

**Minutes of the  
Litchfield Budget Committee Meeting  
Held on November 9, 2017**

The Litchfield Budget Committee held a meeting on Thursday, November 9, 2017 at Campbell High School, One Highlander Court, Litchfield, NH 03052.

**PRESENT:** C Couture (Chair), K Douglas (Vice Chair), J Bourque, D Miller, J Spotts, J Bourque, C Harrison (School Board Representative)

Absent: R Keating, J Green, J Brunelle (Selectmen Representative)

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mrs. Couture called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

- **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
  
- **REVIEW/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

There were no additions to the agenda.

**2. PUBLIC INPUT**

There was no public input.

**REVIEW/ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

- Oct 26, 2017

**MOTION:** by Mr. Miller

*Move to approve the minutes of October 26, 2017*

**SECOND:** by Mr. Spotts

**VOTE: 6-0-0**

**The motion carried.**

**3. CORRESPONDENCE**

Mrs. Couture indicated she received correspondence from the Town Administrator regarding the Union's vote to change health insurance to Health Trust, which will result in an estimated \$75,000 reduction in the budget.

**4. BUDGET REVIEW: SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Mr. O'Neill announced that Mr. Izbicki will provide an update of the changes in the FY19 Recommended budget.

Mr. Izbicki reported that there were some identified revisions to the budget that were made during the week. He provided a reconciliation from where the budget started last week to the changes made during the week. He reported that the district received the actual Guaranteed Maximum Rate (GMR) from School Care for health insurance, which is an increase of 2.1%, as

well as the GMR for dental Insurance, which is an increase of 2.3%. He noted that the budget overall increase is 2.86% over the FY18 budget.

- Curriculum Development

Dr. Childress presented the FY19 Recommended Curriculum Development budget to the Budget Committee. She explained the goal was to keep the budget as level funded as possible while allowing for a gradual transformation toward a proficiency-based curriculum and providing excellent professional development. She indicated the vision of future curriculum is to make Litchfield's students competitive in the world by creating an environment in which students and teachers have the materials and skills to move toward proficiency-based education with collaborative learning and peer sharing, and a transition to digital texts and resources.

Dr. Childress presented budget highlights and indicated the only increase is in the Contracted Services line. She explained that the industry rate for speakers is \$2,500 and the district can book up to 3 speakers for in-district training.

Mrs. Couture mentioned that middle school is increasing 10 students per grade according to the NHSBA projections.

Mr. Lecklider indicated that there is no increase in each grade level. He noted that the current grade 5 projection is in the 90s range.

Mrs. Couture asked about the difference between new textbooks in the curriculum budget and what the new textbooks are in the school budgets.

Dr. Childress explained that textbook replacements are budgeted at the building level.

Mrs. Bourque asked about the increase in software and what that would mean for future years.

Dr. Childress indicated that many of the digital resources fall under new textbooks. She noted the schools are up to speed on software.

Mr. O'Neill mentioned the individual that provided the projections for the NHSBA will not be doing them in the future. He indicated the district looked into software that is costly. He commented the district will have to rely on internal projections or ask NESDEC to provide them.

- HR

Mrs. Messenger presented the FY19 Human Resources Recommended budget. She noted there is an overall decrease of \$1,700 that is reflected in the conference and workshop line, professional services and advertising.

- Salaries and Benefits

Mrs. Messenger presented the FY19 Salaries and Benefits Recommended budget. She reported the total budget is \$16,817,576 and salaries amount to approximately \$11M of that budget. She

noted there are two contracts in their second year (LEA and LSSA) in the budget: the LEA CBA reflects a 3.9% increase and the LSSA CBA contains no step increase, but the schedule is adjusted by .04%. There is a 3% increase included for non-union staff, \$35,500 pool for administrative raises, and \$135,000 for the vacant superintendent position. Health insurance rates will increase 2.1% and dental insurance will increase 2.3%. There is an attrition reduction of \$150,000 in the salary lines and \$50,000 in health and dental insurance. Substitute salaries and long term salaries were budgeted by a 3 year average of actual expenditures.

Mrs. Couture asked how the salary for the superintendent was determined. Mrs. Messenger indicated that she researched other districts of like size and averaged the range.

Mr. O'Neill asked Mrs. Messenger to define attrition for individuals watching the meeting.

Mrs. Messenger explained attrition is the difference in wages for those who have been employed in the district over a long term and are leaving and new hires with less experience.

Mrs. Messenger continued with highlights from the Salaries and Benefits budget. The budget includes 6<sup>th</sup> period classes that are contracted, teacher and paraprofessional grade changes, severance payouts for LEA contracts, and vacation buybacks for administrators. There is no change in the NH Retirement contributions, no new or expanded positions, and positions for full day kindergarten will be filled by current positions already included in the budget.

Mrs. Couture commented the reduction to staff at LMS and GMS will be used toward Kindergarten. She observed that the positions planned for Kindergarten next year are planned to be budgeted.

Mr. O'Neill indicated that it was decided we would show the positions from where we expected them to come from.

Mrs. Couture commented that she was unsure if it makes more sense to reflect it that way.

Mrs. Douglas commented even though we are not adding any positions, we are not taking reductions we should be taking. She indicated that if we can reallocate two positions from LMS then we should be adding two positions at GMS.

Mr. O'Neill commented the district has been candid and up front about the cost of the positions and the revenue offset.

Mrs. Couture commented the estimate for classroom teachers is \$175,000 and \$28,000 for paraprofessionals. She indicated that is not reflected in the budget and it is important to see that in there.

Mrs. Bourque commented if those decisions have not been made from a personnel standpoint it is a challenge to put those numbers on paper.

Mrs. Couture commented that an average of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers could be taken for a generic reduction.

Mrs. Bourque commented that is not how the district presents their budget.

Mrs. Couture asked to see the positions reallocations in the budget so it will be clear for the voters.

Mr. O'Neill commented he will bring it to the School Board for direction. He indicated he will communicate with the Budget Committee Chair between those meetings. He noted that the district is trying to be as transparent as possible without confusing anyone.

Mr. Miller asked if there is an increase in Lacrosse or is it just a change in revenue?

Mr. Izbicki commented there is a difference in the way the self-funded programs are being handled. He noted there were things that were in the self-funded budget last year that you do not see in the general fund anymore.

Mr. Miller commented that you still have to gross appropriate that money. Mr. Izbicki commented that it will be gross appropriated across the funds, but not in the general fund.

- SAU

Mr. Izbicki presented the FY19 SAU Recommended budget and noted there is an overall increase of \$4,477 for professional development for the new superintendent.

- School Board

Mr. Izbicki presented the FY19 School Board Recommended budget and noted there is a decrease of \$450 directly related to audit fees as the School Board plans to go to bid for audit services in the coming years.

- Buildings and Grounds

Mr. Izbicki presented the FY19 Buildings and Grounds Recommended budget and noted there is an increase of 6.3% related to the costs for full day Kindergarten: lease payments for modular classrooms, site work, set up costs. He noted the remaining budget is level funded.

- Business

Mr. Izbicki presented the FY19 Business Recommended budget and noted there is a decrease of \$6,245 due to the discontinuation of actuarial services.

- Transportation

Mr. Izbicki presented the FY19 Transportation Recommended budget and noted the increase is due to contracted rates. He noted this is the final year of that contract after which the district will go to bid for transportation services.

- Food Service

Mr. Izbicki presented the FY19 Food Services Recommended budget and noted that there is a decrease of 1.3%. He provided a financial statement of the Food Service fund balance that reflects a decrease due to the decline of sales.

## 7. REPORTS

- Town

There was no report from the Town.

## 8. Member Input/Misc Business

Mrs. Couture indicated that the Budget Committee has to prepare the MS-27 and she prepared a template of the MS-27 broad categories for the Budget Committee to use when voting on changes.

Mrs. Bourque commented that the budget process this year has drastically improved.

Mrs. Couture agreed. She invited budget managers to attend the November 30 Budget Committee meeting as there may be additional questions.

Mr. O'Neill thanked the Chair for using the MS-27 form to apply reductions as it would be more efficient. He assured the Chair that administrators will attend on November 30.

Mrs. Couture asked about the default budget. Mr. Izbicki indicated it is in progress and he will provide it for the Budget Committee once it has been presented to the School Board.

Mrs. Bourque mentioned that she has read comments on Facebook about full day Kindergarten. She indicated that she would love to hear more input as there are many feelings out there and it is difficult to get a pulse.

## 9. Public Input

There was no public input.

## 10. Adjourn

**MOTION:** by Mrs. Douglas

***Move to adjourn***

**SECOND:** by Mrs. Bourque

**VOTE: 6-0-0**

**The motion carried.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Next meeting: November 30, 2017

**Recorded by: Michele E. Flynn, Recording Secretary**

**Approved:**