,431.00 (the Principal's salary) was that in that figure somehow. Mr. Yergeau confirmed it was. Superintendent for Schools, Peter Warburton stated that ten employees were given raises approved by the School Board for this year and confirmed that the ten employees were not teachers; not contract bond employees.

Chairman Spillane referred to the question of which out-of-district schools are used by Deerfield (SAU #53). Special Education Director, Patti Willis provided a list of schools and Mr. Yergeau stated that DCS does not use most of those schools. He said those tuitions are based on the services that are provided; so it is not a set fee like Concord High School (CHS) has.

Mrs. Cady asked if DCS has any handicap children that go to Life House, and if so, do they pay for transportation and tuition to Life House. Mrs. Whitaker replied that they have used Life House in the past, but does not think they are used now. Mr. Warburton said that the list show the ones that they use with check marks next to them.

Chairman Spillane referred to the question on if there is a plan to reduce the number of modulars at DCS; the answer was that DCS and Administration are continuing discussions on this. Mr. Warburton stated there is a School Board meeting tomorrow night and they have invited the State to come look at them, as well as others looking into the space. They should have more information before the next meeting. Don Gorman said that one of the elements that is missing to make a logical decision on whether to remove a modular or leave it there is that if it has to return in the future it will need upgrades on the septic system. He said that up until now, they have not had a concept as to what that would cost. They have contacted some contractors to give them a ballpark as to what would be required so they may give a more intelligent answer. Chairman Spillane expressed the MBC's concern of where the cut off point should be; if they are continuing to maintain a modular not needed (as well as paying for it each year), where does it become more expensive to keep it than to just get rid of it and deal with the possibility of needing one down the road. They do not want to reach that point where they have gone past the payback value of keeping the modular. Mr. Gorman said they are actively trying to get those figures now so that they can get a handle on the situation.

Chairman Spillane referred to the question on why the 2010/2011 Default Budget was higher than the Proposed Budget. Mr. Aubrey provided a spreadsheet breaking down by function areas. The typical areas that do not fit into the Default are supplies, books, equipment, food service and grants. He stated that the biggest decrease is in the 1100 Series.

Mrs. Cady said it looks like they took out the salaries of the Para Professional and the three teachers that were removed, but there is about a \$12,000.00 difference and asked if it is in the materials and books that the School Board took out. Mr. Aubrey said there is \$20,000.00 in that number; the two new Aide positions and the regular SPED that are not part of the Default (they go the other way, increasing the budget). The net of the \$1,100.00 is that \$12,000.00 decrease and the Default was based on last year's Voted Budget; the only things that increased or decreased are contractual items.

Mrs. Cady asked what the difference in the Instructional Staff services were and as to what it covers. Mr. Aubrey said it would include lines for Instruction, Educational Media and other instructional staff services. He summarized items that went down that were noted on their Budget.

Mr. Aubrey stated they are still waiting on CHS to give them an answer on why their percentages of increase were so high; they are expecting some news tomorrow.

Mr. Warburton referred to the question about the referee fees and that they had a conversation with the Athletic Director, Cindy Hanson. He said she stated that DCS belongs to the Southeast League of sporting events, who look for two trained officials at a minimum. They would like to see an official that has passed a course specific to a sport. This is not only for keeping track of all the rules and regulations of the game, but also to contain what is going on around the game (in the stands and on the field). He added that they require two trained officials in basket ball, two in soccer, two in baseball and one in softball; Deerfield has been paying \$35.00 per trained official, per game, but the League asks for \$40.00 (Northwood pays \$45.00).

Mr. Warburton referred to the Charter School and said there will be a press release tomorrow. They met with the Charter School last week (whom do not have a home for their proposed school) and they have decided not to go forward with the warrant article. The contract is still ongoing and the School Board still has some decisions to make tomorrow night at their meeting.

He referred to the question on the Special Education placement and that there was information given the MBC members tonight, as well as noting that Patti Willis was available for questions.

Mr. Aubrey informed the MBC that he had a conversation with Buxton Oil and said that one of the limitations they have is that they will only service Deerfield; they will not service Chichester or Epsom which is a problem for the SAU who needs a company to price out for all the schools they manage. He feels that the key is getting enough quantity to make it worth their while to give the Town a better price. He will check on other companies as well.

Tom Dillon referred to the previous discussion on the classes being 27.5 and he was surprised to see the Salary Projection Sheet showing 37.5 people being paid under the Regular Teacher salary line. Mr. Yergeau referred to the Budget showing several places where there are salaries categorized by certain job descriptions; for example, the Guidance Counselors are in one salary line by themselves. He said that other people (who are considered regular education professionals/not special ed, library or administration) such as the Art, Music and Physical Education teachers are those that fall under that category.

Mr. Dillon asked if more than 27.5 classes would be going on at any given day at the school or would there be 1/3 of the teachers having free time when their students are in another class. Mr. Yergeau said that the younger grades (1st through 5th grade) go by homeroom to the music teacher; during that period, those students would travel to the music class and the 4th grade teacher would have planning time. He gave another example of when the 4th grade students are back in the classroom, the reading specialist has a group so that class is split; it is a constant flow of where the students are. He confirmed that there are more than 27.5 classes worth of time and gave examples of scenarios. He stated that the teachers are allocated by their contract to have 25-minutes worth of planning time and they actually have difficulty in being able to provide the planning time that is required for the teachers. He said they are supposed to have 225 minutes in the course of the week that they are required to be planning and they tried to divide it up over a five day period, but sometimes that does not happen.

Don Daley requested they go through the classroom teachers and non-classroom teachers list with the MBC. Peter Menard said he printed a list of the teachers on the SAU website and found that there were 27 regular teachers, but about 51 more when adding them all up. Mr. Yergeau reviewed the list with the Committee.

Mrs. Cady believes that the State requires the schools to have one Guidance Counselor per 500 students and it seems that DCS is over the requirements. Mr. Yergeau confirmed that 500 students is the cutoff to mandate another counselor. He said there are recommendations for art, music, physical education and world language classes (or the like), but there is not any mandated amount of time like there are in the core academic areas. He said that one of the biggest things that drive how they schedule their integrated arts programs is coordinating planning time for teachers to adhere to their contracts.

Mr. Gorman said that one would have to actually have to be in a classroom with a teacher for an entire day to find out what is going on with that scheduling piece (as well as their lunch piece); they are straight out planning their classes for the next day, for even individual students. He explained that some students are at different levels and their plans differ from the others. Their planning has to be ready for the next day or the next week and they are very busy and very concerned about the individual students along with the overall classroom projects. He stressed that they are not taking time off; they are working those 150 hours and can even hardly take their lunches.

Mr. Warburton added that the standard in the field of education is to give an education preparation and sometimes many parents are squeezed into that small amount of time for a meeting. They could schedule an IB meeting, a Special Ed meeting or a parent meeting during the small planning time allotted. Mr. Dillon said that when he was looking at this sheet it looks like $\frac{3}{4}$ of the classes shown are already less than what the School Board recommends as a size for that class. Mrs. Whitaker said that the 27.5 are classrooms teaching mostly academic subjects. Students also have art, music, world language, wellness and physical ed that may not be a big classroom but in a small group, which would need to be added to that number. Mr. Yergeau added that the 27.5 classes are really the homeroom grouping of the kids; the middle school has currently four eighth grades and four seventh grades and those would (at some point of the day) all be in a language arts, science, social studies or math classes. However, in the math classes (for example), as much as they try to group them together as best as possible, there are some that need specialized instructions. During that block of time, those may be with a special education. He gave several other examples.

Don Daley referred to the non-classroom teachers and asked how many of them are State requirements. Mr. Yergeau replied that State requirements would be the reading specialists, but the wellness and world language programs are not; it was a community decision to offer them as a programs. Mrs. Cady asked if the State was paying for Kindergarten (for a half day program), as she thought it was State mandated under Article-28 of the Constitution. Mr. Warburton confirmed that they are not. Mr. Yergeau added that they never really know who is out there that will be attending their Kindergarten, so it is a guessing game. He said last year they ended up having more kids than they anticipated; the numbers showed that they were going to have to do something different, as the numbers were too high to offer the one full-day option and two half-day options (the classes would have been much larger than any classes in the rest of the building). He said the School Board went through a process to look at options and he gave several examples. He believes (through conversations with the parents) that a lot of the families whose children are in the half-day option would prefer the full-day option if it was available to them. Liz Murphy asked if the 1st Grade teachers see a difference in the readiness between the children in the full day Kindergarten class verses the half-day classes. Mr. Yergeau confirmed that they do, but there are unknown quantities of the kids come to them and they do not know which kids would need the full day verses the half day as there are no evaluations prior to Kindergarten. He confirmed that they have worked very hard to make them as equitable a program as possible in the half-day.

Chairman Spillane referred to the question about the decreasing of positions and whether the Board had looked at decreasing any of the full-time positions to part-time positions, as they seem to have more teachers available than they need to have. Mr. Yergeau replied that it was not pursued by the Board, but the School is taking a step into reconfiguring the school.

Mr. Dillon referred to the 1200 Series/Central Administration costs going to the SAU that is up 19.5% and said that when he looks at the Voted SAU Budget he does not see Special Education costs in there (he just noticed the Special Education Director lines cut to zero for next year). Patti Willis replied that it is not based on the SAU Budget, but it is based on the Special Services Budget; which is not specifically included in there, but is given to the School Board and the Executive Board in the fall. It is developed to meet the program needs and the pieces that make up that budget are the Federal Funds Bookkeeper, Assistant Special Education Director and the Case Manager for the CHS students; it is the staff that makes up the Special Services at the SAU office, but it is not part of the SAU Budget (it is its own budget, divided out to each town by the number of coded students they have).

Selectman O'Neal said that he sees that they have a Special Education Coordinator Secretary in the School Budget, which looks like a lot of new functions and asked if they are getting duplicated services. Mrs. Willis replied that it is similar to the structure of how you would need a Building Principal to run the building, but you would need a Superintendent at the Administrative Offices. They need someone to be in the building to do the day to day special services administration, but at the SAU level there are a number of State reports that need to be submitted, the billing to get the catastrophic aide reimbursements, administering of the medicated school programs and all the data entry that the State requires them to do. Mr. Dillon said that at the last meeting there was discussion that our Town's percentage of the SAU costs were above 26%, but using the total SAU Budget here it would be around \$325,000.00 for that 26% (the School Budget shows the SAU Admin costs at \$254,000.00). Mr. Willis replied that the \$63,000.00 that was spoken of being up 19 or 20% is only the Special Services Budget, not on the SAU Budget. Mr. Aubrey confirmed that the Town is getting 19.8%, not the 26%.

Mr. Warburton said that the budget that the members are looking at is the Fund One Budget, but they also have a few others that are budgets that are put together based upon the needs of their identified children. The budgets have not been voted on by the SAU's Board; those are program budgets they give them and they vote on the Fund One Budget. He said there has been conversation recently that should the SAU Board have oversight to look at those budgets and vote on them; it's not hidden. He mentioned other programs they are working in which they add up to say how much money they need based on the individualized educational plan that they have (then they would charge back the school if they use those services).

Mrs. Willis added that the Fund Two Budget is the Preschool Program that is located at the Hill School; because Deerfield has their own Preschool they do not pay into that program at all. She said the Fund Four Budget is the Diagnostics Budget that is put together based on the Occupational Therapist (OT) and School Psychologist, but Deerfield has opted to hire their own Occupational Therapist so they do not pay any portion of that. The SAU hires a fulltime School Psychologist and each school contributes to the amount that they need, which would make it difficult for a school to hire a two day a week Psychologist when the SAU can have a fulltime hire and bill out their two or so days separately.

Mrs. Whitaker said that this year they had a fulltime OT and had a three day a week one, but now they have not been able to find a three day a week which is costing more to hire through an agency than it would to hire a fulltime one. Liz Murphy asked how they would get the money for those other Funds. Mr. Willis replied that it is in their budgets under 2123/Diagnostic. The School Board and the Town gets to vote on those other budgets.

Selectman O'Neal asked what the Town gets for that Diagnostic Budget. Mrs. Whitaker said it is for 80% of a School Psychologist (four days a week), which also includes benefits. Mrs. Cady requested a copy of the Elementary School and Middle School standards from the State of New Hampshire Department of Education to understand what the Town is giving extra, versus what they have to give. Mr. Warburton said they will look into that and they will send the members a link of the State Education Department that lists their standards.

Mr. Daley asked where the six Interns and the four Para Professionals are located in the School. Mr. Yergeau replied that there is a sixth grade intern, a seventh grade science intern, fourth grade intern and a half-time (half a year) sixth grade intern. He said there are two full-day Kindergarten Aides, one half-day Kindergarten Aide and one full-day Preschool Aide.

Mr. Dillon asked what services Deerfield gets from the SAU Technology Coordinator. Mr. Warburton said there are so many things and tried to summarize them. He said the SAU gets a large success with purchasing and the SAU IT person oversees a lot information and boxes connected with different schools, handles a lot of money that comes in the SAU, she has co-written and been a lead in a recent award of a grant for \$600,000.00 for Science & Technology for all of their schools (they were awarded the most money in the State), she does a lot of mentoring classes, troubleshoots whatever system goes down each day and they feel they are extremely fortunate to have her (he listed many other contributions she has made). Mr. Aubrey added that she is the IT for all their schools, as each school flows through the SAU; each district by itself would end up paying more otherwise.

Mr. Dillon asked what the School Board's Technology Coordinated does, particularly since there is also a Network Technician. Mr. Yergeau replied that the School Board's IT Coordinator has more of a teaching role; she does direct training in classes with teachers (sets up the networks and teaches the teachers how to use them). He stated that she also had written and secured a one-on-one technology grant; which

gave the ability to be able to provide one piece of technology for each student in the classroom, as well as providing training on them. He said when the network is not working at the building level she handles those issues and she troubleshoots the computers for NWBA Testing (three times a year for two weeks each time). Mr. Gorman said she also offers enthusiasm; always excited about some seminar or some new technology.

Mr. Daley referred to the Special Programs and the list of teachers under the salary line and asked for a little more specifics. Mr. Yergeau summarized each of the teachers listed and gave their positions.

Mr. Dillon asked how they decide how many Special Education teachers DCS needs. Mrs. Whitaker replied that they look at how many service hours the students need for specific support (she gave examples) and they add it up per grade level. She confirmed that the non-on-one aids are working with multiple students (at least two).

Selectman O'Neal referred to the 2620/Utility line and that it looked like it had an overrun of \$46,000.00. Mr. Aubrey replied that they have had furnace and water issues (among other situations) come up.

MOTION: Vice Chairman Daley moved to approve the bottom line of \$12,234,124.00.

SECONDED: Peter Menard seconded the Motion.

VOTE: Chairman Spillane called for the Vote.

It was a 5-2 Vote in Favor.

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION: Vice Chairman Daley made a Motion to approve the Minutes of December 12, 2009 as written.

SECONDED: Harriet Cady seconded the Motion.

Mrs. Cady said she had some corrections to discuss.

AMENDMENT: Vice Chairman Daley withdrew his Motion until all the Committee could review the Minutes.

Unfinished Business:

Selectman O'Neal referred to the video tapes that needed to be purchased.

MOTION: Selectman O'Neal moved to pay the MBC portion of the invoice for the video tapes.

SECONDED: Peter Menard seconded the Motion.

VOTE: Chairman Spillane called for the Vote.

It was a Unanimous Vote in Favor.

New Business:

None

Old Business:

None

Citizen's Comments:

Walter Hooker inquired about the Minutes of December 12, 2009 and whether they were available to the public yet. It was confirmed that they had not been posted, as the Committee had not had a chance to review them yet. Mr. Hooker pointed out that under RSA 91 they need to be available within five business days, even if they are not edited yet.

Mr. Hooker also inquired as to where the binders that hold the MBC Minutes were kept. The Recording Secretary, Nese Farrell agreed to look into this and report back to him and the Committee.

Mr. Hooker inquired on if the Public Hearing for January 12, 2009 had been posted. Chairman Spillane confirmed it would be posted tomorrow.

Mr. Hooker asked who keeps the MBC emails. Chairman Spillane confirmed that the Town Administrator, Cindy Heon gets copied on all the emails and that the MBC does not do any correspondence outside the official MBC mailing list which includes her. He confirmed that no official MBC business is conducted over the email.

Mr. Hooker referred to the comment made tonight that the MBC's role is to justify expenses, not the program. He noted that the MBC had cut the radar traffic counters and the Church Street traffic calming (which was part of Highway Safety), and asked if those were programs and not expenses, why did the MBC cut those. Chairman Spillane replied that it was considered to be an unjustified expense by the majority of the MBC

that was sitting at the time and added that without speaking to the individuals that actual made the Motion, he cannot clarify that. He feels it is a good question to bring up at the Public Hearing.

Adjourned:

8:13pm

MOTION: Selectman O'Neal made a Motion to adjourn.

SECONDED: Vice Chairman Daley seconded the Motion.

VOTE: Chairman Spillane called for the Vote. It was a Unanimous Vote in Favor.

The January 5, 2010 meeting is now adjourned.

*The Minutes were Recorded, Transcribed and Respectfully Submitted by Nese Farrell, Recording Secretary.
Pending Approval by the Municipal Budget Committee*