

Town of Litchfield, NH
Budget Committee Meeting
December 2, 2021
Litchfield Town Hall

In Attendance:

Members: Andrew Cutter, Chairman; John David Son, Vice Chairman; Derek Barka; Keri Douglas; William Hayes (virtual); Kate Stevens; and Scott Taylor

Selectmen's Rep.: Robert Leary

School Board Rep.: Christina Harrison

Also in Attendance: Michael Jette, Superintendent; Cory Izbicki, Business Administrator

1. Call to Order:

- a. 7:05 pm - Chairman Andrew Cutter called the meeting to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Virtual Meeting Attendance:

Chairman Andrew Cutter commented that William Hayes was remote tonight, and the Committee would need to vote to allow Mr. Hayes to participate in the meeting.

Mr. Cutter requested a motion to allow remote participation for the Budget Committee meeting.

Motion: (Ms. Douglas / Mr. Leary) So moved.

Discussion: None

Roll-Call: Mr. Son - Yes; Ms. Harrison - Yes; Mr. Leary - Yes; Ms. Douglas - Yes; Mr. Taylor - Yes; Ms. Stephens - Yes; Mr. Barka - Yes; and Mr. Cutter - Yes

Vote: (8-0-0) The motion carried.

Mr. Cutter asked Mr. Hayes if there was anyone in the room with him and why was he remote for the meeting? Mr. Hayes stated that he was alone, and his reason was that he was still concerned with the Covid-19 variants. He added that he had not been vaccinated for Covid-19.

3. Public Input #1 @ 7:07 pm:

- a. There was no one present for Public Input

Public Input ended at 7:08 pm.

4. Review / Additions of Agenda:

- a. No additions or changes to the agenda.

5. Correspondence:

Chairman Andrew Cutter reviewed the Correspondence Summary.

- a. Town Budget Reports:
i. November 19, 2021
ii. November 24, 2021

- b. November 19 – Email from Conservation Commission Chairman Lepore on use of Conservation Fund. Forwarded to the Budget Committee.
- c. November 21 – Minutes from November 18 received. Forwarded to the Budget Committee on November 23.
- d. November 28 – Request from Mr. Leary, which was forwarded to the SAU for itemized salary for all school employees for the last three years.
- e. November 29 – Response from Superintendent Jette to Mr. Leary’s email. The School District does not have a three-year comparison of salaries, and the Food Service and Custodial Services will be discussed tonight.
- f. November 29– Email from Ms. Stevens on subbing at GMS and avoiding any conflicts. Recommended for Ms. Stevens to discuss with the Budget Committee this evening.
- g. November 29– Email from Donna Ferguson, Library Trustees, on the desire to be more involved in town planning and activities.
- h. December 1 – Mr. Hayes sent an email regarding remote participation on December 2.

6. GMS Substitute Teacher:

Kate Stevens mentioned that the Litchfield School District is desperate for substitute teachers, especially GMS. Ms. Stevens stated that she has a couple of hours a week to substitute. She asked if the Committee thought her substitute teaching would be a conflict of interest? No one on the Committee believed that her substituting would create a conflict of interest.

Derek Barka commented that his wife is a Paraprofessional for the Litchfield School District. Mr. Barka stated that he would abstain from any votes on warrants regarding raises. Mr. Son said that his company was utilized by the School District last year, but his company does not have a line item in the FY 2023 Budget.

7. Review / Acceptance of Minutes:

- a. November 18, 2021, Meeting Minutes -

Motion: (Ms. Harrison / Mr. Son) So moved.

Discussion: None

Roll-Call: Mr. Son - Yes; Ms. Harrison - Yes; Mr. Leary - Yes; Ms. Douglas - Yes; Mr. Taylor - Yes; Ms. Stephens -Yes; Mr. Barka - Yes; Mr. Hayes - Yes; and Mr. Cutter - Yes

Vote: (9-0-0) The motion carried.

8. School Business:

a. **Questions and Answers:**

Chairman Cutter stated that the objective of the meeting was to vote on the School District Budget. He mentioned that the Committee was presented with all the individual sections of the budget at the last meeting, starting with CHS. The Committee asked several questions, and there was a working document that had some answers to the questions. Before voting on the budget, Mr. Cutter suggested that the Committee starts with the questions and answers.

Superintendent Michael Jette mentioned that he and Business Administrator Cory Izbicki answered 15 questions. He asked if there were any questions from the answers that they provided? Ms. Douglas stated that she was very uncomfortable going over the answers and not having them in the meeting minutes. Mr. Cutter suggested the questions and answers be placed in the minutes.

Mr. Son mentioned that question ten was asked because students could not print from their Chromebooks to a school printer. He asked why the students could not print from their Chromebooks to a school printer? Mr. Izbicki stated that he was not sure why the students could not print to a school printer but added there was more to the issue. He said that a connection or software issue might be causing the problem. Dr. Jette noted that if students could use the school printers, the District Budget would significantly increase.

Ms. Douglas commented that she did not believe there was a response to her question about how much was funded for resignations and retirements versus how many were paid out. She noted that the excess funds are rolled over into the General Fund. Ms. Douglas' question from the last meeting was 'how many retirement notifications did we receive and budget for in last year's budget that did not get expended?' Ms. Douglas' concern was that if there are four notifications of retirement and only three retire, the taxpayers are still on the hook for the fourth retirement. When the fourth employee retires, the taxpayers could be paying for two retirements.

Dr. Jette and Mr. Izbicki agreed that the unused funds are rolled into the General Fund at the end of the Fiscal Year. They added that the funds moved into the General Fund are used to pay for projects that the District would have had to put in their budget in the future. Ms. Douglas pointed out that in FY 2020, the line item for salaries in this area was budgeted for \$146,390, and the District expended \$80,000. Dr. Jette acknowledged the issue but noted that the CBA requires the District budget for a teacher that gives notice by November 1. If they are under budget for teacher retirements, they need to find the funds somewhere else.

Mr. Cutter suggested that the Committee allow the School District to present their budget, and if a Committee member disagreed, then the member could make a motion to make a percentage reduction.

Ms. Douglas asked if the Committee would discuss Food Service and Custodial Salaries & Benefits? Dr. Jette commented that the Food Service and Custodial Salaries & Benefits are the same for both classes of employees. He noted that the District's inability to hire staff was because the wages were not competitive in the marketplace. Dr. Jette mentioned that the starting salary at McDonald's is \$15 an hour, and the Litchfield School District was previously offering \$13.81 an hour for custodians and 10.27 an hour for food service. He described how they saw a 43% vacancy rate in the staff during the summer, and they had to do something immediately. Dr. Jette commented how the District had unused wages in the items, and the School Board decided to use the unused wages from July and August to increase the wages. The new starting salaries are \$15.12 an hour for custodians and \$12.27 for food service. He noted that this should not cause an overspend.

Dr. Jette commented that he spoke to legal counsel and was advised how to proceed with the increase in salaries, the case law, and a strategy to address the hiring deficiencies that the District has. Mr. Taylor asked if the District had considered increasing the custodians' salaries at the time instead of hiring additional custodians? Mr. Izbicki stated that the District was burning the custodians out and had to hire additional staff to help the custodians.

Dr. Jette mentioned that the School Board responded to vacant positions because of uncompetitive salaries. Selectman Leary stated that if he were part of the staff that did not receive a raise, he would be upset. Mr. Leary noted that the District wants to give two raises to the custodial and food service department in one year. He asked Dr. Jette to explain to the taxpayers why the School Board wants to provide the first raise, then a 3% raise, in the same year? Dr. Jette pointed out that they had to provide the initial raise because there was a 43% vacancy rate with the custodial positions. Ms. Harrison, Dr. Jette, and Mr. Izbicki explained that the initial 'raise' was from funds not being spent. Mr. Leary and Ms. Douglas acknowledged that they completely understood what was said. She noted that, in FY 2023, the higher pay rate would bust the line item.

b. **Fiscal Year 2023 – Budget Committee Questions:**

Answers from the School District:

1. 20% tuition increase: In this particular case, a school (out of state) can request (to their state) an increase in tuition costs based on current costs and change in student enrollment. This increase was a direct result of the pandemic. In-State programs can only increase by up to 5% each fiscal year.
2. Two new Special Education positions: The request for the additional positions allows us to continue to meet current student needs without needing to look elsewhere for placement. I know the conversation is around cost avoidance and cost savings; however, the other piece that needs to be considered is compliance. In special education, we have to seek program approvals from the NHDOE for the programs we run for the students we serve. Self-contained programming cannot exceed 12 students, and in addition, we cannot have more than four grade levels or five developmental years within the same program. That is why these positions are required.
3. What is the exact PPE provided for music?: At LMS, our chorus students are provided with singing masks. PPE for band students is specialized for each instrument: wind instruments have masks with space to insert the mouthpiece and bags that contain instruments such as flutes and clarinets, and brass instruments have bell covers. We have PPE at CHS for chorus and for instrumental, and it is the same type of PPE as at LMS. The instrumental is more complex and costly than for chorus.
4. CTE attendance?: In terms of raw numbers, we have 40 students between Pinkerton and Alvirne. Remember, by leveraging federal Perkins funds; these credits are a cost-effective and highly personalized educational experience.
 - a. $45,000 / 40 = \$1,125$ per student/ 2 credits = $\$562.50$ / credit
 - b. CHS cost last year was $\$16,183 / 6 = \$2,697$ / credit
5. CRCC – LMS Co-curricular budget?: Cyber Robotics Coding Competition
6. Which ELA Program does Grade 5 use? Journeys or Study sync?: Currently, they use a combination of both. She uses both programs as resources and other outside resources to ensure the standards and competencies are met.
7. Touchscreens on Chromebooks: After considering the additional cost of a touchscreen model versus the value, we decided not to purchase touchscreens. With product cost increases related to the pandemic, not having additional costs related to touchscreens has proven to be a wise decision. Pre-COVID, a Chromebook costs \$250, and we now are spending about \$300 (roughly the cost of a touchscreen model pre-COVID).
8. Chromebooks: The number ordered (107) per grade exceeds enrollment. Fifth Grade (101) and Ninth Grade (97) allow a few extras for repairs, new enrollments, etc.
9. 43 Laptops at GMS – Who?: Teachers (23), Specialists (11), Special Education (6), Admin (2), Guidance (1).
10. CHS Library Computers – Do we need them? What do they do that the Chromebook does not do?: The computers have all of the programs that are not accessible through Chromebooks, so students can utilize them in the Learning Commons when in study hall or before/after school. They are also the only way students can print any documents here at CHS, and they cannot print from their Chromebooks on school

printers.

11. Why do we need Microsoft Licenses? (Line 446): These licenses cover our servers and the various computer labs that run Microsoft products. Once licensed as a District, it allows access to others when needed.
12. Water Bill - Is level-funded correct?:
 - a. Click here for a review of expenditures for water over the past six years.
 - b. Over the noted period, water expenditures had exceeded \$34,000 once in 2019. Around that time, it was discovered that an outdoor water spigot at GMS had been leaking consistently for some time, which was driving bills up, and was repaired.
 - c. Recently, it was discovered that the irrigation system at CHS had a broken valve that created a situation where they were being double-billed for usage while the system was on. This has been remedied, and I anticipate seeing a reduction in cost at CHS.
 - d. Based on these factors, they believe that maintaining a level budget of \$34,000 for the water District-Wide is sufficient going into 2023.
13. 460 annual gym equipment - \$2400 - What is the breakdown? Ropes? Etc.:
 - a. In reviewing the invoices from A+ Athletic, they are not itemized. \$2400 was the fee for inspection of bleachers, athletic equipment, and outdoor bleachers. This is a small cost to ensure we are complying with safety standards.
14. Benefit Strategies - What is the usage?:
 - a. Currently, 84 Employees are utilizing FSA for Medical and Dependent Care, over half of the eligible employees.
15. Food Service & Custodial Salaries & Benefits:
 - a. With the pandemic, our wage scale for Custodians and Food Service Workers, was not competitive to the general marketplace.
 - Custodial starting pay was \$13.81/ hour
 - Food service starting pay was \$10.27/ hour
 - b. Custodians - We started summer cleaning in June with 2.5 unfilled custodial positions (20% vacancy rate) and had 5.5 open positions by August (43% vacancy rate).
 - c. Food Service - We had four open positions in August (31% vacancy rate).
 - d. The Board used the funds from vacant positions to increase the pay scales for custodians and food service workers. This was accomplished within the bottom-line budget.
 - e. The new pay rates have allowed us to attract and retain custodial and food service workers.
 - New Custodial starting pay is \$15.12/ hour (9.5% increase)
 - New Food Service starting pay is \$12.27/ hour (19.5% increase)
 - f. Only negotiated agreements are required to be brought before the voters for approval. Because the Litchfield Support Staff Association waived their right to negotiate over these salaries, and the Board acted unilaterally within voter-approved funds, no public vote was required.
16. Which AP sciences are running next year?:
17. Update vocational note in 561:

18. GMS – Math, 640 – If we are getting new books, why do we need these?;
19. How many spare Chromebooks are on hand? Now?;
20. CHS Custodial – Missing a position? \$36,157 cut?;

The Committee agreed that they were done with the question and answer section. Chairman Cutter stated that the Committee had 14 budget sections presented at the last meeting, and they were going to go through each section. The committee agreed to start with CHS and work through the sections accordingly.

c. **School Budget Voting:**

i. **Campbell High School**

Chairman Cutter stated that the bottom line on Campbell High School was \$570,685. He asked for a motion.

Motion: (Mr. Taylor / Ms. Douglas) CHS Physical Education, line item 430, Repairs and Maintenance. Motion to reduce the line item from \$1,300 to \$0.00.

Discussion: Mr. Barka asked if this included the bleachers? Mr. Taylor stated that it includes the rope course, and he added that the line item was one of the questions answered from the Google Doc (question 13). Dr. Jette stated that the Fit For Life class and the Freshman Seminar use the rope course. Mr. Barka commented that if the School District no longer inspects the course, then they would need to take the rope course down.

Roll-Call: Mr. Son – No; Ms. Harrison – No; Mr. Leary – No; Ms. Douglas – No; Mr. Taylor – Yes; Ms. Stephens –No; Mr. Barka – No; Mr. Hayes – No; and Mr. Cutter – No

Vote: (1-8-0) The motion failed.

Motion: (Mr. Taylor / Ms. Douglas) CHS Music Education, line item 610, Supplies. Motion to reduce the line item by \$1,500.

Discussion: Mr. Taylor stated that they did not need to budget for those types of supplies, and if the District does, it can come out of the emergency fund and not the specific music budget. Mr. Son was informed that The PPE equipment caused the increase. Mr. Taylor said that the \$1,500 would be reduced from what the Department spent in FY 2021 for PPE supplies. Ms. Douglas mentioned that the Budget Committee needs to figure out what the taxpayers need to spend and what is not unreasonable to ask the participants to pay.

Roll-Call: Mr. Son – Yes; Ms. Harrison – No; Mr. Leary – Yes; Ms. Douglas – Yes; Mr. Taylor – Yes; Ms. Stephens –Yes; Mr. Barka – Yes; Mr. Hayes – Yes; and Mr. Cutter – No

Vote: (7-2-0) The motion carried.

Motion: (Mr. Taylor / Ms. Douglas) CHS Science Education, line item 610, Supplies. Motion to reduce the line item by \$600.

Discussion: Mr. Taylor mentioned that he had asked during the presentation about the rotation of courses for AP Science. From Mr. Lonergan’s answer, it was his understanding that AP-Biology and AP-Physics would not run during the 2023 budget. They would not run because it would be time for AP-Chemistry and AP-Environmental to run. Mr. Taylor was looking to cut the \$600 from the line items if the courses were not going to be run.

Dr. Jette commented that he did not believe the information was correct; it looked like the rotation was backward. Dr. Jette asked the Committee to allow him to get back to them with the right answer. Dr. Jette supported removing the courses from the budget that are not running in FY 2023.

Roll-Call:

None

Vote:

No Vote (Mr. Taylor withdrew his motion).

Motion:

(Mr. Taylor / Ms. Douglas) CHS Social Studies Education, line item 738, Equipment Replacement. Motion to reduce the line item from \$400 to \$200. The purpose of the reduction is to match the market rate for a drop-down map.

Discussion:

Mr. Barka asked Mr. Taylor if he looked up the cost of a drop-down map? Mr. Taylor confirmed that he had looked up the market rate for the drop-down maps.

Roll-Call:

Mr. Son - Yes; Ms. Harrison - No; Mr. Leary - Yes; Ms. Douglas - Yes; Mr. Cutter - Yes; Mr. Taylor - Yes; Ms. Stephens - Yes; Mr. Barka - Yes; and Mr. Hayes - Yes

Vote:

(8-1-0) The motion carried.

Motion:

(Mr. Taylor / Mr. Cutter) CHS Vocational Education, line item 561, Tuition. Motion to reduce the line item by \$5,940, which matches the four students at Pinkerton Academy.

Discussion:

Mr. Barka asked if the District knew how many students would be going to Pinkerton Academy next year? There are four enrolled this year. Dr. Jette stated that reducing the budget by \$5,940 could affect the underclassmen who are taking two-year courses at Pinkerton. Mr. Taylor asked if Dr. Jette could get back to him on the number of juniors that are and will be enrolled in Pinkerton? Dr. Jette stated that he would get back to the Budget Committee with an answer. Ms. Douglas pointed out that if she takes four students and multiplies it by \$1,027.76, she comes up with \$4,111.04 and not \$5,940. Mr. Son asked if any of the courses Litchfield students take at Pinkerton are also available at Alvirne? The understanding was that the students go to Pinkerton because Alvirne does not offer specific courses. Mr. Taylor noted that he researched into it, and there are only a couple of courses taught at Pinkerton that is not offered at Alvirne.

Roll-Call:

None

Vote:

No Vote (Mr. Taylor withdrew his motion).

Motion:

(Ms. Douglas / Mr. Leary) CHS Math Education, line item 610, Supplies. Motion to reduce the line item by \$300.

Discussion:

Ms. Douglas mentioned that they were talking about one class, and she noted that students and teachers should have supply lists. Ms. Harrison commented that she had not seen a supply list from a CHS teacher, and Ms. Douglas suggested that the District bring back the supply lists.

Roll-Call:

Mr. Son - No; Ms. Harrison - No; Mr. Leary - No; Mr. Cutter - No; Ms. Douglas - Yes; Mr. Taylor - Yes; Ms. Stephens - No; Mr. Barka - No; and Mr. Hayes - Yes

Vote:

(3-6-0) The motion failed.

Motion:

(Ms. Douglas / Mr. Barka) CHS Science Education, line item 640, Textbook Replacement. Motion to reduce the line item by \$1,759.

Discussion:

Ms. Douglas mentioned that elsewhere in the budget, the line item for textbook replacement was

reduced to \$1. She noted that if the District needed to replace two textbooks, it could be absorbed within the budget. Mr. Son asked for confirmation that the line item would be reduced to \$751. Ms. Douglas agreed with that amount.

The Committee discussed why there was \$1 in the line item for Textbook New. Mr. Izbicki mentioned that they place \$1 in a line item signifies the ability to transfer money into.

Roll-Call: Mr. Son - Yes; Ms. Harrison - No; Mr. Leary - Yes; Mr. Cutter - Yes; Ms. Douglas - Yes; Mr. Taylor - Yes; Ms. Stephens -Yes; Mr. Barka - Yes; and Mr. Hayes - Yes

Vote: (8-1-0) The motion carried.

Ms. Douglas asked if there was a reason that the District did not buy camcorders using this year's funds? Mr. Izbicki mentioned that purchasing the camcorders was not brought to his attention.

Mr. Cutter asked if there were any more motions regarding the CHS Budget? No more motions were made, and Mr. Cutter stated that the new bottom line was \$567,226.

ii. Litchfield Middle School

Chairman Cutter stated that the bottom line on Litchfield Middle School was \$133,821. He asked for a motion. Mr. Taylor stated that he had a question regarding Guidance Services, line item 430, Repairs, and Maintenance. He said that the line item was for repairing and maintaining an FM System for one student. Mr. Taylor asked if this line item would be an annual expense? Mr. Izbicki stated that the FM System is for one student, and the Budget Committee would continue to see an annual line item for its maintenance.

Motion #1: (Ms. Stevens / Ms. Douglas) LMS Music Education, line item 610, Supplies. Motion to reduce the line item by \$3,100.

Discussion: Mr. Son suggested that they should leave \$1 in the line item in case they need to transfer funds into the line item.

Roll-Call: Mr. Son - No; Ms. Harrison - No; Mr. Leary - Yes; Mr. Cutter - Yes; Ms. Douglas - Yes; Mr. Taylor - Yes; Ms. Stephens -Yes; Mr. Barka - No; and Mr. Hayes - Yes

Vote: (6-3-0) The motion carried.

Motion #2: (Ms. Stevens / Ms. Douglas) Made a motion to amend her motion to the LMS Music Education, line item 610, Supplies. The amended motion is to reduce the line item by \$3,099.

Discussion: Mr. Son asked why the budget for PPE at LMS was twice the budgeted amount at LMS? Ms. Harrison stated that LMS has a General Music Course that every student goes through, and she specified that the masks were for singing. The Committee discussed how students in LMS are required to go through the General Music Course. Mr. Son stated that unlike CHS, where students choose to take a music class, the students at LMS are required to take the music class and should not be required to provide their PPE.

Roll-Call: None

Vote: No Vote.

Motion #3: (Mr. Son / Ms. Stevens) Made a motion to amend Ms. Stevens' motion by half. (\$1,600.).

Discussion: Ms. Douglas asked what would happen if LMS did not need the PPE? She asked if the District was better

off by saying, 'reality is we can absorb \$1,000 if the need is still there.' Ms. Stevens asked what would happen if this motion failed? She was informed that if this motion failed, then they would go back to the original motion.

Roll-Call: Mr. Son - Yes; Ms. Harrison - No; Mr. Leary - Yes; Mr. Cutter - Yes; Ms. Douglas - No; Mr. Taylor - No; Ms. Stephens -No; Mr. Barka - Yes; and Mr. Hayes - No

Vote: (4-5-0) The motion failed.

Mr. Cutter stated the failed motion brought the Committee back to the original motion of a reduction of \$3,100.

Mr. Cutter asked if there were any more motions regarding the LMS Budget? No more motions were made, and Mr. Cutter stated that the new bottom line was \$130,772.

iii. Griffin Memorial School

Chairman Cutter stated that the bottom line for Griffin Memorial School was \$130,669. He asked for a motion.

Motion: (Ms. Douglas / Mr. Taylor) GMS Math Education, line item 640, Textbook Replacement. Motion to reduce the line item by \$999.

Discussion: Ms. Douglas stated that math is noted as having a new program in the curriculum that will be adopted. She mentioned that if a new math program is being started, then there should be no new math books required. Mr. Son commented that the note reads as if it is new textbooks for additional students. The Committee agreed that the item should have been on a different line item. Ms. Douglas stated that there is typically an allowance for textbook replacements, but the District would have all new books since there is a new math program. Dr. Jette stated that he would like to get clarification regarding the additional books.

Roll-Call: None

Vote: No Vote (Ms. Douglas withdrew her motion).

Motion: (Ms. Douglas / Ms. Stevens) GMS Social Studies Education, line item 640, Textbook Replacement. Motion to reduce the line item by \$500.

Discussion: Ms. Douglas commented that she motioned to bring the request in line with the annual expenditures. Ms. Harrison pointed out that the books were consumables, and they need to replace them yearly.

Roll-Call: Mr. Son - Yes; Ms. Harrison - No; Mr. Leary - No; Mr. Cutter - Yes; Ms. Douglas - Yes; Mr. Taylor - Yes; Ms. Stephens -Yes; Mr. Barka - Yes; and Mr. Hayes - Yes

Vote: (7-2-0) The motion carried.

Mr. Cutter asked if there were any more motions regarding the GMS Budget? No more motions were made, and Mr. Cutter stated that the new bottom line was \$130,169.

iv. Curriculum:

Chairman Cutter stated that the bottom line for the Curriculum was \$151,317. He asked for a motion.

No motions were made.

v. Technology:

Chairman Cutter stated that the bottom line for the Technology was \$398,657. He asked for a motion.

Motion: (Ms. Douglas / Mr. Cutter) LMS Computer Instruction, line item 734, Fifth Grade Chromebooks. Motion to make an initial reduction of \$1,800.

Discussion: Ms. Douglas mentioned that the \$1,800 reduction reduces the number of Chromebooks to 101. She acknowledged that the District likes to have additional Chromebooks in an emergency; in reality, there is funding if the District needs an additional Chromebook. Ms. Douglas noted that she had not seen enrollment projections, so she assumed that 101 Chromebooks would be correct. Superintendent Jette showed Ms. Douglas where the projected enrollment numbers were and Ms. Douglas informed Dr. Jette that she preferred a paper copy of the enrollment numbers. Dr. Jette confirmed that 101 students were the correct projected enrollment number for Fifth Grade. Ms. Douglas added that the projected enrollment number is 101 students and the Budget Committee should budget based on that number.

Roll-Call: Mr. Son - No; Ms. Harrison - No; Mr. Leary - Yes; Mr. Cutter - No; Ms. Douglas - Yes; Mr. Taylor - Yes; Ms. Stephens -No; Mr. Barka - No; and Mr. Hayes - Yes

Vote: (4-5-0) The motion failed.

Motion: (Ms. Douglas / Ms. Stevens) LMS Computer Instruction, line item 734, Fifth Grade Chromebooks. Motion to make a reduction of \$2,600.

Discussion: Ms. Harrison asked if this motion was the same for the same motion? Ms. Douglas said 'yes.' Ms. Douglas mentioned that the spec sheet provided to the Budget Committee showed \$300. Ms. Douglas did not believe the Chromebooks cost \$300 and calculated based on \$275 per Chromebook.

Roll-Call: Mr. Son - No; Ms. Harrison - No; Mr. Leary - No; Mr. Cutter - No; Ms. Douglas - Yes; Mr. Taylor - No; Ms. Stephens -No; Mr. Barka - No; and Mr. Hayes - Yes

Vote: (2-7-0) The motion failed.

Ms. Douglas asked for clarification on what a reasonable extra amount of Chromebooks would be? She mentioned that the freshmen class has ten extra Chromebooks and asked if she should reduce the number to 97? Dr. Jette explained to Ms. Douglas that the Chromebooks are not extras and just sitting on a shelf. He explained that when a student forgets their Chromebook, a battery is uncharged, or the Chromebook is broken, the District provides a loaner.

Mr. Izbicki informed Ms. Douglas that the District does not have 45 Chromebooks sitting all over the place. He mentioned that the loaner Chromebooks are given to students as a replacement when a damaged Chromebook is brought into school.

Mr. Cutter asked if there was another motion? No other motion was made.

Dr. Jette stated that he would determine how many loaner Chromebooks are on hand.

vi. Special Services:

Chairman Cutter stated that the bottom line for the Special Services was \$1,206,200. He asked for a motion.

Ms. Douglas mentioned that she reviewed all her binders, going back to 2014, and she found that the District spends less than 80% of what is budgeted for Special Services. Ms. Douglas claimed that the three-year average from the binders she pulled was 78.5, the five-year average was 78%, and the eight-year average was 77.7%. Ms. Douglas recommended that they reduce the line item by \$240,000. The \$240,000 reduction would be a bottom-line reduction.

Motion: (Ms. Douglas / Mr. Hayes) Motion to make a reduction with Special Services of \$240,000.

Discussion: Ms. Douglas commented that, after reviewing the budget from the last several years, the District only spends around 80% of what was budgeted for Special Services. She noted that the Budget Committee significantly over budgets this Department, every year. Mr. Izbicki stressed that he did not believe this was a risk that Budget Committee members should feel comfortable taking. He noted that the School District was able to underspend regarding Special Services last year because OOD schools were closed. Mr. Cutter reminded everyone that the District has a Reserve Account. Ms. Harrison asked when the last time was that the District underspent by hundreds of thousands of dollars? Ms. Douglas said she would pull up the email that she received last year that showed the annual end-of-fund balance, which was traditionally over \$500,000. Ms. Douglas said she would send the email to Ms. Harrison.

Mr. Cutter asked if there was still a process for Special Services funds to be returned to the taxpayers? Mr. Izbicki stated that this is a bottom-line budget, and the General Fund incorporates all the Departments.

Mr. Taylor asked Dr. Jette if his plan for DW Special Education, line item 569 OOD Tuition, is to go to warrant article or even put a Special Education Teacher into the budget to help reduce that individual tuition cost? Dr. Jette confirmed that was correct, and Mr. Izbicki stated they planned to do that within the budget. The Committee discussed the impact of hiring additional Special Education Teachers, and Ms. Harrison stated that the Director of Special Education informed the School Board that they would not see Easter Seals in next year's budget. Mr. Taylor commented that Ms. Bandurski informed them that this could save the District around six figures. Ms. Stevens added that the budget would not see \$120,000 in the FY 2023 and 2024 budgets because of the two additional Special Education Teachers.

Roll-Call: Mr. Son - No; Ms. Harrison - No; Mr. Leary - Yes; Mr. Cutter - No; Ms. Douglas - Yes; Mr. Taylor - No; Ms. Stephens - No; Mr. Barka - No; and Mr. Hayes - Yes

Vote: (3-6-0) The motion failed.

Motion: (Ms. Douglas / Mr. Leary) Motion to make a reduction with Special Services in the amount of \$120,000.

Discussion: Ms. Douglas mentioned that the \$120,000 would cover the expenses of an additional student in Special Education. Mr. Barka asked if there was a reason that the School Board went away from the handshake agreement? Ms. Harrison stated that no one on the School Board knew why it was made, how it evolved through the years, and she proposed that they put everything in writing. She added that the Budget Committee did not want to go that route.

The Committee, Mr. Izbicki, and Dr. Jette continued talking about how the budget was calculated, unspent funds, and how the Budget Committee treated the School District Budget just like every

other budget. Mr. Izbicki noted that the Special Education Budget is a budget that he strives not to touch Ms. Bandurski's budget.

Ms. Stevens mentioned that it was her understanding that the Committee would discuss the handshake agreement at this point. She asked if the Committee was not going to discuss the handshake agreement, then when? Mr. Cutter said that it was the will of the Committee; if the Committee would like to review handshake agreements, then they can. Ms. Douglas mentioned that the handshake agreement would have to be specific only to this, and added that she would be in complete agreement with the handshake agreement if the budgeted funds that are not spent are segregated and returned to the taxpayers. Mr. Izbicki stated that he could not do that because if there is a deficit in another department, the money has to come from the Special Services Budget, which is part of the General Fund.

Roll-Call: Mr. Son - No; Ms. Harrison - No; Mr. Leary - Yes; Mr. Cutter - No; Ms. Douglas - Yes; Mr. Taylor - Yes; Ms. Stephens -No; Mr. Barka - No; and Mr. Hayes - Yes

Vote: (4-5-0) The motion failed.

vii. Food Service:

Chairman Cutter stated that the bottom line for Food Service was \$398,657. He asked for a motion.

No motions were made.

viii. Facilities:

Chairman Cutter stated that the bottom line for Facilities was \$1,044,241. He asked for a motion.

Motion: (Mr. Taylor / Ms. Douglas) LMS Building Services, line item 623 Util-Bottled Gas. Motion to reduce the FY21 actual and removal of the tank from \$1,500 to \$0.

Discussion: Mr. Barka asked if the tanks were just for the portables? Mr. Izbicki confirmed they were for the portables and noted that he left the line in the budget because he thought the kitchen also used it. The kitchen is all-electric. Dr. Jette mentioned that the energy efficiency work being done at LMS would be a warrant article. He noted that they would take all the existing energy costs and redirect them back to the municipal lease.

Roll-Call: Mr. Son - Yes; Ms. Harrison - Yes; Mr. Leary - Yes; Mr. Cutter - Yes; Ms. Douglas - Yes; Mr. Taylor - Yes; Ms. Stephens -Yes; Mr. Barka - Yes; and Mr. Hayes - Yes

Vote: (9-0-0) The motion failed.

Motion: (Mr. Taylor / Mr. Cutter) LMS Non-Instruct Equip, line item 430, Repairs and Maintenance. Motion to reduce Repairs to the HVAC that Fall Outside of Contract from \$9,000 down to \$5,000.

Discussion: Mr. Taylor said the HVAC is a brand new system covered under warranty.

Roll-Call: Mr. Son - Yes; Ms. Harrison - No; Mr. Leary - Yes; Mr. Cutter - Yes; Ms. Douglas - Yes; Mr. Taylor - Yes; Ms. Stephens -Yes; Mr. Barka - Yes; and Mr. Hayes - Yes

Vote: (8-1-0) The motion failed.

Mr. Cutter asked if there were any more motions regarding the Facilities Budget? No more motions were made, and Mr. Cutter stated that the new bottom line was \$1,038,741.

ix. Business Services:

Chairman Cutter stated that the bottom line for Business Services was \$54,964. He asked for a motion.

Motion: (Mr. Taylor / Ms. Douglas) DW Emergency Management, line item 610, Supplies. Motion to reduce the the line item by \$1,699.

Discussion: Mr. Barka asked if this line item was for masks for the District? Mr. Izbicki confirmed that the funds would be used for PPE. The Committee talked about all the sanitizer dropped off by Walmart and the ESSER funds that the School District has to pay for PPE.

Roll-Call: Mr. Son - Yes; Ms. Harrison - Yes; Mr. Leary - No; Mr. Cutter - Yes; Ms. Douglas - Yes; Mr. Taylor - Yes; Ms. Stephens -Yes; Mr. Barka - Yes; and Mr. Hayes - Yes

Vote: (8-1-0) The motion failed.

Mr. Cutter asked if there were any more motions regarding the Business Services Budget? No more motions were made, and Mr. Cutter stated that the new bottom line was \$53,265.

x. Transportation:

Chairman Cutter stated that the bottom line for Transportation was \$609,282. He asked for a motion.

No motions were made.

xi. SAU:

Chairman Cutter stated that the bottom line for the SAU was \$26,912. He asked for a motion.

No motions were made.

xii. School Board:

Chairman Cutter stated that the bottom line for the School Board was \$87,740. He asked for a motion.

Mr. Izbicki stated that the major increase came from the Audit Services line item for Federal Compliance.

No motions were made.

xiii. Human Services:

Chairman Cutter stated that the bottom line for Human Services was \$9,301. He asked for a motion.

No motions were made.

xiv. Salaries and Benefits:

Chairman Cutter stated that the bottom line for Salaries and Benefits was \$18,334,158.01. He asked for a motion.

Motion: (Mr. Taylor) DW Improve Instruction, line item 110, Salaries. Motion to reduce the line item by \$2,500.

Discussion: Mr. Izbicki stated that the \$106,000 was her actual salary, and they could not reduce her salary. Mr. Taylor suggested that he could just reduce the bottom line by his calculated salaries. Dr. Jette requested

that the Budget Committee look at the employee's actual salary from FY 2021 and not what was approved.

Roll-Call: None
Vote: No Vote

Motion: (Mr. Taylor / Ms. Douglas) DW Improve Instruction, line item 110, Salaries. Motion to reduce the overall District General Fund by \$48,715.

Discussion: None

Roll-Call: Mr. Son - No; Ms. Harrison - No; Mr. Leary - Yes; Mr. Cutter - No; Ms. Douglas - Yes; Mr. Taylor - Yes; Ms. Stephens - No; Mr. Barka - No; and Mr. Hayes - Yes

Vote: (4-5-0) The motion failed.

Motion: (Mr. Taylor / Ms. Douglas) CHS Custodial Services, line item 110, Salaries. Motion to reduce the line item by \$36,157.64.

Discussion: Dr. Jette stated that he needs to double-check the figures and ensure they are not missing a position. Mr. Izbicki confirmed that there is a fourth night-time position missing.

Roll-Call: None

Vote: No Vote; Mr. Taylor withdrew his motion.

xv. **Food Service Salaries and Benefits:**

Chairman Cutter stated that the bottom line for Human Services was \$363,427. He asked for a motion.

Mr. Taylor asked if the increase from \$55,043 to \$67,773, an increase of \$12,730, was caused by a previously vacant position? Mr. Izbicki stated that the increase was created by the increases given to the employees.

Mr. Cutter stated that with that and the motions made this evening, he had a reduction of \$14,257, and out of the budget, he had \$22,979,197.

The four points that will need to be recapped next week are:

- i. CHS Supplies - a withdrawal of \$600 on Supplies for AP-Science.
- ii. Research Vocational Education - A withdrawal of \$5940.
- iii. Withdrawal on GMS 640 Math for \$999.
- iv. Missing Custodial Employee Salary.

Topics at the next meeting:

- i. Cover the four points that need to be recapped.
- ii. Discussion on handshake agreements.
- iii. Mr. Taylor will not be present at the next meeting.

9. Town Business:

a. General Updates

No report

10. Old Business:

a. None

11. Member Input / New Business:

- a. Ms. Douglas mentioned that she emailed Mr. Cutter and Ms. Harrison a copy of the email she received with fund balances going back to 2015.
- b. In two weeks, December 16, the Budget Committee will have a joint meeting with the Town and School District regarding warrant articles.

12. Public Input #2 @ 9:31 pm

a. There was no one for Public Input

Public Input ended at 9:32 pm.

13. School Budget Meeting Schedule

- a. December 9 - Thursday - School Voting - Top Level
- b. December 16 - Thursday - Town and School Warrant Article Presentations
- c. January 6, 2022 - Thursday - Warrant Article Voting
- d. January 13, 2022 - Thursday - Budget Hearing

13. Adjournment:

Motion: (Ms. Douglas / Mr. Taylor) motioned to adjourn the public meeting at 9:32 pm.

Roll-Call:

- a. Mr. Cutter - Yes
- b. Mr. Son - Yes
- c. Mr. Barka - Yes
- d. Ms. Douglas - Yes
- e. Mr. Hayes - Yes
- f. Ms. Stevens - Yes
- g. Mr. Taylor - Yes
- h. Ms. Harrison - Yes

- i. Mr. Leary - Yes

Vote: (9-0-0) The motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,
Matthew Sullivan
Budget Committee Recording Secretary

Approved by the Budget Committee:

Andrew Cutter, Chairman

John David Son, Vice Chairman

Derek Barka

Keri Douglas

William Hayes

Kate Stevens

Scott Taylor

Christina Harrison, School Board Representative

Robert Leary, Selectmen's Representative