

Merrimack School District Budget Committee
January 23, 2018
Minutes

Present: K. Bobbitt, H. Gage, J. Guagliumi, J. Hanson, S. Heinrich, D. Illg, S. Jacoby, C. Lang
(attended by phone) C. Mower, B. Nunez and School Board Liaison N. Schoenfeld

Excused: A. Hyde-Berger

Also present: Superintendent M. Chiafery, Assistant Superintendent Dr. M. McLaughlin, School
Business Administrator M. Shevenell and various department heads

S. Heinrich called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M and asked D. Illg to lead those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements

S. Heinrich explained that the Budget Committee operated under the statutory authority of RSA 32. He said the role of the Committee was to review the budget proposed by the Administration and School Board and to recommend expenditures it felt were prudent. He said, while the Committee could offer guidance to the School Board, it did not make policy.

S. Heinrich told the Committee that C. Lang would participate in the meeting via telephone. He reminded the Committee that all votes taken while she was on the phone were required to be roll call votes.

Department Budget Reviews

Elementary Schools

Principal and Assistant Principal: MES –Michelle Romein and Allisha Hansen-Proulx
TFS – Bridey Bellemare and Julie DeLuca
RFS – Kim Yarlott and Rachel Schneider

Committee Liaisons: D Illg, B. Nunez and K. Bobbitt.

Liaison Report: D. Illg told the Committee that the proposed Elementary School budgets were right in line with what has been proposed over the last few years. He indicated items of note were a new electric piano at Reeds Ferry and the continuation of the furniture replacement program. He said the budget line for math texts was up due to implementation of a new program.

At this time Carol Lang joined the meeting via speakerphone. She said she was in Satellite Beach, Florida and there was no one in the room with her.

K. Yarlott told the Committee the Elementary School budgets are thin. She indicated she showed the liaison team examples of the cafeteria tables and sinks that are scheduled for replacement. She said the principals has discussed budget needs and budget wants that are not in the current budget but may be part of a future budget.

Discussion included the following:

- Merrimack offers professional development programs at its “August Academy.”
- Occasionally one staff member goes to out of district professional development program and then shares the information learned with other staff.
- The Elementary School Budget represents Pre-school through 4th grade.
- Costs in the budget are for half-day Kindergarten. There will be a warrant article for full day kindergarten which contains the additional costs to implement a full day program at the start of FY 2018-2019. Passage of the warrant article will not impact the proposed operating budget.
- The rising costs to repair and maintain the current piano at Reeds Ferry make the purchase of a new piano a better investment.

Mastricola Upper Elementary School

Principal and Assistant Principal: Marcia McGill and William Morris

Committee Liaisons: S. Jacoby and C. Mower

Liaison Report: S. Jacoby told the Committee that the proposed Upper Elementary School budget was similar to budgets that have been proposed over the last few years. She indicated items of note were the continuation of the furniture replacement program: year 3 for cafeteria tables and year 2 for science room stools. She also said this year’s budget included replacement of the 30-year-old kiln in the art room.

M. McGill said the proposed budget proposes costs to support literacy and writing instruction and implement the standards based math program.

Discussion included the following:

- The budget line for equipment for physical education is slightly reduced from prior years since a smaller quantity of table tennis tables is being requested this year.
- “Bat Remediation”
 - Administration hopes to return to full usage of the school by the beginning of March.
 - The issue involved a two story section of the building which required removal/remediation of bats, prevention of their return and replacement of insulation, wiring, and bricks as well as disinfecting involved areas.
 - In addition, the District performed air quality tests and the Department of Education has inspected the involved areas. Testing costs \$15,000 - \$20,000.
 - Totally replacing the bricks was cheaper and easier than trying to clean and re-use the old bricks.
 - In the spring, all other school buildings will be inspected by remediation experts to determine if other schools have bat issues as well as to recommend any preventative measures the district should implement to prevent future issues.
 - The costs of remediation were not covered by the District’s insurance policy because the policy has a specific exclusion for rodent damage. However, the District has applied for a grant of \$180,000 from the State’s Facility Safety Fund. If the District does not get the grant, it will fund the remediation costs from the District’s Emergency Repair Expendable Trust Fund.

Merrimack Middle School

Principal and Assistant Principal: Adam Caragher, Shawna D'Amour

Committee Liaisons: S. Jacoby, J. Guagliumi

Liaison Report: S. Jacoby told the Committee that the proposed Middle School budget is basically a level funded budget and indicated that the Middle School is in the final phase of its furniture replacement plan.

A. Caragher told the Committee that the Middle School is working with the High School to determine the best texts to purchase for the new math program. He said the proposed supply accounts were created based on a per pupil cost.

Discussion included the following:

- Having a police resource officer at the school is working out well.
- The new roof is working out well.

High School

Principal and Assistant Principals: Ken Johnson, Richard Zampieri & Peter Bergeron

Committee Liaisons: K. Bobbitt, H. Gage, A. Hyde-Berger, and D. Illg

Liaison Report: K. Bobbitt said the proposed budget was straight forward. He said the District projects that next year there will be 1250 – 1275 students at high school. He indicated the budget proposes new math texts and new business texts as the High School is working on revitalizing some of the its technology education programs.

K. Johnson said he thought the proposed budget was a responsible budget. He highlighted a new printer that was going to be used by both the Art Department and the Technology Education Department.

Discussion included the following:

- Costs for transportation for co-curricular activities have increased as more activities are offered.
- K. Johnson will provide the Committee with information about the new Accounting text.
- Professional Development costs are broken down by school, but are considered part of the District-wide budget.
- The High School is working to resurrect various Technology Education programs. It is partnering with Manchester Community College regarding an Automotive Course. The area Vocational Education High Schools offer slots for Merrimack students to take Voc Ed courses. Sometimes all Merrimack students who want such courses get them; sometimes they don't and sometimes the High School does not fill all the slots offered. K. Johnson will provide the Committee with information about the number of slots offered and number of students who wanted to take these courses.

At this time, C. Lang left the meeting.

Minutes: 1-23-18, continued

Approval of Prior Minutes

D. Illg made a MOTION to approve the minutes of November 28, 2017. Second: J. Hanson.
MOTION PASSED: 8 – 0 – 2.

Public Participation

There was no public participation

Other

S. Heinrich reminded the Committee that the next meeting would be Tuesday, January 30, 2018 at 7 PM. He said the remaining department budgets would be reviewed at this time.

K. Bobbitt asked if the Committee could get a list of any potential warrant articles. M. Chiafery offered to present a draft list to the Committee on January 30th. She said the School Board would not be voting on warrant articles until its February 5th meeting.

S. Heinrich told the Committee that the last date for petitioned warrant articles to be submitted is February 13th.

J. Hanson made a MOTION to adjourn. Second: K. Bobbitt. MOTION PASSED unanimously.

S. Heinrich adjourned the meeting at 8:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Heinrich