

**MINUTES OF MEETING
MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE
December 16, 2015**

A meeting of the Municipal Budget Committee was called to order at 6:33 PM in the Professional Development Room at Kennett Middle School with the following members present: Chairman Joe Mosca (left the meeting at 7:45 PM), Doug Swett, Pat Swett, Bill Marvel, Bill Masters, Peter Donohoe, Mark Hounsell, Jim LeFebvre, John Colbath, Christopher DeVries, Frank McCarthy, Terry McCarthy, Dick Klement and Danielle Santuccio. Excused: John Edgerton. Absent: Greydon Turner and Pat Kittle.

Joe Mosca led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Mosca stated that he would be leaving the meeting at 7:30 PM as his son was performing in a holiday concert. When he leaves, Danielle Santuccio would take over chairing the meeting.

QUESTIONS FOR TOWN AND SCHOOL

Chairman Mosca opened for discussion a list of questions that had been presented to him by Committee members. Mark Hounsell requested that each question be discussed separately.

Chairman Mosca read the first question for the Town:

What were the total disbursements the Town made to the school system during 2015.

Mark Hounsell stated he was not prepared to answer this question as he didn't have his budget book for the School, but it will be on the Revenue page of the proposed Budget.

Dick Klement asked if the same question would apply going the other way. The School sends money to the Town for maintenance of buses, plowing of Eagle's Way and there may be a number of other things that this Committee is not aware of. Mark Hounsell stated it would be obvious in the Budget.

Bill Masters stated in the past the Town has disbursed monies to the School. Mark Hounsell stated having served as Treasurer, he was telling the Committee that disbursements will vary to a degree. Mark further asked what was the member really looking for on total disbursements.

Chairman Mosca stated all decisions concerning the questions are up to the Board. Dick Klement stated it was not necessary to have it from the Town. Mark Hounsell stated the Town and the School are exactly the same which is made obvious in the Town and School Reports. It is planned weeks in advance how money will flow.

Bill Masters stated when the voters of the Town of Conway voted to fund \$34 Million, the taxpayers of this Town said we accept we are on the hook.

Chairman Mosca stated the Town of Conway's share is 48% of the total. Frank McCarthy stated once voted on the Budget, we are now on the hook.

Frank McCarthy moved, seconded by Jim LeFebvre, to leave the question as is. In favor: 6 - Terry McCarthy, Pat Swett, Dick Klement, Bill Masters, Jim LeFebvre and Frank McCarthy; Opposed: 7; Abstain: 1 - Mark Hounsell. MOTION FAILED.

Bill Marvel stated he doesn't understand the question. Mark Hounsell stated before we can spend a dime, it needs to be paid by the taxpayers which is done through taxation of about 48% to the property owners.

Chairman Mosca read the second question for the Town:

What would be the estimated cost and tax impact to:

- a. Renovate the existing Town Hall and/or purchase and renovate the Echo Building?
- b. Relocate the Town Hall to one of the elementary schools if one was available?
- c. Construct a new multi-functional Town Hall?

John Colbath stated the Town is in the process of having a Study done. The Echo Building is under contract with the closing to be held before January 1st.

Peter Donohoe asked what is the definition of multi-functional Town Hall. Bill Masters stated more than just Town or Recreation, could be any number of things. Dick Klement stated we already have a Rec Center and the Police Station currently is too small. Can we accommodate putting the Town Hall, Police and Rec together.

Frank McCarthy stated don't agree; knock off "b" question. School Board is not going to close a close and who expected to see anything else. Chairman Mosca stated point well taken. John Colbath stated he thought the question is fine.

Jim LeFebvre moved, seconded by Mark Hounsell, to separate Question 2 into 3 separate questions. In favor: 14; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 0.

Bill Marvel stated add "if available". Frank McCarthy stated same as "b". Chairman Mosca stated add "if available to "a" so that the question would read:

Renovate the existing Town Hall and/or purchase and renovate the Echo Building, if available.

Bill Marvel moved, seconded by Mark Hounsell, to change 2.a. to "Renovate the existing Town Hall and/or purchase and renovate the Echo Building, if available." In favor: 14; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 0.

Chairman Mosca read the next question for the Town:

Relocate the Town Hall to one of the Elementary Schools if one was available.

Frank McCarthy moved, seconded by Jim LeFebvre, to accept the question as written. In favor: 13; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 1 - Mark Hounsell.

Chairman Mosca read the next question for the Town:

Construct a new multi-functional Town Hall.

Frank McCarthy stated we already have a separate building for the Police Department, why do we need a multi-functional building. John Colbath stated a multi-functional building is going to be hard.

Frank McCarthy moved, seconded by Peter Donohoe, to remove "multi-functional" from the question. In favor: 13; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 1 - Mark Hounsell.

Chairman Mosca stated the next question for the Town would read:

Construct a new Town Hall.

Chairman Mosca stated that was it for the Town questions and asked the members if anyone had any other questions they wanted to add.

Chairman Mosca moved on to the proposed questions for the School. Chairman read the first question for the School:

Number and cost of contracts being let with a brief description of the goods, materials and services provided.

Are the contracts for a fixed amount or open ended.

Are any of the contracts written as single source providers.

Chairman Mosca stated that he didn't understand the question, nor what the member was actually looking for.

Dick Klement suggested that a minimum dollar value be added. If don't, looking at copy paper, pencils, etc. Dick suggested using the value of over \$50,000.00. Frank McCarthy stated the County reveals anything over \$5,000.00.

Peter Donohoe stated he was confused by the words "being let". He thought he understood what kind of obligations the School enters into. Mark Hounsell stated it is clear the answer would be "what do you mean", need clarity. Frank McCarthy stated the question is eluding to Contracts bid on and approved. Frank asked Mark whether or not he had an idea of what the School Board requires. Mark Hounsell stated there are some things left to the Principals and Administrators. The School Board gets into Contracts on

bigger ticketed items. John Colbath asked whether we want to include personnel contracts.

Bill Marvel stated on the other hand how much is out on bids, how many contracts are warranted each year. That would be the question to ask; don't know the purpose of the question. Mark Hounsell stated there was no reason for the question.

Chairman Mosca stated someone could make a motion and vote against the question.

Jim LeFebvre moved, seconded by Peter Donohoe, to accept the first question changing "being let" to "awarded". In favor: 0; Opposed: 12; Abstain: 2 - Mark Hounsell and Bill Masters. MOTION FAILED.

Chairman Mosca proceeded with the second question for the School:

Number of students promoted where the teachers recommended that they not be promoted to the higher grade.

Mark Hounsell stated he didn't see how this is a Budget Committee question.

John Colbath moved, seconded by Jim LeFebvre, to accept the second question as is. In favor: 0; Opposed: 13; Abstain: 1 - Mark Hounsell. MOTION FAILED.

Chairman Mosca proceeded with the third question for the School:

How much of the \$2,109,461.00 of the surplus balance for FY 2015 will be applied to reducing the FY 2016 tax rate?

Dick Klement stated that is going to be in what we get from the School. Mark Hounsell stated the answer is forthcoming. Chairman Mosca stated he didn't see why it couldn't be put out there.

Mark Hounsell stated the money of over \$411,000.00 sits in a fund and is not to be used without the Department of Education and this Committee's approval. The School Board can't just spend it.

John Colbath moved, seconded by Peter Donohoe, to accept the third question as is. In favor: 7 - Terry McCarthy, Pat Swett, Dick Klement, John Colbath, Christopher DeVries, Peter Donohoe and Frank McCarthy; Opposed: 5; Abstain: 2 - Mark Hounsell and Bill Masters.

Frank McCarthy stated the entire amount is not going where it should be going. Jim LeFebvre asked how long does the School keep the money in a fund. Mark Hounsell stated he believed it was one year. Chairman Mosca stated the money doesn't get used unless the Budget Committee and the Department of Education approve same.

Mark Hounsell stated Point of Order - why are we not moving on.

Chairman Mosca proceeded to read question four for the School:

Provide a list of all High School teacher schedules, including number of classes and hours teaching.

Bill Marvel stated he wanted to have a list provided of all High School teachers bi-weekly teaching schedules, by teachers name including name of each class and its hours of beginning and ending.

Bill Marvel moved, seconded by Jim LeFebvre, to have the School Board provide a list of all High School teachers' weekly teaching schedules, by teacher's name, including the name of each class and its hours of beginning and ending. In favor: 10; Opposed: 2 - Pat Swett and Joe Mosca; Abstain: 2 - Mark Hounsell and John Colbath.

Mark Hounsell stated he didn't see the value to the Budget Committee. Bill Marvel stated the same reason we needed list of names and salaries, asking for a different number.

Mark Hounsell stated he could understand the salary questions, but not the relevance of this one. Bill Marvel stated he did; it might imply not teaching heavy schedule and over staffing. Mark stated it was not the function of this Committee. This is not a policy Committee; this is not the purview of this Committee.

Dick Klement stated he could understand the number of hours, teaching 40 hours and getting \$80,000.00 or if making \$80,000.00 and only working 20 hours. This more valuable.

Mark Hounsell stated those hypothetical things don't exist. This is not the function of this Committee and could result in a witch hunt. Bill Marvel stated may or may not need to see names.

Mark Hounsell stated every question is worthy, but asking for names goes beyond our responsibility. The School Board does the hiring.

Christopher DeVries stated he was not sure, but had his own question concerning office staff and support staff. Jim LeFebvre stated it would be a separate question.

Chairman Mosca stated he had one more question recently presented to him:

What is the total dollar cost for all teachers including salaries, benefits and stipends.

Jim LeFebvre moved, seconded by Frank McCarthy, to accept the additional question as read. In favor: 12; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 2 - Mark Hounsell and Christopher DeVries.

Chairman Joe Mosca left the meeting at 7:45 PM.

Frank McCarthy moved, seconded by Jim LeFebvre, to provide since 2000 the total number of teachers, students and support staff at the High School, the Middle School and each Elementary School. In favor: 9; Opposed: Peter Donohoe, Christopher DeVries and John Colbath; Abstain: 1 - Mark Hounsell.

Acting Chair Danielle Santuccio asked for any other questions.

Christopher DeVries moved, seconded by Jim LeFebvre, to provide a current list of all High School Administrators, Administrative Support Staff and Office Staff; weekly hours and yearly salaries. In favor: 10; Opposed: 2 - Pat Swett and John Colbath; Abstain: 1 - Mark Hounsell.

Mark Hounsell stated each school has an Administrative Assistant. Dick Klement stated probably Nurses are out and Librarians are out. Christopher DeVries stated he didn't see how he could clarify.

Dick Klement moved, seconded by Peter Donohoe, to provide an electronic copy of the current Facility Study and surrounding discussion to determine not to close an elementary school and provide same at least one week prior to the next meeting. In favor: 12; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 1 - Mark Hounsell.

Mark Hounsell stated showed a copy of the Study and advised that it will be on the website. Dick Klement stated he wanted to get it electronically.

Dick Klement moved, seconded by Jim LeFebvre, to provide the contents of any discussion held to look at the facility needs should SAU 13 not renew or be denied a sending town agreement when the current agreement expires. In favor: 12; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 1 - Mark Hounsell.

Jim asked when the current agreement expires. Dick Klement stated he believed it to be 2024.

OLD BUSINESS

Dick Klement stated he had asked for a statement that was read by the CEA Negotiating Chair. The request was made several months ago. Dick passed out copies and requested that the statement become part of the Minutes as follows:

"The Budget Committee recommends to the School Board that this year its negotiations with the Conway Education Association reflect far more emphasis on starting teachers' salaries than on veteran teachers, and eliminate longevity pay in its entirety." (Vote 12 yes, 0 no and 1 abstention [Mark Hounsell].)

"As Chair of the School Board's CEA Contract Negotiation Team, I am of the opinion that the Budget Committee has overstepped the scope of its responsibility and authority in issuing formal recommendations regarding contract negotiations and programmatic decisions of a governing board. Nowhere in NH RSA 32, which clearly outlines the role and responsibility of municipal budget committees, does the law grant the authority or responsibility to make formal recommendations regarding contract negotiations, programmatic or educational decisions before a budget has been presented to the Committee for their review.

"Their duties and responsibility, in accordance with RSA 32:16 are to prepare the budget for submission to each annual or special meeting of the voters of the municipality, to confer with the school board, department heads and other officials, relative to estimated costs, revenues anticipated, and services performed to the extent deemed necessary by the budget committee; to conduct public hearings required under 32:5; and to forward copies of the budget and their recommendations on special warrant articles to the School Board. That is the limit of their duties.

"While the Budget Committee technically has not violated any law regarding contract negotiations, they have certainly violated the spirit of the law and have attempted to broaden the scope of their responsibilities and purpose of their duties. It is the sole responsibility of the Conway School Board, whose members were elected by the voters of this town, to make the decisions regarding the direction and goals of the negotiations between the district and the CEA. Once an agreement has been reached between the negotiating teams and has been approved by the CEA and the Conway School Board, then the contract will be referred to the Budget Committee for their review. They then will have the opportunity to ask questions and receive answers regarding items in the negotiated contract.

"Issuing recommendations for specific contract changes undermines the negotiation process with the teacher's union, and sets up the budget committee to vote against the future contract if the recommendations of that body are not followed. In order for negotiations to be productive and effective, they must be entered into in good faith. If the board accepted this recommendation, the negotiations would be in jeopardy before they even started.

"I therefore ask the Conway School Board to respond to the Budget Committee, informing them that their recommendations before or during the period of negotiations is inappropriate, and will not be addressed by this Board.

"Syndi White."

Dick Klement stated one of his concerns was that this letter was read just after Mark (Hounsell) stated that the School Board and the Budget Committee were cooperating with each other. Mark can't be held responsible. Mark stated he thought the Boards were getting along. Dick further stated that he thought the Chair (Syndi White) was basically telling the Budget Committee to pound sand.

Acting Chair Danielle Santuccio thanked Dick Klement and Mark Hounsell for finally getting this statement.

John Colbath advised the members that he and Earl Sires researched if the recent Adopted Rules and Regulations for the Budget Committee need to have any kind of public input as often do other boards. They did not find anything that would require the Budget Committee to hold public hearings

prior to adopting rules of procedure, other than "rules of procedure shall be adopted at a regular meeting of the board". It appears that local land use boards may require public readings or input prior to the adoption of amendments to its rules of procedure.

NEW BUSINESS

Mark Hounsell stated there will be a presentation at the appropriate time, but the School Board has ratified the Teachers' Contract.

Bill Marvel moved, seconded by Peter Donohoe, to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Iris A. Bowden, Recording Secretary