

Sanborn Regional School District

Budget Committee

APPROVED Minutes

Thursday, October 11, 2018 7 PM

Sanborn Regional High School Library

Call to Order- Annie Collyer, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

Present: Members: Annie Collyer, Chairman

Charlton Swasey, Vice Chairman

Sandra Rogers-Osterloh, Secretary

Mary Cyr

James Doggett

Cheryl Gannon

Larry Heath, School Board Representative

Excused: Jack Kozec

Superintendent Tom Ambrose

Pledge of Allegiance

Acceptance of Minutes of June 7, 2018- Mr. Doggett made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Swasey. After extensive discussion lasting about 45 minutes during which the minutes were amended to add a few words for clarification purposes, approval of the amended minutes was 6 in favor and Ms. Rogers-Osterloh abstaining due to absence from the meeting.

Ms. Collyer noted that the former recording secretary resigned on Tuesday, and the SAU office is seeking a replacement. Mr. Swasey made a public notification that the position is about 40 hours a year, at \$20/hour. Ms. Collyer will make certain the job description includes attendance at meetings.

Mr. Swasey requested hard copies of minutes going forward.

Mr. Doggett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Swasey, that future minutes be in a simple, non-quotational format in compliance with RSA 91-A. The motion passed unanimously.

School Board Report: Larry Heath reported that the School Board is seeking public comments on the NESDEC study in order to make informed decisions. He also said a lot of work is being done, with cooperation from the Superintendent and his staff, to revise and update the School Board policies.

Chairman Comments: Review of Team Drive.

Public Comment- none

Review Previously Requested Information for Current and Past Budgets

Ms. Collyer reaffirmed the agreed procedure for this year, that by the end of October, all information needed by members for past and current budgets be requested and received, so that November – February can be devoted to the proposed budget preparation.

The Committee members reviewed the documents supplied by the Administration to date on past and current budgets and expenditures.

- **DOE 25 & MS 25:** There is a preliminary Unassigned Fund Balance as of FY 18 yearend of \$1,504,483.28. Some of that can be allocated into reserves, Superintendent Ambrose stated. He also noted that there was no year-end spending spree, but that money was needed immediately and spent on the Swasey Gym roof to prevent worse and higher cost conditions.
- The corrected Master Schedule shows 100 out of 262 classes with 19 or fewer students in the High School, not including Special Education classes. The Committee want this looked at, to find out whether there is potential overspending in this area. Mr. Ambrose will be bringing Mr. Stack to the first Joint meeting in November. The Committee agreed they want an explanation, not a sales job and not a justification. Mr. Heath asked for a minimum class size recommendation, and members do not have enough information at this time to do that.
- **Salary & Benefits:** Benefits average about 50% or more of salaries in the District. Mr. Ambrose agreed to supply the benefits per employee, excluding health, that go with the salary listing that has been given in the past by the prior Administration.
- **District Profile:** Preliminary Cost per student for the District is \$17,809. It excludes transportation, debt and food service. Ms. Collyer noted that the cost per pupil is higher for Elementary students, then Middle, then High and that the \$17,809 is an aggregate. The Budget Committee looks at comparably sized nearby Districts with K-12 for comparisons.
- **General Fund Revenue Report:** \$65,000 less than budgeted was received from Fremont per agreement. Ms. Croteau, Business Administrator, will be changing the accounting terminology for Use of Fund Balance, seeking greater clarity and transparency.
- **General Fund Expense Report:**
 - Ms. Collyer noted that custodial \$ spent was about \$130,000 less than budgeted and that this has been a trend. She asked that the Admin look into why, and whether that is money that can be reallocated.
 - Online Access Fees were discussed, and the Superintendent will continue to examine the budgetary needs. He said that Technology has a need for about \$15,000 this year to comply with NH regulations.
 - There was over-budget spending on structures of about \$118,000 and there is no reserve the Superintendent stated for emergencies like boiler failure. Ms. Collyer said a recent School Board Facilities meeting agreed that Mr. Riley will do a review of

- needed, recommended and less urgent repairs for the District with estimated costs for a new Capital Improvement Plan. She pointed out that Mr. Riley will not cost the District extra money as did the prior commissioned study done by the prior Administration for an undisclosed cost to the District and for repairs that have proven to be significantly over-estimated for the now-set-aside Capital Improvement Plan.
- High School Athletics was able by a salary savings to fund extra equipment and still had \$5700 left over. Ms. Collyer hopes the Director will be able to budget within her current budget amount to add more sports, and agreed with Mr. Ambrose that sports and co-curricular activities are important to fund.
 - Ms. Collyer put together a year-to-year comparison of FY 18 and FY 19, which can be found in the Team Drive. From it, she had the following questions:
 - School Board Services and Other School Board Services were budgeted at about \$25,000 combined, while expended was about \$47,000 combined. Why?
 - Superintendent Services is up 22% this year. Why?
 - Where in the current budget is the Professional Development increase?
 - Summer Programs is a new line item, for better tracking and transparency. It is an accounting change per Ms. Croteau, not a new line expense.
 - What plans are there around transportation besides elimination of one bus this year?
 - Mr. Ambrose said that his Admin intends to look at Transportation, but will await School Board direction on the NESDEC study first.

Public Comment:

- Jim Baker, Newton, stated that the Swasey roof repair, thanks to the work of Mr. Riley, cost about \$100,000 less than on the old abandoned Capital Improvement Plan. He also stated that the actual cost to taxpayers per pupil is \$22,000 when all costs not used in the state comparison numbers are included.
- Tammy Mahoney, Kingston, expressed her gratitude at the collegial attitudes of the Committee. She also noted that the word taxpayers was used several times this night, including twice by the Superintendent, and she appreciates the balance of concern for education with taxpayer ability to pay.
- Pamela Brown, Newton, spoke of the SAT results of a decline in math proficiency from 37% to 30%. She stated we now have other measures, but it is still concerning in that 65% of Sanborn students plan to attend 2 or 4 year colleges with below that proficiency results. 46% intend to attend 4-year colleges.

Committee Comment

Mr. Swasey expressed concern over emergency fund money ‘burning a hole in the pockets’ of school boards, now or in the future as unspent reserves have so often in the past. He wants such a fund restricted from invasion.

Other Fund discussion ensued, with the members determining that they want

- **5 years of fund history: the fund, how funded, purpose, balance and how expended along with copies of the fund guidelines when and how established**
- **Copies of legal opinions on how and when the Unassigned Fund Balance can be reserved**

The Budget Committee will meet on Thursday, October 19 at 7 PM with the following agenda:

- a. **Approval of minutes of Oct 11, to be kept brief in line with the motion passed earlier**
- b. **Contract negotiation recommendations**
- c. **Fund Review and recommendations**

Ms. Collyer reviewed the Budget Timeline, to have all Q&A on past and present budget done by Oct. 31 and to have the Superintendent’s budget recommendations by October 31, to be followed by the Joint Budget Committee and School Board Presentation by the Superintendent on Wednesday November 7 at 6 PM.

Mr. Swasey motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Rogers-Osterloh and passed unanimously.

Adjourned at 9:10PM

Respectfully submitted,

Annie Collyer, Chairman and Secretary Pro-Tem