

**TOWN OF HOPKINTON**  
**Budget Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, January 25, 2017**  
**\*APPROVED\***

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairwoman Janet Krzyzaniak welcomed all in attendance. The Hopkinton Budget Committee Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m., at the Town Hall.

**ATTENDEES**

Janet Krzyzaniak, Don Houston, Ken Traum, Richard Houston, Deborah Norris, Amy Bogart, Ginni Haines, John Wuellenweber, Mark Zankel, and Bill Chapin, Jr.

**PUBLIC ATTENDEES**

Steve Chamberlin, Superintendent; Michelle Clark, Business Administrator; Matt Cairns, School Board Chair; Arnold Coda, Mary Kusturin, and Candi Youngman.

**APPROVAL OF JANUARY 18, 2017, DRAFT MINUTES**

Ken Traum motioned, Deb Norris seconded, to accept the January 18, 2017, draft minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**SCHOOL BOARD'S PRESENTATION OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE'S REQUEST TO CUT 50% OF THE BUDGET INCREASE**

Bill Chapin, began with thanking Steve, Michelle, Brenda, School Board, and the community, for their continued support and trust in him, in terms of working with the Budget Committee. He thanked the Teacher's Union for working hard to help this town and help get this budget to go through. He thanked the Budget Committee for being easy to talk to and easy to work with.

He reviewed that initially he presented a School Board Approved Budget with a tax increase of \$1.02, that needed to be raised by the local taxpayers. He was given the task to go back and see if they could cut that number in half.

**These are the savings they've come up with:**

They usually budget for 95% of Adequacy Funds but generally get 100%	\$ .18
Retirement of Educational Support Staff, 2 IA's that can be hired back for less	.03
Teamster retired, rehire for less	.01
Restructure of Personnel	.02
Facilities Work, instead of from tax dollars they'll use \$8,800 from Maintenance Trust	.01
IDEA Grant, Federal Support for Behavioral Specialist (using \$18,000 from the Grant)	.03
Curriculum Director/Coordinator	.19
New expense of Curriculum Consultant (\$10,000/1 year)	<u>-.016</u>
Total Savings	\$ .454

*That would mean a tax impact of \$0.566 instead of \$1.02.*

Mr. Chapin said that from a community standpoint, the Curriculum Director/Coordinator is a real need, and it was difficult not to include that hire. They felt, considering the budget that they had, and considering the stance of the Budget Committee, they would eliminate that hire for this year. They would, instead, work to do the same thing they did last year, which was hire an ad hoc curriculum consultant to help with the development of curriculum and implementation of curriculum.

He reminded the Budget Committee that the original number they were working with was \$1.90, after the School Board went through the numbers they were at \$1.02, and finally with the Budget Committee's request they are at \$0.566.

Mark Zankel asked Steve Chamberlin how he felt about the budget as it is now. Steve responded, he felt it was a fiscally responsible budget, based on the times. They can maintain the great things they've done, and work to improve in other areas.

Michelle Clark will get replacement pages for their presentation packet to the Budget Committee, with the approved numbers included.

Don Houston asked about football. Bill Chapin said the \$7,000 is included in the budget because the School Board felt it was important to have the ability to monitor and to have stake on the coaches and referee side of the equation. Mr. Houston voiced his concern that the need for a field in the future needs to be addressed. Mr. Traum said that at the last Select Board Meeting this was brought up and that the town government is not going to pay for a football field. Mr. Chapin said that the \$7,000 has no contingency to any sort of field in the future. If they need to raise the money, they will either do it privately or sell it to the town. Mr. Houston said it wasn't full disclosure, for the School, for the second time around, to put in an athletic program without looking at all the costs involved.

#### SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET AND WARRANT ARTICLES

John Wuellenweber motioned, Don Houston seconded, to approve the School District Budget of \$19,622,911. *The motion passed 9-1.*

Ken Traum motioned, Mark Zankel seconded, to approve Warrant Article II, which calls for the following changes in salaries and benefits at current staffing levels:

FY2017-2018 estimated decrease of \$274,861

FY2018-2019 estimated increase of \$247,124

FY2019-2020 estimated increase of \$241,093

*The motion passed 10-0.*

Mark Zankel motioned, Ken Traum seconded, to approve Warrant Article V, to raise and appropriate \$100,000, for a General Contingency Fund to meet the cost of unanticipated expenses that may arise during the year. *The motion passed 10-0.*

Deborah Norris motioned, Rich Houston seconded, to approve Warrant Article VI, to raise and appropriate up to \$50,000, to be added to the School Building Repair and Maintenance Trust Fund. *The motion passed 10-0.*

Ken Traum motioned, Amy Bogart seconded, to approve Warrant Article VII, to raise and appropriate up to \$10,000, to be added to the Replacing School District Vehicles Capital Reserve Fund. The 2012 bus is being replaced with a bus that has accommodations for 2 wheelchairs. *The motion passed 10-0.*

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE**

Mary Kusturin asked if it costs \$17,000 per student in Hopkinton, why doesn't the town just give every parent \$10,000 per child to go to a private school, and not have a public school that costs so much. Bill Chapin will recommend people who can explain it much clearer to her. She shared that she was also concerned with the cost share proportion of the health care coverage being picked up by the taxpayers.

Candi Youngman asked about the bus service. Why are the busses in town empty? How much do we spend for the busing? Mr. Chapin said it was a requirement to have public transportation provided for our students to get to school. Whether they take the bus, is up to them. She asked if the preschool program was self-sufficient. Mr. Chapin said that there was no expense, the tuition pays for the teachers. She asked why the health insurance coverage was so negotiated so generously, having no cost share of the premiums, and having the first \$1,500 of the co-pay being paid for. She says this is so disproportionate with most of the people in the working sector. Why was this deal struck? Mr. Chapin explained that they saved money compared to the old plan and that they could talk. She said that the rest of the world doesn't work this way, why should we. Mark Zankel suggested she could bring this up at the School District meeting because it was a great discussion point.

Arnold Coda said that any increase in the tax rate is going to be hard for retirees and others in town. Taxpayers must make hard choices if their income isn't increasing and their health costs are rising and on top of that the tax rate is going up.

Janet Krzyzaniak read an email that Matt Cairns forwarded to her from Molly Hardenbergh, voicing her support for the proposed Curriculum Director position.

#### **DELIBERATION AND VOTING ON THE FOUR BUDGETS TO BE PRESENTED AT THE PUBLIC HEARING IN FEBRUARY**

**SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET AND WARRANT ARTICLES** – This was presented earlier in the evening.

##### **TOWN BUDGET AND WARRANT ARTICLES**

Amy Bogart motioned, Deb Norris seconded, to approve Warrant Article 3, of the Town Operating Budget for \$6,990,096. *The motion passed 10-0.*

Mark Zankel motioned, Bill Chapin seconded, to approve Warrant Article 4, to raise and appropriate \$487,000, to be added to the Capital Reserve Funds. *The motion passed 10-0.*

Bill Chapin motioned, Amy Bogart seconded, to approve Warrant Article 5, to raise and appropriate \$49,000, to be added to the General Trust Funds. *The motion passed 10-0.*

Amy Bogart motioned, Bill Chapin seconded, to approve Warrant Article 6, to raise and appropriate \$15,000, for digitalizing town assessing and property records. *The motion passed 10-0.*

Mark Zankel motioned, Bill Chapin seconded, to approve Warrant Article 7, to raise and appropriate \$102,710, for offsetting the cost of collection and disposal of residential solid waste, with funds to come from the Pay-by-Bag Special Revenue Fund. *The motion passed 10-0.*

Amy Bogart motioned, Bill Chapin seconded, to approve Warrant Article 9, to raise and appropriate \$2,227, for offsetting operational and maintenance costs of the Slusser Senior Center with the funds coming from the Senior Center Special Reserve Fund. *The motion passed 10-0.*

#### **CONTOOCOOK VILLAGE PRECINCT BUDGET AND WARRANT ARTICLE**

Bill Chapin motioned, Amy Bogart seconded, to approve the Operating Budget of \$493,750. *The motion passed 10-0.*

Bill Chapin motioned, Ken Traum seconded, to approve the \$250,000 Warrant Article, for new construction and improvements. *The motion passed 10-0.*

#### **HOPKINTON VILLAGE PRECINCT BUDGET**

Bill Chapin motioned, Rich Houston seconded, to approve the Operating Budget of \$17,695. The increase over last year's budget was from Eversource increase, insurance increase, and they gave the Water Board a small increase. *The motion passed 10-0.*

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Bill Chapin, Jr., will get replacement pages to the Budget Committee before the February 8, 2017, meeting.

Don Houston had 2 forms for the Budget Committee to look at.

- 1) Budget Committee Estimated Tax Rate Impact – All Entities (format to be looked at only)  
This could be handed out, again this year, at the Public Meeting(s). This information summarizes all the budgets on one sheet. It gives everybody a quick snapshot as to what is in the total budget. Mark Zankel motioned, Ken Traum seconded, to approve to use this information form at the Public Meetings. *The motion passed 10-0.*
- 2) Tax Projection Forecast/Scenario Plan – This spreadsheet shows averages of expenses for all budgets out 8 years. There was concern shared that this spreadsheet should be a planning tool for the Budget Committee and not a public document, because there are too many variables regarding housing growth/trends.

#### **NEXT MEETINGS**

Wednesday, February 8, 2017, 6:30 p.m., at Hopkinton High School, Public Hearing on all Budgets.

#### **ADJOURN**

Ken Traum motioned to adjourn at 7:40 pm. Deb Norris seconded. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tammy Clay