

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD
MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
January 6, 2015
MINUTES**

Call to Order

6:30p - The meeting was called to order.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Chairman Verville asked all to rise and pledge allegiance to the Flag.

Moment of Silent Reflection

Roll Call

Present: Kevin Verville, Chairman; Jim Spillane, Vice Chair; Harriet Cady, David Carbone, Karen Cote, Carol Levesque, Fred McGarry and Brendan O'Donnell Members; Maryann Clark, School Board Rep; Andrew Robertson, Select Board Rep

Excused: Jeff Kelley, Member

Also Present: Jan Foisy, Finance Director; Richard Pelletier, Transfer Station Manager; Deerfield Community School & SAU Representatives Peter Aubrey, Kevin Barry, Deb Boisvert, Mike Davis, Jim Deely, Karen Garcia, Brian Grieve, Cindy Hanson, Shelly Tetrault, Deb Trottier, and Paul Yergeau

Approval of Minutes – December 6, 2014

Motion: Vice Chairman Spillane moves to approve the minutes as written

Second: Selectman Robertson

Vote: Yea 9, Nay 0, Abstained 1 – Motion Carries

Approval of Minutes – December 9, 2014

Motion: Vice Chairman Spillane moves to approve the minutes as written

Second: M. Clark

Vote: Yea 8, Nay 0, Abstained 2 – Motion Carries

Discussion and Review - 2015 Town Budget

Executive: IT

Motion: Selectman Robertson moves the amount of \$48,528

Second: M. Clark

Discussion: J. Foisy provided information that the line in question, line .399 was increased due to increased firewall security for the Town Server. The increase in price was for better security. Vice Chairman Spillane asked whether the purchase was bid among multiple vendors, and if the Town knew what its area Towns used. J. Foisy answered that Steve Jamele did price compare and was able to secure the item below market price. H. Cady spoke her displeasure at having seen nothing in the Select Board meeting minutes to show what comparisons were made and added that it is not typical for a Town the size of Deerfield to employ a full time IT person. Selectman Robertson pointed out that a purchase at the \$500 level would not be required by Town policy to formally go to bid.

Vote to approve the bottom line of \$48,528: Yea 9, Nay 0, Abstained 1 – Motion Carries

Transfer Station

Motion: Selectman Roberson moves the amount of \$373,422

Second: M. Clark

Second Withdrawn: M. Clark

Motion Withdrawn: Selectman Robertson

Motion: Vice Chairman Spillane moves the amount of \$368,422

Second: F. McGarry

Discussion: R. Pelletier spoke that the bulk of the Department's increased budget is attributable to increases in disposal fees. Many of the vendors have kept fees static for the past four years, but have increased for this cycle, one vendor alone has raised its tipping fee \$3,200. Other increases to the budget are a new compactor rental for \$7,800/year, a \$6,000 increase to hauling fees, and money to repave the facility. He went on to note that the recycling market is experiencing a gradual softening of rates. Steel and paper revenue are down significantly. Selectman Robertson referenced the Revenue report where \$19,217 was

generated from user fees and \$18,507 from recycling. H. Cady spoke that the 2014 actual expenditures are shown well below the amount budgeted, and with an additional \$122,000 proposed for 2015, asked what else was accounting for the increase. There was some question as to what the actual amount expended in 2014 was.

Vice Chairman Spillane asked what adjustments were being made to user disposal fees. He feels the Town charges too little, specifically on large items such as big screen televisions. R. Pelletier responded that no review has been done, but that they pay \$0.05/lbs to dispose of items such as televisions. Selectman Robertson reminded that the Select Board is responsible for setting the fees and that, generally speaking, many taxpayers comment that the prices should go down.

F. McGarry requested a breakdown by tonnage of the various recycled items. R. Pelletier agreed to pull what information was available from the NRAA for Saturday's meeting. Vice Chairman Spillane asked why the Electronic Disposal Actual Expenditures have fallen from \$3,289 to \$1,346, R. Pelletier answered that it could have been the tonnage went down, or the rate could have decreased. He reminded that the numbers presented were estimated in August using July 2014 figures.

Motion: Vice Chairman Spillane moves to reduce the Electronic Disposal line (.425) by \$1,000 to \$2,000

Second: K. Cote

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 5, Abstained 0 – Motion Fails

Vice Chairman Spillane asked why the Hazardous Waste Day actual expenditure was reported at \$0. Backup materials showed that \$6,993 was spent in 2014.

Motion: Vice Chairman Spillane moves to reduce the Hazardous Waste Line by \$500 to \$7,500

Second: K. Cote

Discussion: Selectman Robertson spoke that the Hazardous Waste days have been well received by the Community and that, were someone to be turned away due to funds running out, he would expect the comments be overwhelmingly negative. Chairman Verville agreed, adding that he would be concerned with how the materials would be alternatively disposed of by anyone turned away.

Vote: Yea 2, Nay 8, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

H. Cady asked why a cell phone was budgeted for under the Transfer Station. R. Pelletier answered that the phone at the station is restricted to local calls only, with vendors outside of Town and his cell phone being a Nashua, NH exchange, the Station has a cell in case of emergencies.

Vote to approve the bottom line of \$368,422: Yea 7, Nay 3, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Bottom Line Town Budget

Motion: Selectman Robertson moves the amount of \$3,823,434

Second: F. McGarry

Discussion: Chairman Verville's notes show that the original Town budget of \$3,830,764 was reduced \$7,300 by the Committee, bringing the new bottom line to \$3,823,464

Motion: H. Cady moves to table the vote until Saturday morning when a full reporting of current figures is available

Second: Vice Chairman Spillane

Vote: Yea 10, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Discussion and Review – 2015 Town Warrant Articles

Selectman Robertson described that the Select Board has had discussion as to whether or not to include this many items by Warrant Article. It has opted to leave everything in, leaving it up to the voters to decide what they want purchased. He advised that one more petition warrant article is expected. That article would call for \$10,000 to fund counter-efforts related to the Northern Pass. The Committee agreed to a cursory review of each Article, but to postpone formal votes until Saturday's meeting.

The first Warrant Article proposed calls for \$73,000 for construction of a metal building for storage of equipment at the Highway Department. Selectman Robertson spoke that this item, proposed by the Highway Agent, would be to improve on the way equipment is stored, thereby protecting the Town's investment. D. Carbone asked where the building would be placed and Selectman Robertson responded that it would likely go near the existing Highway shed. H. Cady asked whether new buildings for the Highway Department were already a component of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), and if so how? Selectman Robertson confirmed that improvements to the existing Highway building were a piece of the CIP, but not this particular building. F. McGarry voiced concerns the Planning Board may have with regards to the appearance and screening of the building and how it would fall in line with the Town Hall and other historic buildings at the center of Town. Vice Chairman Spillane agreed, and questioned what would happen were the Village District Zoning Amendment to also pass. F. McGarry noted that the Planning Board has withdrawn the Village District Amendment at this time and added that the Town government would not be bound by any zoning regulations.

Vice Chairman Spillane asked, if the Highway Departments location were to change, would the building be portable? The Select Board had not discussed the portability, Selectman Robertson believe the Highway Agent is approaching this as a permanent structure within the Department's facilities. At this point the Select Board has no plans for a new Highway Complex.

Motion: D. Carbone moves to table discussion of the Town Warrant Articles until Saturday

Second: Vice Chairman Spillane

Vote: Yea 10, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Discussion and Review – 2015-2016 School Budgets

M. Clark introduced the School and SAU members in attendance and presented an updated copy of the proposed 2015-2016 School Budget. The bottom line is proposed at \$12,181,828 with a default amount of \$12,141,367.

Technology (055) Budget Components – Deb Boisvert

H. Cady asked where the Electronic Software and Licensing money was used. D. Boisvert spoke that the funds are for subscription licenses to various software. IXL is a math tutoring software. Discovery Streaming is for a video streaming service. Hapara is a tool that works on top of Google allowing students and teachers to create and access documents. The trend in software has shifted away from the purchasing of licenses and toward web-based subscriptions. The Regular Education Programs line was reduced by \$5,000 and that money was moved to software licensing. Chairman Verville asked whether the software subscriptions are for school-wide use. D. Boisvert answered that it varies depending on the service; some are usage based costs while some are unlimited. She added that the majority are accessible by staff and students from home. Some of the services are specific to a class or a subject matter, for example a typing software for grades 4 and 5, all can be accessed from anywhere in the building.

F. McGarry asked about the \$2,000 increase to the Computer Repair/Parts line. D. Boisvert spoke that they are very fortunate to have an internal person able to repair Computer components. Because of this, they are working to shift to more internal support and the outside repair line has been reduced by \$250.

Chairman Verville asked about the increase in the Computer Network Replacement line, up from \$20,000 to \$30,000. D. Boisvert attributed this to three specific projects, the purchase of 80 new energy efficient monitors, the replacement of 100 computers, and \$5,000 for the purchase of a server. Currently the School is using a desktop computer to serve as its server and that machine is failing. The proposal is for a true server. She described that of 350 machines at the school 100 are deemed "essential". Those essential computers are on a 5 year replacement cycle. Chairman Verville asked, when purchasing new machines, is there a certain amount of standardization so that they are working to given specifications. D. Boisvert answered that it is a bit of both, general use machines are to specifications so that all machines are similar, but with such fast changes in technology it is hard to be consistent from year to year. The Chrome books for example cost has been halved in recent years. Generally, in making purchases, they will try to get multiple copies of the same model.

Chairman Verville asked about the increase in the School Administrative Services New Computer Equipment line from \$1 to \$3,500. D. Boisvert answered that the \$3,500 is for an Archive Device. The current machine retains backups only two months in arrears, causing problems in the summer months of June-September. Chairman Verville asked whether all backups were retained on site, D. Boisvert answered yes, and Chairman Verville suggested they consider an alternate off site location in case of a catastrophe at the School. It was suggested perhaps the School and SAU could serve as counter remote sites for one another. Vice Chairman Spillane suggested that subscription based backup services be explored as well. D. Boisvert agreed to look into the suggestions.

Maintenance Budgets – Mike Davis

M. Clark spoke that the changes to the Salaries line in this area were due to an extended absence during the 2013-2014 school year. The number of Modular Units has been reduced by one. H. Cady asked what the remaining two modular buildings were being used for, P. Yergeau answered that one houses support staff, tutoring and special education offices, while the other has two 5th grad classes.

F. McGarry noted the significant increase to the Telephone line and D. Boisvert responded that this was due to a change in the internet speed contract. The School had previously operated under a Metrocast Business Service with 30/5 download/upload speeds, partway through the year they changed to a FairPoint service with 30/30 speeds, but with so many online subscription services, bandwidth usage was becoming a real struggle. The School Board has voted to go through FairPoint for a two year contract with 100/100 upload/download speeds at a cost of \$20,124. Chairman Verville asked Ms. Boisvert to elaborate on how the School is using Google, as he understands it is far more than a search engine. D. Boisvert spoke that Microsoft Office is very expensive to purchase and that the most recent version on the School's machines is from 2010. As an alternative, Google provides a free environment to School where presentation, drawing, spreadsheet and word processing tools can be utilized. All students K-8 have a Google account. With the 30/30 download/upload speeds teachers were unable to conduct a class where all students were working in Google at once, but that is now possible. H. Cady noted that the School received a MetroCast service for free and asked how that came short in meeting the Schools needs. D. Boisvert answered that the free offer was for a "Municipal Speed" internet that was

slower than any product MetroCast sells to the general public. She added that in making the move they did look at Bayring and other various vendors.

Chairman Verville asked what costs in the Technology budget were directly associated with implementation of the Common Core standards. D. Boisvert responded that all expenses seen in the budget would be seen whether the School was using the Common Core standard or not. She indicated that monies are used for the Common Core testing, but that the budget has not changed because of the standard.

H. Cady noted that Electric costs are rising, but that the School has not budgeted for additional money in that line. P. Aubrey responded that the School is locked into a five year rate with a third party. It was not immediately known why the line was overspent this year, but he suspected it may have been related to the filing of the generator.

M. Davis presented an overview of the remaining Maintenance budget. He spoke that supplies usage is the hardest figure to pin down, with \$18,000 budgeted last year he currently has only \$4,000 remaining with half of the school year still to come. He maintains tight controls on inventory and usage and has looked closely at performance versus price for the chemicals they use. An increase from \$1,000 to \$4,200 is proposed in the New Equipment line. M. Davis would like to purchase three refrigerated water sources. He spoke that most students now carry their own water bottles. As a result, he has looked into purchasing water cooler/filler units from ELKAY. He recommends the three units be placed at the gymnasium, cafeteria hallway and at the rear of the second floor. \$3,200 would cover the purchase and installation of three units.

Additional funds are proposed for Equipment Replacement. M. Davis indicated that the equipment is aging. He is looking to purchase an upright bagless vacuum as well as new Walk Off mats to be placed at each entrance of the building. Chairman Verville asked what the life expectancy for a mat was, M. Davis answered that all of the mats presently on site have been there since before he came on. \$5,900 would be the cost for new continuous 12 foot mats at each entry to the building. It was noted that the improved mats would cut down on sand tracked into the building, thus preserving the tile floors and cutting down on chemicals required to address any damage done by the sand.

Improvements made over the past year to the facilities included refurbishment of the sinks, faucets and showerheads and installing a new commercial double sink in the Art room. The Maintenance team is beginning to replace the classroom blinds at a cost of \$106 per window.

Vice Chairman Spillane asked where the bulk of the 33% increase to the Grounds Maintenance line came from. M. Clark will get clarity on this area for Saturday.

H. Cady asked whether the Town provided snow plowing to the School and did the School pay for that service. M. Davis answered yes, and that that line of the budget is unchanged. Selectman Robertson spoke that there should be an offsetting revenue line in the Town's budget. H. Cady asked whether the School received any money from the \$53 Million Health Trust settlement. P. Aubrey will re-send that information to Ms. Cady's email. H. Cady asked that the number of students at each school in the SAU be provided. She will be asking the State Legislature to change the law defining how those payments are calculated and would like that figure to support her data. She asked that the average number of students at each school in the district be provided.

Athletic Budgets – Cindy Hanson

Athletic Director Cindy Hanson described the proposed changes to the Co-Curricular Salaries and Co-Curricular Officials. She spoke that no changes have been made in this area for several years. The intent is to double the Athletic Director position so that the 15 hours of after school time can be split between two employees. Currently Coaching Stipends are \$900/season for head coaches and \$450/season for assistants. The goal is to bring those amounts in line with the surrounding communities at \$1,200/season for head coaches and \$700/season for assistants. Selectman Robertson described that most coaches are "patched" in their respective field, a certification process that involves time and spending of personal funds. C. Hanson added that all are CPR and First Aid certified.

F. McGarry asked how the Cross Country team did at the National Competition, C. Hanson shared that Deerfield ranked 4th in the Nation. The Cross Country team has excelled student participation and is made up of grades 5 through 8. She noted that \$200 has been added to the budget for a Cross Country Race and Timing official.

M. Clark pointed out that the salaries line includes \$5,000 for an After School Program initiative that Mr. St. Germain is spearheading. The plan is to launch various After School programs including cooking, drama, Spanish, and other items of community interest and the School Board fully supports the effort.

Chairman Verville asked about the percentage of the student body that participates in Athletic programs and asked that, if Ms. Hanson believes participation is up dramatically, that those figures be presented. He voiced his support for the various outdoors programs the School sponsors, including ice fishing, and feels they are a great asset to the community.

Special Education – Karen Garcia & Deb Trottier

M. Clark reviewed the highlights of the Special Education portion of the budget. The decrease shown in the Summer Services line has shifted to the Summer Tuition line. There was a \$26,000 reduction in Contracted Services. F. McGarry asked what had changed with Contracted Services and K. Garcia answered that the decrease is due to a reduction in students. B. O'Donnell asked why the New Equipment and Fixtures line was showing an increase from \$1,000 to \$2,775, D. Trottier answered that the cost was specific to an individual students needs.

Looking ahead, Vice Chairman Spillane asked that the School be prepared to discuss its justification for having two Guidance Counselors on staff for a student body of less than 500 at Saturday's meeting. Chairman Verville noted that he has forwarded questions relating to Common Core and Smarter Balance to Ms. Clark and is hoping to have a discussion surrounding those areas on Saturday as well. He feels there is a large amount of misinformation in the community regarding the implementation costs of Common Core and Smarter Balance in the School. He feels that residents have the right to know what such significant changes to the assessment structure are costing, i.e. professional development costs associated with the new standards. M. Clark responded that the School has always operated according to a constantly evolving set of standards and that shifting the way it approaches things may not result in new expenses. If there are identifiable costs, she confirmed that the School will provide that data, but she cautioned that there may not be. She added that it would be useful if Chairman Verville could target his questions to specific line items within the budget. Chairman Verville offered thanks, noting that engaging in the debate is healthy so that going forward the community can have confidence in its approach to education.

Discussion and Review – 2015 School Warrant Articles

M. Clark reviewed the expected 2015-2016 School Warrant Articles. Articles include a 2-year collective bargaining agreement between the School and its Para-Professionals, money for the Playground Expendable Trust Fund, an addition to the Facility Paving Plan, an addition to the Technology Expendable Trust fund, and a petition article with no funds attached. Vice Chairman Spillane requested that the tax impact of each Article be calculated and displayed as is done with the Town items. P. Aubrey responded that is not recommended by the DRA, but they will work to pull the figures.

Old Business None

New Business

Selectman Robertson asked when the notice for the Public hearing was posted, Chairman Verville answered that it would run in the January 7th Concord Monitor. Selectman Robertson clarified that the posting needs to be a full seven days in advance and the January 13th meeting would therefore be illegal. Chairman Verville will correct the dates and re-publish.

Citizens Comments None

Adjourn:

Motion: M. Clark moves to adjourn the meeting of January 6, 2015

Second: Selectman Robertson

All in Favor – Motion Carries – Meeting Adjourned @ 9:28p

Next Meeting Saturday, January 10th @ 9:00a

The Minutes were Recorded, Transcribed and Respectfully Submitted by Katie Libby.
Pending Approval by the Municipal Budget Committee