

DUNBARTON SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Dunbarton, NH 03046

Dunbarton School Board Meeting  
November 15, 2011 – 6:30pm

Board members present:  
Rene Ouellet  
Debra Foster  
Deborah Trottier  
Carl Metzger

Administration present:  
Stacy Buckley, Superintendent (arrived @ 7:09pm)  
Carol Thibaudeau, Principal

**Call to Order**

Rene Ouellet called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm and Carol Thibaudeau led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. AREA Agreement Discussion**

Mr. Ouellet asked Mrs. Foster for a report of the recent committee meeting. Mrs. Foster stated that the Curriculum Committee had a productive meeting on November 14<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Foster explained that the committee started comparisons between the Goffstown and Bow schools. Tasks were divided among the members who will report back at the November 30<sup>th</sup> meeting, to be held at 7 pm. At that point, the committee members will populate a spreadsheet of the comparison. Mr. Ouellet asked that the spreadsheet be distributed to the Board members before the December meeting. Mrs. Foster then explained that there were some questions by some committee members of how to determine and compare the two (2) schools for students who are middle of the road students who need motivation. Mr. Ouellet suggested that we reach out to the Superintendents for their feedback.

Mr. Metzger reported that he scheduled a joint board meeting with Goffstown on November 28<sup>th</sup> starting at 6:00pm. The tour will start at Mountain View Middle School and continue on to Goffstown High School.

Mr. Ouellet stated that the Board is trying to capture a sense of costs and a way to compare the costs between Bow and Goffstown. He mentioned that the Board has not addressed bussing. Mr. Metzger questioned where the calculation begins. Mrs. Buckley explained that it begins where the bus is, which is the reason why we try to have Dunbarton residents as the bus drivers for Dunbarton students. Mr. Metzger will contact the Goffstown Truck Center and ask for an estimate of what the difference would be if the students are bussed to Bow. Mrs. Trottier stated that we need to find out if the times of the middle school and high school are staggered because it will make a difference in bussing.

Mr. Labore believes that Bow owns its own buses and that our discussions with Bow should include bussing. Mr. Ouellet stated that it would be worthwhile to use Goffstown Truck Center. Mr. Labore explained that we are already paying a bit more. He doesn't expect a huge change

with the miles on the road. Mrs. Trottier stated that if you have middle school starting at the same time, then it could increase our bussing costs for transporting kids at the same time.

Mr. Ouellet stated that Jeff Trexler is using our budget template from the current AREA Agreement and has been working with Bow to develop a tuition number. Carl Metzger mentioned the complexity of the tuition.

Mrs. Foster stated that it is important for all board members to read the surveys. Mrs. Trottier agreed that it is different to read the surveys rather than just a summary.

Mrs. Foster stated that a question keeps coming up what the Warrant Article will be. She asked if it would be worthwhile to have the lawyer come in and speak. Mr. Ouellet stated that the cost to meet with him for 1½ hours was approx. \$2,000.00.

Mr. Ouellet stated that we need more information before making a decision. Mr. Metzger asked about comparing per pupil costs as defined by the NHDOE to make a rough comparison. Mrs. Buckley stated that that would be the minimum; that is what the taxpayer pays for a child. It includes everything but transportation and bonds. Mr. Ouellet stated that we can't expect that number to be accurate. Mrs. Buckley said there are so many variables. Mr. Ouellet stated that we have to get Bow to give us a number.

### **Public Comment**

Brian Nault asked about proposed changes. He suggested an additional amendment be included in the negotiated AREA Agreement which states that all financial obligations end at the end of the 10 year contract. It would be an agreement ahead of time.

Jarrett Duncan made a suggestion to save on Attorney's fees. The board could draft some Warrant Articles and have the attorney review the Articles. Jarrett questioned if the Board needs to have a public hearing to draft the articles.

### **B. Proposed Budget Discussion**

Mr. Metzger asked Mrs. Thibaudeau for clarification on the Special Ed account for Mountain View Middle School; listed on page 73. Mrs. Thibaudeau stated that the numbers are correct but they need the costs to figure out why the numbers aren't right. Mr. Metzger stated that you would have expected the number to double instead of triple. Mrs. Thibaudeau will seek clarification from Melissa Romein and report back to the Board. Mrs. Thibaudeau explained that she doesn't have an exact total because there is a Monitor on the bus and they don't know if they will go to a small bus with no monitor.

Mr. Metzger commented that he is surprised that the budget is up approximately \$216,000.00. He asked if it is time to consolidate some of the smaller classes. He stated that next year both Grade 2 classrooms will only have 11 students. Mrs. Thibaudeau stated that as of November 1<sup>st</sup>, there are 23 students in a potential Grade 2 and a potential 23 students in Grade 4. Mrs. Buckley stated that the question is if 4 students move into town and into one of those grades, then the count is 27 students. Mr. Metzger stated that the cost of 2 teachers is approximately \$140,000.00 - \$150,000.00, which includes salaries and benefits. Mrs. Trottier asked about having an aide assigned to the classrooms. Mrs. Thibaudeau explained that most aides are

assigned to specific students. Mr. Ouellet stated that research shows that having an aide in the classroom doesn't change performance much. It is counter-intuitive. Mrs. Foster stated that 20 years ago there was only 1 class per grade. Mrs. Trottier stated that if you cut a teacher but then have to pay an aide then you have that salary to pay.

Mrs. Buckley mentioned some of the reasons for the increased budget are out of our control. The cost of oil went up, student services went up \$34,000.00, transportation increased \$50,000.00 and Special Ed went up \$44,000.00. Also there is the added expense of the materials for the Math program.

Mrs. Trottier stated that she doesn't want to see Regular Ed cut. Mrs. Foster stated that she doesn't see anything extra in the budget. There are no major maintenance projects; just maintaining this school and accommodating the increase of fuel and things out of our control. The only place we can control this budget is what is here in the elementary school. Mrs. Trottier stated that even with drastic changes, we can't trim \$316,000.00 to have a flat budget.

Upon request, Mrs. Thibaudeau gave the Board members a brochure on the new preschool, Strong Beginnings.

On Page 26 item 2150, Mr. Ouellet asked about the change from employee to contracted service provider. Mrs. Buckley explained that we are contracting for less days.

Mrs. Buckley explained the Staff incentive listed on page 52 – it is the salary pool for Administrative.

Mr. Labore stated that the 27 line is for telephone calls for substitute calling.

Mr. Ouellet stated that the current year is modified down and based on Goffstown's voted budget on March 2011. It won't be final until next year. The figure on page 68 for \$10,962 for the middle school is from Mrs. Buckley's budget. \$10,610 is the current projected budget. Mrs. Buckley stated that they will look to see if it can be adjusted. They will have a better number for the next meeting. On the high school on page 74, the projection for this year is \$11,311.00 but that could be adjusted. Mr. Ouellet stated the actual number goes down but where we get hurt is having more kids.

Mr. Ouellet requested that the budget be emailed to the board members in an Excel format. He also asked for the date when Goffstown became SB2.

Mrs. Foster questioned whether the Board should tap into the Special Ed Trust Fund. She also stated that we would not want to drain it down to nothing. She questioned at what point do we tap into it? Mr. Ouellet stated that we would be borrowing forward. Mrs. Buckley will pull all the Special Ed costs together.

Mr. Ouellet reported on the leg work Jeff Trexler has been doing regarding the rental charge. Mr. Ouellet explained that when they met at the AREA Agreement meeting they asked for the annual accounting for the rental charge. In addition, it would be helpful to know how the appraisal number was reached. Does the number include building and contents? Mr. Ouellet

questions how it is being computed this year. He asked Mr. Labore if they are using the insurance appraisal again.

Mr. Labore will get a copy of the appraisal to the Board. American Appraisal did the appraisal. Mr. Labore explained that the number includes contents. He stated that he can furnish the data and answer any questions. Mr. Labore further explained that the appraisals are done every 5 years and adjusted annually. It will be appraised again in the summer of 2012. Mr. Ouellet voiced a concern about a disconnect. Mr. Labore will go through the files to get the appraisal.

Mr. Metzger questioned how to get rid of the contents piece. Rene stated that we will take it one step at a time.

Mrs. Thibaudeau handed each board member her “wish list” for additional budget items for the school board’s consideration for the 2012 – 2103 school year. The list is in the order of need.

- Refurbish Boys/Girls bathrooms in main building cost unknown
- Paint outside entry ceilings \$1,200.00 estimate
- Replace kitchen ceiling \$5,000.00 estimate
- Replace information sign in front of school \$10,000.00 estimate
- Replace old emergency exit signs \$1,200.00 estimate

Mrs. Thibaudeau further explained:

- The outside entry ceiling under the cafeteria entrance needs to be primed and painted. It is a very high ceiling.
- The kitchen ceiling has plastic over it.
- The information sign in front of the school is peeling and flaking. Mrs. Thibaudeau mentioned that the PTO might be interested in partnering in the funding. Mrs. Trottier will contact Shelly Westenberg to discuss further
- The old emergency exit signs need to be replaced but she doesn’t know if that is part of the energy plan.
- Mrs. Foster asked what needs to be done to refurbish the bathrooms. Mrs. Thibaudeau explained that it would include replacing all the sinks and commodes. Mr. Metzger will speak with CIC. Mr. Metzger also stated that this item could be a warrant article. Mr. Labore stated that there is \$30,000.00 in the capital improvements fund.

Mr. Metzger stated that by doing it piecemeal, it is a maintenance item. Mrs. Trottier stated that the longer you defer maintenance, than the more it becomes a larger project.

Mrs. Buckley will see if there is a similar program in Merrimack County to have prisoners come in and paint. Mrs. Foster stated that we could have them come in during the summer months.

Mrs. Foster stated that last year during inspection, the ceiling didn’t come up. Mrs. Foster also stated that since it is in the Community Center Kitchen, as the liaison, she will check with the Selectmen.

Mrs. Buckley stated that the Dunbarton only portion of the budget is \$150,000.00 over last year. The oil went up \$35,000.00; the rest is all contract.

Mrs. Thibaudeau explained that the medicine cabinet was budgeted in 2 years. Last year we bought the top for the medicine cabinet. This year we budgeted for the bottom cabinet. Mrs. Thibaudeau also explained that the Power scrubber is for cleaning the tile floors. Mrs. Foster asked if it would be cost effective to have someone come in to clean the tile floors rather than purchase a scrubber. Mrs. Thibaudeau explained that we would do it 3 times a year instead of once a year. Mr. Ouellet stated that in bigger schools the floors are done every day.

Mr. Ouellet stated the idea of folding 2 classes into one is big. His inclination is to study this over the next couple of weeks and come to a decision at the December meeting. Mrs. Foster stated that it has a potential ripple effect for several years. Mrs. Buckley stated that you would eventually have to add those teachers back in the budget. Mr. Ouellet commented that it is a destabilizing approach to the curriculum. Mrs. Foster stated that she has heard that people want to have a steady tax rate. If you have to add teachers, then the tax rate would go up. Mr. Metzger stated that for 4<sup>th</sup> grade you can go up to 30 students. Stacy stated that in Goffstown there are 26, 27 in a class and it is a lot of kids. In Dunbarton, you have to think of equity of a teacher who has 13 kids in a class and another teacher who has 25 kids. Mrs. Trottier questioned if you're teaching to 27 kids, are the kids getting the same level of education? Mrs. Buckley said it is not an easy decision. There are so many variables. Mrs. Foster stated that historically, we would potentially have 2 classes of 11 kids and it was kept at the small numbers.

Mr. Ouellet mentioned that Dunbarton has espoused a philosophy of smaller classes. It was part of the discussion in negotiating teacher contracts. There has been some savings. The grid from which we pay our teachers is lower than many other communities because teachers have accepted that in part because of the smaller classes. Mrs. Trottier stated that it is a possible savings of \$140,000.00 but you might have to add aides. The discussion of classroom sizes was tabled to the next meeting.

#### **Other Business that May Legally come Before the Meeting**

None

#### **Public Comment**

Clem Madden of Robert Rogers Road stated that the Board is doing a good job. He asked when the budget will be available.

Jarrett Duncan of Putney Road asked what the process is for what Mr. Metzger is proposing. Mr. Ouellet stated that in the past the Board had a public forum.

#### **Non-Public Session RSA 91-A:3, II**

None

#### **Adjournment**

Debra Foster made a motion to adjourn at 8:22 pm. Carl Metzger seconded the motion. ***VOTE: All in Favor. MOTION PASSED.***

Judith van Kalken  
School Board Recording Secretary