

MINUTES

**School Board Budget Work Session**

December 12, 2011 - 8:30 a.m. – Bow High School Media Center / Tutorial Room

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The meeting was called to order at 8:34 a.m.

Board members present:

June Branscom, Deb Alfano, Pansy Bloomfield, Robert Louf, and Thomas Keane

Administrators present:

Dr. Dean S. T. Cascadden, Duane Ford, Dan Ferreira, John House-Myers, Kirk Spofford, and Dr. Deb Winings

**Robert Louf motioned and Tom Keane Seconded to approve the budget work session minutes from December 6, 2011. Approved 5-0.**

Superintendent Updates:

- The BEA Unfair Labor Practice regarding evergreen issues had a pre-hearing conference last Friday, December 9, 2011. The two sides agreed to meet on December 20, 2011 for mediation of 2011 contract negotiations and to postpone the Hearing as the issue could be resolved as part of a new contract.
- BESS negotiations continue December 13, 2011 at 3:30 p.m.
- Dunbarton is moving forward with their study committee. The Board stated that a public information session should be scheduled.

Discussion

Updated spreadsheets on class sizes in the District were distributed and discussed. Limited changes in staffing are proposed.

Tom Keane advised the Board that Town issues including the water/sewer bond, library expansion, Town center project, and general budget increases may impact the bottom line for voters as far as the ability to handle budget and tax increases. There is a concern that the School District needs to work more closely with the Town on cost containment.

Duane Ford reported that there have been changes to the budget in staffing costs since the last printing. These changes represent a \$74,000.00 decrease. These staffing changes reflect the hiring of less costly employees and a projection of likely costs for retiree replacements for next year.

A long discussion was held about Language and the future direction of the District. Presently there is a 0.4 FTE reduction in Languages due to demand. The Board felt that this reduction should stand, but that the administration could be flexible on how the reductions are implemented relative to which languages might be affected. The Board would like to build more towards a K-12 Language program.

There was a lengthy discussion about Technology which has a large increase in equipment. The Board reduced the Smart Board purchase proposal from 13 units to seven saving \$28,800.00 and gave Administration leeway on where they would be placed with emphasis at the lower grades. There was also a reduction of \$10,000.00 made to the proposed computer replacement schedule with the administration given discretion on how to accomplish it.

Robert Louf asked how much it would be to restore the School-to-Career position to 0.8 FTE and it was decided not to move forward with that proposal this year.

The Board approved a budget that will be sent to the Budget Committee that has an increase of \$513,603.00 (2.13%) and a projected tax impact of \$147.00 on a \$300,000.00 house. This budget absorbs \$570,820.00 in increased costs in benefits and contracted services.

Negotiations are ongoing with both teachers (BEA) and support staff (BESS). Costs associated with the settling of those contracts would add to the overall costs discussed so far. Other than the contracts, there are no other money items for the total warrant.

Building Level administrators were dismissed at 12:40 p.m.

#### Dunbarton

The Board scheduled an informational meeting on January 18, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Bow High School auditorium regarding Bow / Dunbarton: Questions and Answers. This will be communicated to the public in newsletters and electronically. The Board Chair will give an overview of the process. Dr. Cascadden will talk about demographic and program impacts, and Duane Ford will discuss preliminary financial implications. However, it will be structured as an open forum and leave plenty of time for questions and feedback from the community.

The Board then brainstormed possible questions or concerns and discussed how answers could be obtained for them.

The Board adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

*Dr. Dean S. T. Cascadden*

Superintendent