

Sanborn Regional Budget Committee

**Approved Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, October 18, 2018**

A meeting of the Sanborn Regional Budget Committee was held on Thursday, October 17, 2018. The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM. The following were recorded as present:

**SRSD Budget Committee:**

**Annie Collyer, Chairperson**  
**Charlton Swasey, Vice-Chairman**  
**Cheryl Gannon**  
**Sandra Rogers-Osterloh**  
**Jack Kozec**  
**Mary Cyr, Member-at-large**  
**James Doggett**  
**Larry Heath, School Board Representative**

The meeting began with a salute and pledge of allegiance to the flag.

**1) Approval of Minutes from October 11, 2018**

Jack Kozec made a motion to approve minutes from October 11, 2018. The motion was seconded by Larry Heath. Discussion followed regarding proposed edits to the draft document. Cheryl Gannon referenced an error in the number of reported classes at the high school with 19 or fewer students, so that figure was changed from 136/262 class offerings, to 100/262 class offerings to reflect clarification of the data provided during that meeting on 10/11/18.

**Vote to accept minutes as amended: (6-0-2), with all members voting to approve, except for Cheryl Gannon and Jack Kozec, who abstained. Motion carries**

**2) There were no Chairman Comments**

**3) Contract Recommendations to School Board**

Committee members discussed issues and concerns they would like Larry Heath, representative from the School Board, to share with fellow sub-committee members, regarding the impending Employment Contract negotiations. Cheryl Gannon recused herself, as her husband is a District employee. Some of the topics discussed included:

- Working toward more equitable insurance contributions and deductibles for District employees, so they are more closely aligned with insurance benefits for employees of the towns served by the District
- Looking at the entire compensation packages for District employees to ensure we will be able to attract and retain staff and remain competitive. Factors to be considered include: Salary, Insurance Benefits (employee contribution/deductible), Professional

Development, Tuition Reimbursement, Travel Stipends, Phone allowance, class sizes (lower student:teacher ratios), recouping Lost Steps as a result of failed contracts, etc.

- Full disclosure/transparency of contract details *before* voting
- Step Flexibility to recognize and reward applicable and relevant experience - especially in areas of high demand and specific skills, such as the trades and STEM fields
- The opportunity for one-time, annual merit awards, in lieu of cost of living increases to incentivize staff to consistently exceed expectations
- Implementation of a "three strikes" termination policy, for any employee who enters into a 3rd Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)
- Do not include 'evergreen' clauses
- Financial cost of recruiting and training new employees, only to have them turn over/leave for greener pastures shortly after hire

A letter was drafted by Mr. Swasey, and then edited by members to include the above recommendations. The letter will be sent to the School Board for consideration in the upcoming negotiations.

**Vote** to send letter as amended (6-0-1-1) with all members voting in favor, except for Cheryl Gannon who recused herself, and Larry Heath who abstained.

#### **4) Fund Review and Recommendations**

Business Administrator, Michelle Croteau presented requested information on the District's four existing fund balances: The Facilities Use Revolving Fund, The Special Education Fund, The Capital Improvement and Maintenance Capital reserve Fund and the Retained Unreserved Fund.

, Committee members were grateful for this information about what exists (currently and historically) and how funds can be added and expended. Chairman Collyer noted the 3% - 3.5% average budget surplus which have existed in recent years could be more closely forecasted, to allow for proactive funding of the latter fund on a more consistent basis.

Jim Doggett motioned for a request to the School Board to NOT spend the Retained Unreserved Fund Balance which was seconded by Sandra Rogers-Osterloh

**Vote** (6-0-1-1) with all members voting in favor, except for Larry Heath who recused himself, and Cheryl Gannon who abstained.

## **5) Public Comment**

Jim Baker - Newton spoke to the interest rate of the reserve funds, suggesting we were earning a standard rate of return for a savings account. He further suggested an on-line account may earn a slightly higher interest rate (+ 0.5% - 1.0%).

Pam Brown - Newton indicated that Step Flexibility already exists with our current employee contract. She also noted the District is not obligated to advance steps for all employees, however, withholding step increases for some would likely result in the filing of grievances.

She also noted the Oyster River District has existing language for Merit Awards. The specific criteria for awarding merit bonuses is not clearly defined, making it subjective; but it is a start. The SRSD grading and class size issues will be addressed at the next School Board meeting on 10/24/18.

Dr. Brown also noted many teachers who do leave SAU 17 go to districts with higher student:teacher ratios, which suggests our educators are quite capable of handling larger class sizes.

Tammy Mahoney - Kingston complimented the Committee's continued hard work, and suggested the voucher Vs. stipend issue may be more an inefficiency or cost to administer, than it is for employees to submit reimbursement requests. She also expressed a need for SAU 17 to stay competitive with Step policies in order to maintain quality teachers.

## **6) Committee Comment**

Larry Heath thanked committee members for their input regarding the impending employment contract negotiations.

Charlton Swasey expressed being encouraged by the changes in this process.

Cheryl Gannon voiced concern that Meeting Minutes should be accurate, objective and free of opinion and conjecture. They should also be heard, deliberated, subject to amendment and accepted; and not simply recorded as 'accepted by everyone.'

Jim Doggett restated his position that travel vouchers should be submitted for reimbursement, to allow for accurate tracking of this expense.

Michelle Croteau reassured the Budget Committee that a new Object Code has been defined for this purpose going forward, which should lend better understanding to this cost.

Annie Collyer indicated future Meeting Minutes will be emailed to members, with edits being submitted to JUST her (not on Google Docs, which could constitute a virtual meeting). Annie will then consolidate the edits for review, deliberation and acceptance at the next meeting.

**7) Proposed Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, November 7, 2018 @ 6:00 p.m.**  
**- Joint Meeting with School Board**

The Budget Committee and School Board had agreed to receive the Superintendent's proposed budget prior to this meeting. Mrs. Croteau indicated the Superintendent may not be able to meet that deliverable, although the School Board may require compliance.

The following Q&A joint session of the Budget Committee and School Board will be on Thursday, November 29, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

**8) Adjourn**

Charlton Swasey made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Jack Kozec.

**Vote: Unanimous (8-0) Motion carries**  
**Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.**

Minutes Respectfully submitted by,

Mary Cyr - Budget Committee, at-large