

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD, NH**  
**MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
George B. White Building  
8 Raymond Rd. Deerfield, NH 03037

**December 17, 2019**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**Call to Order** at 7:00 PM by Chair

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Roll Call**

In Attendance: Phil Bilodeau, Zach Langlois, Herman Pretorius, JoAnne Bradbury,  
Bonnie Beaubeing, Alden Dill, John Dubiansky, Terry Roy  
Excused Absences: Andrew Robertson, Bill Von Hassel, Bradley Briggs

**Approval of Minutes:**

**Motion:** Made by Mr. Dill to approve the minutes from the 12/10/2019 meeting

**2nd:** Mr. Langlois

**Discussion:** Mr. Pretorius said he had heard from Andrea Hotaling with regard to her statements during citizen's comments during the 12/10/2019. She had meant to say that the high school tuition is over budgeted for, not that the line is over budget.

Mr. Langlois also pointed out a correction that needed to be made to the discussion of the high school tuition. The capital fee for last year should \$496.00 and next year should be \$501.00.

**Motion:** Made by Mr. Dill to approve the minutes as amended for the 12/10/2019 meeting.

**2nd:** Mr. Langlois

**Vote:** 6 Yay, 0 Nay, 2 Abstain

**Motion Carried**

**Town Budget: \$4,300,001.00**

**Motion:** Made by Mr. Langlois to approve the town budget

**2nd:** Mr. Dill

**Vote:** 7 Yay, 1 Nay, 0 Abstain

**Motion Carried**

**School Budget: \$14,394,363.00**

**Motion:** Made by Mr. Pretorius to re-open the discussion on the school budget from the previous meeting.

**2nd:** Mr. Dill

**Vote:** Unanimous to re-open discussion

**Motion Carried,** which also put motion from prior meeting to approve the school budget back on the table.

**Discussion:** Mr. Roy asked why the cost for special ed paras is more than the cost for special ed teachers. Ms. Patti Sherman, the SAU 53 Superintendent, was present to answer questions. Ms. Sherman explained that the special ed case managers line may not represent the cost for just one student, case managers may manage 20 cases, assigned to one or two grade levels, and paras are assigned one on one to students. Mr. Roy asked what happens to the paras when their students age out of the school. Ms. Sherman said they staff according to student needs, that there is always a shortage, but that if they were fully staffed, the position would be eliminated. Mr. Roy asked how many paras had been laid off in the last five years. Ms. Sherman said she didn't think they had ever laid a para off because they always have positions that need fillings. Mr. Pretorius asked for clarification, if the figures in orange on the budget were figures that couldn't be changed. Mr. Langlois said that is correct, those figures are not adjustable. Mr. Roy then asked about federal money for IEPs and where that is reflected in the budget. Ms. Sherman said it is shown under revenue. Mr. Langlois added it is on lines 39 & 40. Ms. Sherman said on page 40, Revenue from Federal Sources, Consolidated Grants are special ed grants, Medicaid is reimbursable also, and special ed aid called Catastrophic Aid. Mr. Roy asked if the grants are reflected in the special ed teacher's salaries. Ms. Sherman said no, their entire salaries are in the budget and the grants are added to offset the entire budget. Mr. Roy asked about one time money from the state. Ms. Sherman said that is the Adequacy Aid, which offset taxes. Mr. Roy asked about the surplus of \$710,000 being almost double the surplus from the year before. Ms. Sherman said a significant surplus was from special ed last year. There was a lot of movement at Concord High School and in special ed students at Concord High School. She also explained that special ed placements are hard to discuss without giving away student specific information. Mr. Roy said that a majority of the overage was due to special ed needs and asked if they were not necessary but were budgeted for. Mr. Langlois said about \$500,000 was from special ed lines, about \$200,000 was from high school tuition. Ms. Sherman said there is a breakdown on page 56. Mr. Roy asked why we carry a quarter of a million dollar surplus every year that is returned. Ms. Sherman said it would be extremely risky to cut money out when they are projecting a year and a half out, just because they didn't spend the money this year. Mr. Langlois explained it takes a million dollars a month to run the school, \$250,000 is one week of operating costs. Mr. Langlois said that the administration does a great job of keeping costs down, and not spending when they don't have to. Mr. Roy then asked what the average cost to educate a special ed student is. Mr. Pretorius said he wouldn't allow the question and that it is inappropriate to discuss student specifics. Mr. Roy said he wants to know how much one student can affect the budget. Mr. Pretorius said the potential to throw the budget off by hundreds of thousands of dollars had been discussed at the last meeting and that his decision to

not allow the question stands. Mr. Dill pointed out that the special ed coordinator had been to MBC meetings in the past but that not a lot of information can be given due to confidentiality. Mr. Roy said that the citizens may have to pay up to \$800 or \$900 additional this year for this budget and that it is only fair for them to have an idea why. Mr. Dill mentioned that the school does have a special ed trust fund but that Mr. Langlois had explained at a previous meeting why they chose not to use that. Mr. Langlois explained again that the school board had discussed cutting the special ed lines and using the special ed trust fund should it become necessary. The special ed trust fund was established for unbudgeted cases that may come in. Mr. Langlois explained that the school board determined that using that trust fund like this would be the equivalent of spending life insurance before you die. He said if they were wrong, it would impact the educational experience of every student at DCS and they weren't willing to do that. Mr. Roy said that people are going to ask why money is being returned every year. Mr. Langlois explained that the surplus is not always tied to special ed. Savings are found throughout the budget in a variety of ways. He said everyone works very hard to spend the money as if it were their own and that they try to give as much back as possible. Mr. Bilodeau pointed out that Ms. Hotelling had mentioned last week that the high school tuition is always a surplus. Mr. Dill asked if there was any new information on the buses. Mr. Langlois said that project had been put on hold per Jim Deely, in response to the bus driver shortage last summer, but that it will be taken up again in the near future. At this time, with no further discussion in regard to the school budget, Mr. Pretorius called for a vote on the motion to approve the school budget.

**Vote:** 7 Yay, 1 Nay, 0 Abstain

**Motion Carried**

Mr. Langlois asked if they needed to have the Saturday, January 4th meeting. Mr. Pretorius said if there was general agreement, he was fine with canceling. It was decided that they will meet on Tuesday, January 7th and Thursday, January 9th. Mr. Pretorius will modify the schedule.

**Motion to Adjourn:** Mr. Langlois

**2nd:** Mr. Dubiansky

**Vote:** Unanimous

**Meeting Adjourned at 7:35 PM**

These minutes were transcribed and respectfully submitted by Tina St. Peter, Recording Secretary

Pending approval by the Municipal Budget Committee