

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

January 18, 2020
Meeting Minutes
Public Hearing

Call to Order Public Hearing called to order by Chair at 9:00 AM.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call: In Attendance: Bill Von Hassel, John Dubiansky, Zach Langlois, Herman Pretorius, JoAnne Bradbury, Bonnie Beaubien, Phil Bilodeau, Andrew Robertson
Absent: Alden Dill, Terry Roy, Bradley Briggs

Presentation of Town Budget & Warrant Articles

Mr. Pretorius read each of the Town Warrant Articles and Mr. Robertson provided comments on them.

Jane Miller approached the microphone and mentioned that there is a problem with drainage in front of the Philbrick James Library on Church Street. She asked if the resurfacing on Church Street will improve that problem. Mr. Robertson said he doesn't know the specifics and that he can find out from the Highway Dept.

Erik Burgland approached the microphone. He said he feels that the Warrant Article for the Police Dept Building Trust Fund (Warrant Article 6) is essential. He asked about a plan. Mr. Robertson said that no money could be spent last year because the Warrant Article failed and that it has been suggested to the Board of Selectmen to make this Warrant that money not come from taxation, but from surplus, that they hope that will move it along.

Harriet Cady also approached the microphone and said she would like to see how much taxes would be reduced if money was not taken from unexpended funds for the Warrant Articles. Ms. Cady also spoke to the importance of keeping the Master Plan up to date. Ms. Cady asked had questions about the tax credit for veterans which were answered by Mr. Robertson.

Leila Thompson asked when the last time the veteran tax credit maximum allowance was adjusted. Mr. Robertson answered that it was 3 or 4 years ago.

Presentation of School Budget & Warrant Articles

Mr. Langlois read each of the School Warrant Articles.

Andrea Hotaling approached the microphone with questions about the Food Services budget. Mr. Langlois said he would have to clarify with the Business Administrator and would provide that information at the Deliberative Session and to Ms. Hotaling. Ms. Hotaling asked for clarification on separation benefits for retiring employees. Mr. Langlois said he would need to clarify with the Business Administrator on that as well. Ms. Hotaling asked what percentage the certified and non-certified salary increases are. Mr. Langlois said increases are pooled increases, merit driven at the end.

Ms. Thompson stated that she would like to see a list of employees and their salaries prior to the Deliberative Session. Mr. Dubiansky said that employee salaries have always been in the Town Report but he didn't remember them being provided before that. Mr. Pretorius said that the MBC wasn't intentionally not supplying information and that if Ms. Thompson wanted that information, please request it.

Ms. Cady said she would like to know the number of elementary and high school students, the number of certified teachers, and the number of paras. In response to Ms. Thompson, Ms. Cady stated that salaries are published in the Town Report but that she had never seen them with this data. Ms. Cady said that the problem with that is that the Town Report comes out a while after the Deliberative Session and people can't find out information without making a Right to Know request. Mr. Langlois provided the information on student and teacher and para numbers that Ms. Cady had asked for. Ms. Cady said in 2003 or 2004, DCS had 580 students, fewer classrooms, they added kindergarten and a cafeteria, and now they're looking to add again with fewer students. Mr. Langlois explained that state standards had changed over the years, the usage of the building has changed over the years, and that a larger footprint is needed. Ms. Cady said she had called the Department of Education and said they don't have a minimum standard. She asked who is making the reports. Mr. Langlois said they had an engineering data study from a few years ago. He said the need for modulars is also an indication that the footprint is too small and they currently have two modulars with four classrooms in them. Ms. Cady called that a management problem at the school. Ms. Cady said she can't get the info she wants at the state. Mr. Langlois said he would ask the SAU to pull that information together for her.

Dan Holdridge, Town Moderator thanked everyone for their hard work and time and asked if the MBC could assign a person to speak to Warrant Articles as they are read. Mr. Pretorius said they would do that. Mr. Robertson explained the usual process.

Mr. Pretorius asked Mr. Langlois to explain the addition of a teacher to the DCS Middle School. Mr. Langlois explained that administration requested to add a teacher to accommodate a larger number of incoming students.

Mr. Robertson made a motion to close the Public Hearing at 10:20 AM. Seconded by Mr. Langlois. Vote to close the Public Hearing was unanimous.

Public Hearing closed at 10:20 AM.

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

Pending approval by the Municipal Budget Committee