

**WINCHESTER SCHOOL BOARD  
BUDGET WORK SESSION  
JANUARY 14, 2016**

Board Members Present: K. Bazan, J. Cardinale, R. Horton, T. Croteau, S. Thompson

Finance Committee: Steve Fucille, Sue Rice, Christy Davis, Rikki Bolewsky

Administration Present: J. Lewis, B. Stevenson, E. Jackson, V. Carey

The meeting began at 5:55pm to work on the budget.

**CITIZENS COMMENTS:**

None.

Steve Fucille had questions for the Board regarding the budget:

\*Asked about the (3) permanent substitutes.

J. Lewis explained there is always a need for them; also use them for Alt Ed program. Feels better to do it this way, because history shows we always need 2.6.

K. Bazan asked if there are no tasks for them would they go home.

J. Lewis – To answer your question, yes.

\*Asked if the Medicaid position is going from part-time to full-time.

J. Lewis advised no.

E. Jackson explained the Medicaid position is 15 hours per week.

J. Lewis – There are a lot of Medicaid funds out there. Advised they have asked the person in that position to stay longer hours.

\*Asked about Coaches – Is the rate per game increasing?

J. Lewis – No; increasing the pay per season.

R. Horton advised increasing from \$800.00 to \$1000 per coach, per season.

\*Is there a Special Ed room where the ratio is eight adults to five students?

J. Lewis advised the Autism room would be the closest.

V. Carey explained there are more than five students in that program and all adults are called for by IEP's. Advised there are eight students and nine Paras.

\*Is there going to be restructuring of administration?

J. Lewis – Yes.

S. Fucille – Will it be a wash, cost-wise?

J. Lewis – Pretty much.

\*Asked about Supervisor of Maintenance position?

J. Lewis - They are looking at the line item. Advised they are getting very close to non-public if talking personnel.

Sue Rice asked for clarification of transfer of budget lines.

E. Jackson explained.

Sue Rice asked about 13 year students. Did they fall through the cracks and not have enough credits to graduate?

J. Lewis – Yes.

R. Horton advised Monday is the last scheduled meeting before the public hearing; they could go into a Board meeting after the public hearing, if needed.

R. Horton advised the revenue shortage is a huge concern in the budget. Asked E. Jackson, without using money from this year, what would we need to have no increase to the tax rate?

E. Jackson - \$10.7 million dollars; need another \$285,000 from an already cut budget to have no increase to the tax rate.

R. Horton feels it is imperative to do that.

E. Jackson – Probably the Default Budget will be substantially higher.  
E. Jackson advised she hasn't been able to calculate the Default Budget.

Sue Rice advised Keene tuition is up \$226,000, insurance is up; doesn't leave a whole lot to cut from. That leaves the education part of the budget.

R. Horton advised we have fewer kids than ever. We will see less and less money from the State. Less in revenues is forcing us to do something differently.

E. Jackson advised \$17.82 is the current School portion of the tax rate, but does not include the Statewide Property Tax.

R. Horton advised you never know what will happen with lines in the budget. How can we promise we will save \$325,000?

E. Jackson advised they returned over \$200,000 to taxpayers in each of the last five years.

T. Croteau asked where the majority of the savings is from last year.

E. Jackson advised Keene Tuition, Private Tuitions; those are unpredictable things.

T. Croteau feels the number is too high; need to be a little more conservative. He would feel okay with a \$200,000 figure.

J. Cardinale – Don't have buffers in the budget if Special Ed students come in.

Rikki Bolewsky had questions about proposed changes to Aids, Subs, Summer School-Regular Ed going down.

J. Lewis advised trying to restructure things.

J. Lewis – Trying to be as efficient as possible with our resources.

R. Horton apologized; advised in other years have come with a completed budget to the Budget Committee. This year with a reduction in revenues, need to make changes and still working on it

R. Horton explained it is a balancing act each year. This year is a hard balancing act.

R. Horton explained they have looked at restructuring, not sure they can and save the tax rate from going up. He is concerned about upcoming years.

R. Horton – Should be able to set the tax rate as soon as the final budget is done.

E. Jackson - Don't know exactly what it will be. It is the same format as we use each year.

R. Horton doesn't feel comfortable anticipating what we will return to taxpayers. Advised he has never seen this before.

T. Croteau – Explained would have roughly 17 less students next year between both schools. Is there an average class size you want to see? The figures equal 15-16 students per class.

J. Lewis advised that's ideal, especially in the younger grades.

T. Croteau – With enrollment declining as much as it has, is there room to remove one teacher?

J. Lewis – Already looking at removing one teacher.

T. Croteau – For the 2016-2017 budget of \$11,300,000, hoping we would get everything we want to do. Now need to see what would happen to the tax rate. He doesn't think the Board has really had time to look at the proposed changes. Thinks there are concerns/questions on how organization and new plan will work.

J. Lewis explained there will be no Language or additional Music teacher.

J. Lewis explained they will not just restructure, but it will be a change in the way we operate, i.e. electricity, bottled gas, etc.

\*Cutting Pre-School teacher

\*\$5,000 cut to Repairs and Maintenance

\*Speech and Hearing was over-budgeted

Rikki Bolewsky asked about Alt Ed.

J. Lewis reviewed.

Sue Rice – Advised the Board spoke in the proposal to cut Paras to just 1-1 on IEP time. This would require teachers to stick with schedules to make sure things mesh. Feels would lose teacher moments. We talk about students needing to grow, mature, and going to KHS with an IEP, etc. These kids need consistency to really grow.

She is afraid if patchwork this in to not have many Paras, it wouldn't work. Not all children that need extra help in the classroom are coded. She has worked with a lot of kids that were not her charge; but it needed to be done.

J. Lewis advised they are just tightening things up.

Sue Rice feels that is being done today already. Extra help is important; want our kids to be successful.

Val Carey advised they are requiring Paras to file for Medicaid. If looking to move Paras to work directly with IEP's, how will Medicaid get done?

R. Horton – What do other districts do if class sizes increase?

J. Lewis – Two different observations; one class larger and one smaller - interaction among the two; helps to increase quality of education.

R. Horton – How do you build a support system to handle large classes?

J. Lewis – If too big, would split it. Regardless of how many Paras; five year olds won't sit and learn ABC's in a big group.

R. Horton – Really worked to keep classes small, but now here we are.

J. Lewis advised if the Board says no to the proposed budget; need to cut more.

R. Horton – Need to juggle two pieces, what do we want and what can we afford.

Rikki Bolewsky thinks need to look at lines to be sure cuts won't affect kids' education. Never agree with cutting just to cut.

Steve Thompson advised as sensitive as he is to the tax rate, knows we need to make cuts, but feels potentially close to cutting the quality of education. There is a risk; need some common ground.

Rikki Bolewsky – Line 47: Originally Summer School salaries were down then went up.

E. Jackson advised the cut was arbitrarily made by the Board. Line is IEP driven, so she increased it.

R. Horton – That change would put us in a situation where we are not in compliance with IEP's.

J. Lewis – Right, everything is IEP driven.

Sue Rice asked about Regular Summer School; how many students?

J. Lewis though it was eight or maybe twelve; wasn't exactly sure.

R. Horton advised doesn't like this process one bit as far as how they are doing it this year. Advised the Committee he knows it is quite confusing to them; looking at several numbers with no Board direction. We need to give you a set of numbers before Monday. We are answering questions, but we haven't given our best and final budget.

K. Bazan – Not fair to the Finance Committee; would rather have them look at the final number.

Steve Fucille advised the two day review was very helpful.

R. Horton advised the Board liked the Budget Committee process, it was a great collaboration; great numbers when done. There are not a lot of guidelines for the Finance Committee.

Rikki Bolewsky asked if the Board had any idea what would be happening with Keene High.

R. Horton advised it is a topic every year. He explained currently in an exclusive contract. They are now in negotiation with them. It does put a hold on what happens in this building.

Steve Fucille asked for a comparison educating here and in KHS.

E. Jackson advised she e-mailed information to the Board; will send it to him.

T. Croteau asked if they get Medicaid from Keene.

E. Jackson – No, it is a possibility to go after it; Keene sends us names.

Christy Davis asked about Transportation.

R. Horton – If looking at the actual number, need to know we don't get billed regularly.

E. Jackson – May not have received bills yet.

Steve Fucille - \$50,000 ACCESS Warrant Article was in the school. Now separate entity.

R. Horton advised it is an after-school program not a school program.

R. Horton – Last year was not supposed to be on the School warrant. It is the same thing as programs the ELM Center does.

Rikki Bolewsky asked about Nature's Classroom; that line has increased.

J. Lewis – Want kids to go; they are fundraising, too. It won't be as inexpensive as it was this year.

R. Horton reviewed Coach Lines; two Cheer (one in Spring and one in Fall) and Cross Country in the Fall

R. Horton advised he is pretty confident will have final number for the Finance Committee.

R. Horton advised the Board wants a Language Teacher for Grades 3-8; want that to work, but it might have to come out.

T. Croteau – Other local revenues are down. What is the bulk of the revenues?

E. Jackson advised \$17,000 for one student and Health Trust Fund.

J. Lewis reviewed Life Skills; may have to come out.

Sue Rice advised we struggle to self-fund that portion of it now.

J. Lewis – Alt Ed; can live with budget; understand and respect what R. Horton said, but also S. Thompson asked what are we willing to risk for education?

K. Bazan thinks some cuts could be made with the same quality of education.

K. Bazan reviewed lines in the budget he feels should be cut:

Line 21 – Reduce by \$1,500.

Line 23 - Music Repairs: Cut entire amount of \$1,500.

Line 25 – Books and Magazines – Music: Reduce to zero.

Line 161 – Take \$1,000 out; make that line \$3,000.

Line 167 – Books and Other Information Resources: Take out \$1,000 and make the line \$3,000.

Line 180 – Reduce by \$1,000.

Line 240 – Repairs and Maintenance – Reduce by \$3,000

R. Horton feels for this facility that line should be doubled. It is in dire need of repair. We do have a building reserve fund.

E. Jackson advised there is \$237,000 in that fund; some is allocated.

E. Jackson advised there is \$150,000 in the Special Ed Fund.

R. Horton advised that Warrant Article does not affect taxation.

R. Horton advised the Building Fund does affect taxation. Feels confident we should add to that; we have large projects coming up; repointing of bricks, parking lot, bathroom repairs, locker rooms, etc.

Christy Davis asked if there were any grants for these projects.

R. Horton – No building aid at all, but might get weatherization grant.

R. Horton – The building is in need of maintenance and not just small maintenance.

K. Bazan suggested additional cuts:

Line 248 – Heating Oil – Reduce by \$10,000.

Line 250 – Replacement Furniture: Reduce by \$2,000.

Line 262 – Reduce by \$1,000.

Line 267 – Reduce Software Tech to \$10,000.

Line 268 – Computers and Computer Equipment: Reduce by \$3,000.

Total Proposed cuts - \$27,600.

K. Bazan advised due to classroom count, proposes eliminating one teacher for the Elementary and one in the Middle School in addition to the one already proposed. Total eliminated would be three.

K. Bazan feels with the classroom counts they can still provide quality of education with one less teacher in the Middle School.

R. Horton advised there would be four teachers in the Middle School; that is the proposed plan.

Rikki Bolewsky advised would technically cut another position.

K. Bazan – No, will take that out.

Sue Rice – Elementary will be down two classrooms from three.

Rikki Beluky asked about Music; cuts could be made, but she questions taking the whole thing out.

K. Bazan advised the Music teacher couldn't account for that line.

J. Cardinale – Repairs were for Band; cutting half a Music teacher, so didn't feel needed repairs for instruments.

R. Horton felt they needed discussion around Athletics. It has grown drastically over the last two years; increased three Coaches and Transportation.

S. Crusilli feels the line is so small for what we get. He thinks it crosses over to education. Cross pollination between the two. Understands what they are saying; need to cut a teacher.

R. Horton – If it could go towards Language, maybe it should.

Rikki Bolewsky feels being on a team and in sports is more than just sports.

R. Horton feels the Board's job is to give a final budget and they still have some questions. He asked the Committee if they wanted to continue or the Board could continue working on the budget and reconvene on Monday.

The Board is more comfortable working to get a final number.

Committee members left the meeting at 8:24 pm. The Board advised they will send updated information to the Committee via e-mail, prior to Monday's meeting.

The Board reviewed Warrant Articles.

R. Horton asked if they will have the Default Budget by Tuesday's Public Hearing.

E. Jackson advised yes, if she has the figures to put in.

T. Croteau asked E. Jackson for a balance of the Special Ed Trust account for Monday.

T. Croteau asked how much is in the Building Improvement Fund.

E. Jackson advised she thinks they used \$32,000 for the Science Lab and \$4,500 for HVAC. Those amounts are not out of that line yet.

T. Croteau advised the main priority this year is the showers and the outside of the building.

J. Lewis – Need to get an engineer in here; need to get an expert and do it right.

R. Horton - Every year something needs to be fixed; \$50,000 is probably an okay number.

Thinks maybe they should increase it to \$65,000 or \$70,000.

E. Jackson advised that Article will effect taxation. The Board needs to keep that in mind.

After discussion, **K. Bazan MOVED to approve Article Six in the sum of \$50,000; SECONDED by: J. Cardinale, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

**K. Bazan MOVED for the WSD to go into a hiring freeze across the board until further notice; SECONDED by: R. Horton, after discussion, K. Bazan advised Administration would approach the Board in certain situations, i.e., Special Ed students, MOTION WITHDRAWN:**

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS:**

Amanda Nordberg asked about Pre-School position; would it be temporary this year?

J. Lewi advised it would be a long-term sub.

Amanda Nordberg asked about class sizes. Feels smaller number is really important. Her Daughter is going to Eighth grade; will be in large classes. That same group was in large classes in grade four. Feels they all saw that didn't work.

Val Carey advised they currently have referrals for Special Ed students to Pre-School and they are maxed out.

**K. Bazan MOVED to approve the Payroll Manifest of 1/15/16 in the amount of \$201,861.92; SECONDED by: J. Cardinale, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

**K. Bazan MOVED to put in the notes the Motion on the Operating Manifest of 1/8/16 in the amount of \$1,120.00 SECONDED by: J. Cardinale, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

**J. Cardinale MOVED to go into non-public session under RSA91-A:3(a) at 8:44pm; SECONDED by: T. Croteau, VOTED: K. Bazan – yes, R. Horton – yes, S. Thompson – yes, T. Croteau – yes, J. Cardinale – yes, MOTION PASSED.**

**J. Cardinale MOVED to leave non-public session under RSA91-A:3(a) at 10:01pm; SECONDED by: T. Croteau, VOTED: K. Bazan – yes, R. Horton – yes, S. Thompson – yes, T. Croteau – yes, J. Cardinale – yes, MOTION PASSED.**

R. Horton advised while in non-public session the Board discussed a Personnel matter.

**J. Cardinale MOVED to seal the minutes of the non-public session; SECONDED by: T. Croteau, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

E. Jackson advised she will plug in the cuts K. Bazan made.

The Board reviewed proposed cuts.

K. Bazan reviewed Line 21:

J. Lewis is worried kids don't have enough Math skills.

K. Bazan advised one-third of budget has been spent. He asked J. Lewis if he sees the rest of that line being spent.

V. Carey explained Math supplies are ordered throughout the year. Some have been ordered. The line will be spent completely; probably plus money from personal pockets.

Line 23 – K. Bazan advised he hasn't heard whether the line is needed.

J. Cardinale – Already cut the part-time Music teacher. They were going to repair instruments to start Band.

R. Horton made a friendly Amendment to K. Bazan's proposal to keep \$500.00 in that line.

Magazines –

Line 167 – Books and Printed Material – Magazines:

V. Carey advised it is for Music Curriculum. Advised each year the new teacher evaluated the program before spending the funds.

K. Bazan advised will leave \$200.00 in that line item.

R. Horton reminded everyone these are recommendations to line items. It comes down to a bottom line budget; money can be moved.

Line 180: Board Recognition and Awards.

E. Jackson advised line was overspent this year and last.  
K. Bazan advised will be sure they won't overspend it.

Line 240: Repairs and Maintenance:

K. Bazan – Looked at past history; have increased to \$48,000 last year; used \$42,000. Advised to make that line \$42,000.

Line 248: Bring down to \$80,000. After discussion, the Board agreed to leave at \$90,000.

Replacement Furniture: Cut \$2,000; understands they have been using the line over the last three years, but hasn't heard people saying need things fixed ASAP.

E. Jackson advised request is done in the Summer.

E. Jackson – Have used \$8,000; rest will be used for Pre-School.

K. Bazan agreed to leave line at \$10,000

Line 262 – Technology: Reduce to \$2,000.

Line 267 – Software Technology – Reduce to \$10,000.

Line 268 – Computers and Computer Equipment – reduce to \$23,000

Line 258 – Auditing Monitor system:

S. Thompson advised they wouldn't have that system; won't need that cost of \$2,388.

\*Reduction of one teacher on the Elementary side.

Line 231 – J. Cardinale feels they should put line back to \$55,000; need to change that position. Hoping can save money by not having to contract out. They will change the job description. J. Cardinale asked E. Jackson to change all lines associated with that.

E. Jackson advised changes add \$47,800 back in the budget.

Discussed Principal Position:

Line 206 – R. Horton feels it is the right move to split the Principal and Superintendent; wants to see \$80,000 in the Principal line.

Line 181 - Superintendent : \$90,000.

Eliminate Assistant Principal.

E. Jackson advised that has already been done.

R. Horton – Curriculum Coordinator – Does not want to add \$10,000 to that line.

R. Horton advised should budget Principal and Superintendent full-time with family plan, retirement and Social Security; should budget high.

R. Horton – Are there guidelines on salary positions versus hourly positions? Advised he had asked about that before.

E. Jackson advised need to know specifics of job descriptions. Thinks she can put together and clean up documentation so it is easy to present on Monday, will have numbers she can use.

The Board advised E. Jackson to use \$200,000 from the Unreserved Fund Balance.

J. Cardinale asked E. Jackson to get rid of one of the proposed columns.

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS:**

Sue Rice asked if the Board is still proposing to eliminate a teacher.

K. Bazan – Yes; one after the new proposed budget, at the elementary side.

J. Lewis – If there is an influx, need to move things. Thinks Admin reserves the right to do what needs to be done.

**J. Cardinale MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 10:35 pm; SECONDED by: T. Croteau, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Higgins  
School Board Secretary