

**WINCHESTER SCHOOL BOARD  
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING  
WINCHESTER SCHOOL LIBRARY  
DECEMBER 5, 2023**

School Board Members Present: K. Jerome, J. Blake, J. Hadler, L. Picard

Administration Present: L. Carey, C. Mayberry, M. Pouliot, K. Seaman, S. Bryant

Budget Committee: Brenden Hubbard, Theresa Sepe, Michelle Dwight, Kevin Bazan

Rep to Budget Committee: J. Blake

The meeting was called to order for the Budget Committee by B. Hubbard and School Board Chair, L. Picard at 6:02pm.

**MINUTES:**

The Budget Committee approved their previous meeting minutes.

B. Hubbard asked about the paraprofessional number at 12.

S. Bryant explained they have 12 in the budget; some are carrying over.

B. Hubbard advised they were told with the last budget that they are legally required to budget for paras.

K. Jerome explained kids exit out; changes are based on the students we have now, which is why changes need to be made.

Keene High Tuition:

A Budget Committee Member asked about KHS tuition.

L. Picard explained there was a reduction in cost and the tuition rate went down to \$16,404 in Regular Ed, less almost \$1,000 and \$31,881 for Special Ed, down over \$2,000. Explained the Board took the initiative and reviewed with Eighth Grade families, kids who are not going to KHS and factored that in.

T. Sepe asked if any teachers have come to Admin and said they don't have books for their classes. Kids shouldn't have to share books.

M. Pouliot explained two things have increased; one in Line 31, and a Math Curriculum was added. Last year it was grant funded. Will now be an \$18,000 cost to keep it going.

Also, they have run out of general supplies – Line 44. It is not books, but paper, pencils, etc. That line encompasses a lot of materials for STEM, literacy, etc. Due to inflation, that money has been gone since October.

L. Carey – Every student has a computer assigned to them.

M. Dwight asked about Life Skills. It has been underspent for a couple of years, but there is now more in that line.

L. Picard explained they are revamping and expanding the program. It is a necessary program.

T. Sepe asked if the budget includes raises for Non-CDU Staff.

L. Picard – Yes, at 3%.

T. Sepe asked why the Library Salary is down so much.

L. Carey explained they merged two positions into one. This year the position will be one-half Library and one-half ESL.

B. Hubbard asked about Athletic Supplies.

L. Picard explained that line is increased for much needed equipment, including two soccer goals and uniforms for one sports team.

K. Bazan asked about the Bus Monitor.

L. Picard explained it is required in our contract dependent upon the age of the students. First Student has been unable to staff the bus monitor some of the time, so we haven't been billed for it.

K. Bazan had questions on Transportation – L. Picard advised there are several lines that were recoded. She believes the total amount is split between Regular Ed and Special Ed Transportation.

C. Mayberry will double-check that.

L. Picard wanted to be clear that they are not underspending Special Ed Transportation in any way, shape or form.

C. Mayberry advised it sounds like there is some consolidation. She thinks the expense line should be higher. It could be going in the wrong line.

K. Bazan asked about Technology. Is there anyone on staff?

C. Mayberry explained it is a contracted service.

K. Bazan questioned Lines 30 and 31 and Non-Teacher Retirement.

C. Mayberry will take those out.

B. Hubbard asked about the copiers.

L. Picard advised there are new copiers, with a new lease.

T. Sepe asked about IT Services.

L. Picard explained they reduced the Technology Director in house and kept Tech Support through the vendor. The School got a better deal. It has been a very positive shift.

K. Bazan has concerns about ACCESS fees. On Line 337 – Does the vendor take care of the fees?

L. Picard explained that line is more about Curriculum, utilizing Google, e-mail, etc. Not software driven from the IT side. She advised the lines will be spent.

T. Sepe advised the handout received is based on 3% increase and a 2.5% increase. Is that an appropriate market adjustment?

Yes, that's where those figures arose from.

B. Hubbard – Replacement Furniture Line 308: K. Seaman explained at one time that line was \$15,000 and then it was dropped down after the \$1.6 million reduction. \$10,000 is very conservative; \$2,500 is for CDLU seating options for teachers, as students require them. A number of carpets need to be replaced. He sees this number increasing; this was a small step to start the process.

T. Sepe asked how many Special Ed Students Winchester has.

S. Bryant – 83 Regular Ed and 32 Special Ed at the High School. There are already seven for Early Childhood recommended.

K. Bazan advised they have an out-of-district placement well over \$500,000 pending. It is frustrating to say we have to sit on that money. When does the district know it's going to happen?

L. Picard explained they have a student that they didn't know about prior to setting the budget. The student hasn't gone to an out-of-district placement because there is no room for them. When they do go, we will need to look at the Capital Reserve funds.

S. Bryan explained they write an IEP and if they cannot provide the services, they need to look elsewhere for them. A lot of kids are coming in with multiple needs; need to be better prepared. This is a very unique situation.

B. Hubbard asked for clarification regarding the reduction in hours for the School Psychologist.

S. Bryant explained they are looking at streamlining types of evaluations. They will use money from the reduction in hours to help the number of kids coming in.

M. Dwight asked if there are now more Custodians?

K. Seaman advised no, but the insurance cost has increased 25%.

L. Picard advised the risk has gone up in the school districts. Winchester is in a pool with other districts,

M. Dwight feels there is no harm in looking elsewhere.

K. Seaman explained this year he personally chose not to take health insurance, so the 25% wouldn't add up when looking at that. It is possible another person could be looking to take it.

B. Hubbard advised Wages/Substitute Teachers have been underutilized in the past.

L. Picard explained they couldn't find subs. They brought the pay in-line with other districts last year.

B. Hubbard asked about Board Dues and Fees – Do you need more this year? It was overspent.

C. Mayberry will look at that line.

B. Hubbard asked about stipends in Line 221.

L. Picard advised the Board elected to take their stipends with a 1099.

M. Dwight asked about Ground Maintenance – that line was never spent.

K. Seaman advised he plans on spending it. There are a lot of things that went by the wayside.

They need a tractor trailer of chips for the playground, plowing, ground maintenance, etc. Don't want to reduce that line because they don't know what they will need to do.

M. Dwight Line 248 – SAU: L. Carey advised they pay \$2,000 per year to be in the NH Association of School Superintendents. Didn't have to pay this year. The Business Manager needs certification.

L. Picard – Dues comes out of Line 254. There was some training that was no longer done in person; that was a savings.

L. Carey advised will spend that line; Administration needs certifications.

K. Bazan asked about the Ford Building.

K. Seaman explained it has to be heated as there is a sprinkler system in the building.

L. Picard – A few local agencies have inquired about leasing the building. She would like to see one of them in there, so there isn't an empty space at the school.

B. Hubbard – Social Worker Line 133.

L. Picard explained the Social Worker position was cut down to 25 hours per week for next year. Administration then realized that they need a Social Emotional Curriculum starting in Kindergarten. The Social Worker agreed to go back into the classrooms to do large group activities with SEC. That position is full-time now so as duties are decreasing they want to increase services to the most needy students.

The Board will bring information back on Special Ed Transportation lines.

B. Hubbard advised the Budget Committee will come back next week on December 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 for further discussion and a vote.

L. Picard advised the bond has been paid off. There are no significant changes in Warrant Articles. They are looking at a small increase to the fund, but mostly to the Special Ed Fund.

S. Bryant spoke to recouping Medicaid funds. There are significant funds the district can receive. They should see checks coming in soon. It will probably be a couple of years before they see a stable number.

L. Picard advised C. Mayberry also needs to remove Social Security and Insurance from the Tech Support line.

**T. Sepe MOVED to adjourn the Budget Committee Meeting at 7:16pm; SECONDED by: J. Blake, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED**

**J. Hadler MOVED to adjourn the School Board Meeting at 7:16pm; SECONDED by: K. Jerome, VOTED: 4-0, MOTION PASSED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Higgins  
School Board Secretary