



TOWN OF BOW

Budget Committee

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Bow Budget Committee Bow School District Approved Minutes January 7, 2019

John Heise, Chair	P	Melissa Radomski	P
Mark Zerba, Vice Chair	P	Dominic Lucente	P
Bob Arnold, Secretary	P	Benjamin Kiniry	P
Christopher Nicolopoulos (Selectman Rep.)	P	Kathy Garfield (School Brd Rep)	P
Dr. Dean S. T. Cascadden , Superintendent of Schools	P	Duane Ford, Assistant Superintendent for Business Administration	P

* P = present; A = Absent

I. Call to Order

Chair Heise called the meeting to order at 6:15 PM. Introductions were made all around. Chair Heise gave an overview of the process

II. Approval of Outstanding Unapproved Minutes

Motion:

Bob Arnold moved to approve the minutes of January 29, 2018; February 8, 2018; February 12, 2018; and February 12, 2018 Public Hearing minutes. Motion was seconded by Dominic Lucente. Motion carried with a vote of 7 in favor and 1 abstention.

III. Election of Officers

Motion(s):

Ben Kiniry moved to nominate John Heise as Budget Committee Chair. Motion was seconded by Bob Arnold and carried by unanimous vote of the Committee.

John Heise moved to nominate Mark Zerba as Vice Chair. Motion was seconded by Dominic Lucente and carried by unanimous vote of the Committee.

Mr. Kiniry moved to nominate Bob Arnold as Secretary. Motion was seconded by Mr. Lucente and carried by unanimous vote of the Committee.

IV. School Board Budget Presentation

Dr. Cascadden, Superintendent of Schools, gave a “big picture” overview of the budget being proposed for the 2019-2020 school year. SAU 67 has a reputation of having great schools. The goal for the Bow District should be to continue to support an excellent system and to make sure that the District is

adjusting services to account for the increased enrollment. Tuition revenue has allowed the school's amount raised by taxes to decrease every year. However, this may not be the case this year.

Dr. Cascadden noted several items affecting this proposed budget. Included are: Health Insurance GMR of 10.1%; increases in special education needs and costs; enrollment and class size concerns; staffing proposals to address identified growth concerns; and Support Staff and Teachers contract negotiations. Overhanging these factors are the requests for abatement made by Eversource for the Merrimack Station and its effect on the tax rate. Another item being considered is a warrant article to withdraw from the Special Education Fund, but the details still need to be worked out. It is expected the budget will become clearer in January once the contract negotiations and the details of withdrawing from the Special Education Fund become clearer. Also noted, the State of NH is not contributing as much money to local schools which has put a larger burden on the local property tax.

Duane Ford, Assistant Superintendent, reviewed major changes in the budget. The budget being proposed at this time does **not** include wages for the Support Staff and Teachers contract(s) currently under negotiation. More details can be found in Assistant Superintendent Ford's PowerPoint presentation entitled 'Bow School District Proposed Budget for the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year' as per attached and made a part of this record. A short summary, highlighting some of the changes, follows.

The proposed operating budget is \$28,385,606 which is an increase of 3.05% over the approved 2018-19 operating budget;

The wage budget again, does **not** include wages for the agreements currently under negotiation. That being said, the salary proposal includes a proposed 2% increase in wages for support staff employees and a proposed 2% increase to certified professional staff not covered by the agreements under negotiation; increase in the part-time reading specialist at BES to full time in conjunction with eliminating a math special education aide assistant; a proposed new 5th or 6th grade teacher at BMS; a proposed increase of a .4 FT for 7th/8th grade at BMS; a proposed new part-time general education assistant at BMS; increase in game manager stipend at BMS to reflect increased responsibility; increase in athletic director wages at BHS; and two new coaching stipends at BHS. Special education aide changes are as follows: BES – one Aide to BMS, one new Aide proposed, one Math Assistant reduced; BMS – one Aide from BES, three Aides to BHS, one new Aide proposed; BHS – three Aides from BMS, one Aide reduced.

Benefits have increased 6.86% over the 2018-2019 approved budget. Contracted services show an increase of 11.53% and supplies show a 2.14% increase. Equipment is up 7.05% over last fiscal year's budget. Other outlays including, but not limiting, such items as debt service on bond issues, dues and fees throughout the District and proposed payments to capital reserve funds. The total increase is 1.05%. Estimated revenues/credits for the 2019-2020 fiscal year are projected at a 9.80% increase and estimated State Adequacy Grants are projected to increase 3.18%. The proposed budget is 78% salaries and benefits which is typical of school districts.

V. Warrant Articles

Article 3 proposes to discontinue the Special Education Expendable Trust Fund. This fund has not been funded since 2004 and has never been used. If the fund is discontinued, the balance would go into general funds and, if nothing is done with it, it will offset the taxes. Article 4 is related to 3 in that it asks that \$200,000 of the balance be put in the Bow School District Buildings Construction Capital Reserve Fund. The trust fund has special terms for withdrawal which include unanticipated special education costs. If the Trust was discontinued, at some point a new one could be set up with less restrictive language for its use.

Articles 5 – 8 are related to the agreement(s) negotiations and are unknown at this time. Article 9 relates to Dunbarton AREA Capital Improvement Project (CIP) funds and deposits it to the Capital Reserve Fund

(CRF) as part of the tuition calculation. Article 10 relates to athletic fees collected and deposited to the CRF.

VI. Budget Committee Discussion

The Committee asked Assistant Superintendent Ford if the Town would save money by contracting out their bus service. Assistant Superintendent felt it would be a little more expensive to do so. For one thing the contracted company would need a hub to work out. The shortage of bus drivers was then considered. Bow does not offer a “return-to-work” promise which allows the drivers to collect unemployment during the summer. Bow does offer bonuses for recruitment, perfect attendance, sign-on etc. Chair Heise asked that the school consider a return to work bonus. The Committee also looked at the student to teacher ratio per grade provided for reference in relation to the staff changes proposed.

The Committee generally expressed the overall proposed budget to be good, albeit the unknowns concerning agreement(s) negotiations. The Committee was charged with bringing back any additional questions at the next School Budget Committee Meeting scheduled for January 14, 2019.

VII. Other Business

Dates for the Public Hearing on the School and Municipal budgets were discussed. February 11, 2019 is the date for collective bargaining cost items to be finalized and February 18, 2019 is the last date for a Budget Hearing (at least 25 days prior to the annual meeting.) The Committee discussed possible dates of February 12 or 13, 2019.

VIII. Adjourn

Motion:

Selectman Chris Nicolopoulos moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:45. Motion was seconded by Mr. Lucente and carried by unanimous vote of the Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Gilman, Recording Secretary