

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING – November 16, 2023**

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Hooksett Town Hall**

**35 Main Street**

**Thursday, November 16, 2023**

**6:30 pm**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**R. Ross called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm**

Pledge of Allegiance

**ATTENDANCE**

R. Ross, Acting Chair, M. Kowack, D. Greenberg, A. Shaine, W. Lynch, G. Martins, E. Bencivenga, and E. Baker.

Excused:

B. Soucy and C. Gurung

Absent: J. Pinard

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**November 09, 2023**

*W. Lynch motioned to approve the minutes of November 9, 2023. Seconded by M. Kowack.*

*Correction: R. Ross (attendance); Donati (pg. 2)*

**Vote unanimously in favor**

**PUBLIC INPUT**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**School District Budget**

W. Rearick, Superintendent; Cory Isbicki, Business Administrator

Summary was reviewed

Default increase 3.76 % and budget increased 5.1%

Additional information

Student enrollment since June 2021 – 1207 K-8; November 2023 – 1268,

High School, last year 676 with 452 Pinkerton; currently 694 with 479 at Pinkerton.

Special Ed has increased by 60 students in the past year.

Voters approved a 3 year teachers and a HSPA contract last year

The Board also increase Administration by \$55,000

There is a new English Language Arts Coordinator position which was paid by ESER funds and now we must put it in the budget to continue.

## BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING – November 16, 2023

We had a lengthy conversation last year with 2nd graders from Underhill to 3rd where we added a teacher. That teacher will move with this class. Next year we are predicting the same increase in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. We are proposing another teacher for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Without the added the teacher the class size will be 23; with the teacher it will be 18.

Software packages were bought with ESER funds.

Pinkerton will be giving us the tuition rates which will be an increase of between 5-7% so we put 7%. We hope that will decrease. We should have the numbers tomorrow and hopefully it will go downward.

The vast majority are Special Ed increases.

Maintenance: the Board had \$60,000 for the Cawley parking lot but we took it out and will possibly use fund balance.

Transportation is stabilized and we are at our contractual 3% increase.

The capital improvement project which the Board approved at the last meeting is 10-11 million. We put in 3 HVAC at Underhill and 2 at Cawley. They reviewed our facilities study, and their original proposal was 15.1 million in renovations. We reviewed and discussed that at the Board level. Since the town is going through a reval, we thought this should be done in pieces.

The Board concluded that this is the cheapest option, although a large number. The consultant gave us an 8-10% inflation if you do it in future years. The proposal is at 13.3 million and what would be the best way to fund the project. We looked at bonding and we looked at and agreed on a lease proposal. Candia did this in a lease proposal

If you borrow 10 million and the project is 8.5 you only pay the 8.5 million. The Board felt that is a fiscally responsible way to go. The current lease rate is 5.8%.

**The consultant is available to meet with the Board on December 7<sup>th</sup>.**

We tried to not add anything new.

Special Ed -Christine Osborne

Students K-8 in 2020 -161 and in 2023 + 224

All students increase 88 student from 310 in 2020 to 398 currently.

Hooksett is still 1:1 for devices

How much does Hooksett pay for access.

\$45,000 not covered by ESR

### The difference between text books and Information access

A Shaine: How do you evaluate putting grant funding into the budget.

W. Rearick: When you get a grant, you are on the hook for the funds when the grant ends.

With ESR, we did it to get relief. We also used the grant to pay for an English language coordinator; like we do with math.

The only additional services with ESR funds was the coordinator.

## BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING – November 16, 2023

How many other districts have coordinators?

Meg Largee said all of them.

E. Bencivenga; Do you have achievement stats for 10 years.

They will get the scores

E. Bencivenga: You are looking for an additional teacher even though you are within the allowed class size without it?

W. Rearick: The Board has made it a priority to make the class size lower than the policy. If I had the space, I would have hired more teachers.

Health care increase was 3.6 increase.

Dean Farmer: Every item that we are replacing is beyond it's useful life. We try to do things ahead of time before they break. Memorial and Cawley were both built or rebuilt around the same time. This is the best solution.

If this bond is approved, the work won't start next June. The earliest is summer of 2024 but the first school, Memorial as the priority would go in June of 2025 but the prices are locked in.

Industry standard is 20 years

8-10 inflation is per year? Yes

E. Bencivenga: If you go 20 years, we would pay 20 million in 20 years at 1.1 million per year.

Over the last 3 years we had a 6.8% increase. Can you find out what the national average increase is?

R. Ross asked for the list of class sizes at the schools.

K	19
1	18
2	20 137 students
3	23
4	22
5	22
6	18
7	17

## BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING – November 16, 2023

8 18

Fund Balance – based on 2 pods of money, the money 1. the budget and 2<sup>nd</sup> is excessive revenue from the State. The end of the year, we collected \$695,000. The report was 1.7 million and of that was excess revenue of \$695,000.

### M. Kowack asked for the detail

The Board can keep up to 5% of the fund balance. The Board voted to keep only \$200,000 and \$737,000 will be returned.

W. Lynch: There is \$200,000 in repairs different from the bond.  
Why are we not putting these in the Building Maintenance Bond?

W. Rearick: We just started putting money in this capital reserve as an emergency fund like if we lost the boiler. It is not to do regular maintenance. The Board didn't want to use that money for the capital project.

### Estimate for cost of repairs on newer systems

D. Farmer: The fields and drainage repairs have been doing well.

ESY services is increased 77% ?  
This is due to increase in students at Underhill.

Refugee translate documents?

WE have seen an influx of people from other countries. Last year we had 3 and it was \$3000. We have Polish and Ukraine families. When we are working with legal documents we need translators.

M. Kowack: Pay raise for Paras and food services – Did that help with finding staff  
We were looking for 30 and we hired 3  
Maintenance is down 3 staff

We are in negotiations with HSPA and hope to have an agreement in June.

The number of Paras that we need based on the number of student have increased.

Currently: Contract 31 providers pre – HS and 10 employee sand need 5 more.  
We have hired 2 additional Spec Ed teachers with federal money.

## **BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING – November 16, 2023**

WE have to send paras to HS if they are short staff because we are legally responsible.

Provide the numbers for last year.

Historically we functioned with 10 per school and this year we need 18 Pre-2

*G. Martins motioned to accept the budget. Seconded by D. Greenberg.*

*Vote unanimously in favor.*

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **PUBLIC INPUT**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

*G. Martins motioned to adjourn. Seconded by A. Shaine. (8:00 pm)*

*Vote unanimously in favor*

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Ann Moynihan