

Merrimack School District Budget Committee
November 28, 2017
Minutes

Present: K. Bobbitt, H. Gage, J. Guagliumi, J. Hanson, S. Heinrich, A. Hyde-Berger, D. Illg, C. Lang, C. Mower, B. Nunez and School Board Liaison N. Schoenfeld

Excused: S. Jacoby

Also present: School Business Administrator M. Shevenell

S. Heinrich called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M and asked C. Mower to lead those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Welcome/Introductions

S. Heinrich welcomed A. Hyde-Berger and B. Nunez to the Committee and announced that School Board member Michael Thompson would be serving as the School Board alternate should the need arise. He asked members present to introduce themselves.

FY 2016-2017 Budget Review

S. Heinrich introduced Business Administrator M. Shevenell who was present to give the Committee a review of the finalized FY 2016-2017 budget.

M. Shevenell told the Committee that the District had spent 97% of its appropriated operating budget. He said the District ended the year with a surplus, now called unassigned fund balance, of \$3,210,714. This amount includes both the unexpended appropriation and some unanticipated additional revenue that the District had received. He told the Committee that the unassigned fund balance must be returned to the Town and be used reduce the school portion of the tax rate.

M. Shevenell went through the various components of the unassigned fund balance, noting that Food Service is a special revenue fund which means it can retain all unspent revenue. He said that, during FY 2016-20217, Food Service had to dip into its surplus fund to meet department needs.

Discussion included the following:

Benefits:

- Next year's guaranteed maximum health insurance increase is 3.4%.
- The District should consider comparing insurance "buy-out" plans to see which is better.
- The District no longer offers a "top tier" insurance plan.
- By contract, the district does offer health insurance to full-time para-professionals.

Other

- Since there were fewer than 180 days of school in FY 2016-2017, the bus company had to give the District a refund.
- A succession plan for key employees might need to be considered.

Capital Improvement Plan (C.I.P.)

M. Shevenell reviewed the C.I.P. with the Committee, noting projects such as roofing at Reeds Ferry School, paving at Thorntons Ferry, outside bleachers at Merrimack High and inside bleachers at Mastricola Upper Elementary School plus technology initiatives that are planned for FY 2018-2019. He indicated some may be in the operating budget; some may be warrant articles and some may not be proposed.

M. Shevenell ended his presentation by explaining that information about expenditures for the first three months of the current fiscal year are detailed in the last few pages of the handout.

Committee Reorganization

Chair

C. Lang nominated S. Heinrich for Chair of the Committee. K. Bobbitt nominated J. Guagliumi for Chair of the Committee. Both members accepted the nominations. A roll call vote was held:

J. Guagliumi – 3 votes

S. Heinrich – 8 votes.

S. Heinrich was elected Chair.

Vice Chair

C. Lang nominated J. Guagliumi for Vice Chair of the Committee. There were no other nominations. J. Guagliumi was unanimously elected Vice Chair.

Other Business

FY 2017-2018 Budget Books

S Heinrich told the members Budget Books would be available for pick up at the Superintendent's office Tuesday, December 5th at 1 P.M.

Upcoming Meeting Schedule

S. Heinrich told the Committee budget meetings would start in January. He indicated that he would schedule two nights for budget presentations: one night for all schools and one night for all other departments. He said there would be one night for work session on the budget and warrant article review and a night for the Public Hearing and final committee actions. He said he would try to get Merrimack Cable to attend and stated that snow dates would be built in the schedule. He also said there may be a training session scheduled in December.

Committee Email

A generic budget committee email address has been established. Any emails that members of the public send will get sent to all members. After discussion, it was decided by consensus that J. Guagliumi will reply to any emails sent to the Committee email address to acknowledge receipt of the email and he will send an email to all members to notify them of this action. Members were reminded not to reply all to any emails sent to all Committee members.

Department Liaison Requests

S. Heinrich explained that the Committee sets up Department Liaison teams. Each team is assigned a department (or school) and meets with the department head (or principal) before that department budget is presented to the Committee. If members have specific questions or issues

regarding a particular department budget, they should contact that department liaison team lead rather than the department head. S. Heinrich requested that members return their liaison request forms to him as soon as possible.

Committee Vacancy

S. Heinrich told the Committee that Dawn Pater had moved out of Merrimack. After discussion, by consensus, members agreed to advertise on cable and the District Website that there is a vacancy and to meet in December to interview any potential candidates.

Member Absences

S. Heinrich told members if they cannot make a meeting, they must notify him or J. Guagliumi. He said by statute, three consecutive unexcused absences constitute resignation from the committee. He indicated that participation by telephone is possible as long as a quorum (7 members) is physically present.

Public Participation

There was none.

C. Mower made a motion to adjourn. J. Hanson seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

S. Heinrich adjourned the meeting at 8:45 P.M.