

Budget Committee Minutes
12/09/2004

Members Present: Dick Hickok, Sue Greene, Connie Grant, Bob Brent, John O'Brien, Phyllis Corrigan, Bill Phillips, Diana Goodhue, Derek Tomlinson, Sean Murphy, Kinney O'Rourke, Don Sibson
Members Absent: none

After the pledge of allegiance, the minutes of the prior meeting were approved. (DT/SG/9-0) The Chairman reminded the membership that the working group summary sheets should be reviewed with the Department Managers prior to presentation to the BC.

Dick Hickok reviewed the SAU Administration working group summary sheet. He differentiated between the discretionary and non-discretionary items. He suggested that a similar letter be sent to the School Board as was drafted to the Selectmen. The major areas of concern by the BC were; wage increases, cost of benefits, professional development, early retirement, the Meadows property, cost per pupil, special education, change to a block schedule, and SAT scores.

John O'Brien reviewed the SAU Technology working group summary sheet. There were a few questions asked about the cost of pc's and the replacement policy. This budget is level funded.

Bob Brent reviewed the Special Education working group summary sheet. Comments from the BC were that this money is "smart money spent", and applauds to the department's staff. The Committee was reminded that losing this valuable and highly trained staff will eventually be a costly situation.

Sean Murphy reviewed the Elementary School working group summary sheet. Most of the areas of increase had to do with maintenance and upkeep of the

building.

Scott Isabelle was asked to explain the food service fund. He explained that it works like an enterprise fund and is in good shape at this point. When asked if they could do without the \$8000 this year, Scott suggested they might be able to get by this year, but they need the \$1 on this line item in the event that a transfer would have to be made.

The Committee reviewed the edited letter to the Selectmen. There was general agreement with the content of the letter. There was some discussion on the subject of merit vs. cost of living increases, the Town's pay scale, health insurance, and the tax rate being too high. Kinney O'Rourke, Selectmen's Representative, explained several areas where significant efforts have been made during the past year to address many of these situations and assured the BC that the Selectmen continue to examine these issues.

Derek Tomlinson and Don Sibson asked Kinney about the Lakes Business Park.

They wanted to know the status and if there are financial reports prepared.

The Committee reviewed a letter from Chief Mooney regarding the staffing of Paramedics. A motion was made to reduce the program to cover just one paramedic this year. (SG/BB/4-5 failed)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50. The next meeting is 12/16 at 6:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Shackett, Finance Director