

Board Member Attendees: Scott Burns, Susan Hallett-Cook, Tim Dow, Deborah Brown, Lisa Tremblay, Anya Twarog, Paul Doucette, Jeff Savary

Absent Board Member: Robin Gargano,

Administration: Daniel LeGallo – Superintendent; Amanda Bergquist – Business Administrator; Kevin Barbour – FMS Principal; Jack Finley – FMS Assistant Principal; Carrie Charette – FHS Principal; Mike Zmuda – FHS Assistant Principal; Paul Borsh – Special Education Director; Jule Finley – Curriculum Director; Mike Hoyt – PSS Principal; Ralph Downes – Director of Buildings and Grounds; Robyn Dunlap – Director of Technology; Brenda Petelle – Food Service Director

Others: Franklin Residents/Teachers (12 people), Cathy Viau (School Board Clerk)

Call to Order by Tim Dow, Chairperson, at 6:05 PM.

Salute to the Flag

Tim Dow, Franklin School Board Chairperson, began explaining to the public what has been going on with the budget up to this point in time between Administration, Superintendent, Business Administrator, School Board and Finance Committee.

Originally budget was presented to the Superintendent by the Administrators. Between Administration and the Superintendent reviewing the budget, suggested reductions of over \$400,000 were made. The Finance Committee then reviewed the budget and made their suggested reductions to be presented this evening to the entire board. With that being said, in order to even obtain a level funded budget to last year there is still a need of over \$262,380 needs to be reduced. This still leaves a possible shortfall over revenues of \$1.4 million.

Deborah Brown, Franklin Finance Committee Chairperson, presented a handout with a couple of suggestions that the committee agreed upon. There were three areas that they suggested:

- Reduction in Athletics of 6% equaling \$12,000
- Reduction in Legal by 50% equaling \$15,000
- Elimination of the Grant Manager 20-hour per week position in the amount of \$30,000. Also, an administrative assistant position was reduced by 10-hour and it was proposed to bring that back (five for Athletics and five for Buildings and Grounds). Therefor the net savings is a proposal of \$15,000-20,000)
- The total for this proposed reduction is \$42,000.
- The entire board agreed to forgo their stipends totaling \$2,700.
- The grand savings is \$44,700

Other topics discussed were:

- Since the Franklin/SAU 18 will be a single district SAU there may be some functions such as Technology that may be reallocated to the Franklin School District line rather than SAU. As

there may be duplicate named lines. Therefore the funds would be combined to one line. There may be a need to move positions into the Franklin lines for more accurate reporting.

- It was mentioned to break out the business service functions.
- Discussion was held regarding how errors if any should occur may be handled and what may cause them in budgeting. The superintendent oversees the budget and therefore it is not the duty of the board to micromanage.
- Discussion was held regarding the Grant Manager position and the duties assigned as well as how these may be reallocated to other administration and staff for next year.
- The district is in dire need of revenues to support the budget.
- The desire is to not eliminate teacher positions as they are essential in the students' education.
- In other districts the principal, IT Director, Special Ed Director, etc. are required to find and work on grants.
- The IT Director shared that her position a huge undertaking and she shared her concerns regarding no replacement budget for technology, warranties expiring, etc.
- After a long discussion it was decided that there are people in the district such as principals that may be able to do grants as well as the Curriculum Director.
- There is a concrete plan in place for this change.
- The board has spoken with the attorney about the reduction to the legal line and they too felt comfortable with decision. It was high previously due to the withdrawal.

MOTION: Paul Doucette moved to accept the reduction of \$42,000 as proposed on the Memorandum of March 7, 2017 as written by Deborah Brown and discussed in the Finance Committee Meeting, seconded by Scott Burns.

Motion Passes – 6 in Favor and 2 Opposed (Jeff Savary and Susan Hallett-Cook)

Discussion was held regarding eliminating a two custodial positions, one from the high school and one that is split between the middle school and elementary school.

Ralph Downes, the Director of Buildings and Grounds, gave a presentation on why those positions should not be eliminated. Some of the points included the number of square feet each custodian is already required to do in a certain period of time, emails are still received from staff that sometimes things are not able to be done if someone is out or an extra event occurs. The Director and Maintenance person already fill in and help out where ever needed. If these are cut, you risk things going downhill fast in the schools. It is also very hard to find subs for this type of work. There is so much that goes on in each school both during the day and evening and they are required to set up for and break down for these events.

Brenda Petelle from Food Service stated that since this administration and maintenance team has been in place the food service repair cost has gone down dramatically as both Ralph Downes and Gil Manning pitch in to help whenever possible saving the district lots of money. They can't do refrigeration at this point but certainly handle other safety concerns, etc.

It was decided to keep these positions.

A board member suggested that the school board submit to the City Council the budget that is needed by the school and happens.

Lisa Tremblay arrived at 6:50 PM.

Discussion was held regarding Food Service. It was proposed to cut \$29,657.55. Brenda Petelle gave a packet to the entire board and administration regarding her counter proposal for a reduction of \$14,771.05. Mrs. Petelle stated that they had a lot of reductions to their budget last year. There is a high percentage of free and reduced lunch students. When the state came in to inspect the kitchens, they are immaculate, they were the only district to receive 100%. All of the kitchen staff except for two are Franklin tax payers. Mrs. Petelle did have a conversation with the head cooks of each school before making this decision. They are supplying the charter school with lunches but this is a source of revenue. Discussion was held regarding the decline in the amount of revenue coming in to food service as food guidelines have changed and other programs were eliminated such as Casey Family with affected the revenues tremendously. An explanation was given regarding USDA reimbursement. There have been several large expenses over the last few years. Discussion was held regarding governmental foods and the low cost.

MOTION: Paul Doucette moved to reduce the Food Service budget by \$15,896.05 as proposed by Brenda Petelle, Food Service Director, seconded by Jeff Savary.

Motion Carried – Unanimous

Discussion was held regarding the elimination of one paraprofessional from each school. It was determined that these positions are IEP driven and legally cannot eliminate without possibly facing legal ramifications. There are child specific and group's paraprofessionals within the district.

FHS – Library Assistant Position - \$7,847.47. After discussion it was decided that this position could be cut and other arrangements could be made to accommodate the students.

MOTION: Deborah Brown moved to eliminate the FHS Library Assistant Position in the approximate amount of \$7,847.47, seconded by Paul Doucette.

Motion Carried d- Unanimous

FHS Front Office Secretary has given her notice. This position (including salary and benefits) totals \$30,431.78. This position is part-time/school year and is proposed to be eliminated. The others are full-time year round. The high school has two other secretaries and duties will be reallocated to those secretaries.

MOTION: Paul Doucette moved to eliminate the FHS Front Office part-time school year secretarial position in the amount of \$30,431.78 as discussed, seconded by Susan Hallett-Cook.

Motion Carried – Unanimous

Jennifer Goulet apologized for her comments made at City Council. The issues and comments were geared towards City Council not the School Board. She stated that she knows the schools and the board are doing the best they can with what little the city gives to support the schools. She also stated that the schools can't do everything they need to do with that little money.

In the Superintendent's Office there is a position in the amount of \$10,000 for summer help that was used to help with get audits caught up and working in the basement to separate files.

MOTION: Deborah Brown moved to eliminate the SAU Office Summer help position in the amount of \$10,000, seconded by Scott Burns.

Motion Carried – Unanimous

Discussion was held regarding tutoring. After in-depth discussion it was decided that it would not be feasible to reduce these account lines.

Discussion was held regarding the substitute lines. After further discussion it was decided that these would not be lines to cut as there is no way to predict medical or other leaves.

Discussion was held regarding healthcare for administration. There is not enough evidence support this change until further investigation of the overall effect to the rates and there continues to be negotiations with the Support and Custodial Staff.

A break was taken between 7:29 PM and 7:47 PM

The above requests for reductions were mainly suggestions from Tim Dow and Deborah Brown as topics of discussion. The total of reductions so far between the two of them is approximately \$106,175.

An explanation of account 10-2152-3 was given and it is due to increased need. Paul Borsh is to look into this as the year to date expended amount is currently low and will let the board know for the next meeting. The same discussion was held regarding physical therapy. All outside schools are now putting this cost back onto the districts yet there is no decrease in cost to send them there.

Discussion was held regarding Other Professional Services on the bottom of page 8. The question was asked what these services are. This includes Easter Seals, services that help children through age 21 required by law, life skills, etc.

Discussion was held regarding transportation for Special Education on page 36. This is a contract with the Provider for three years as a set amount.

Discussion was held regarding Fuel Services. It was asked if this is a contract or by usage? Heating is a contract per unit cost. The energy audit may assist with this issue. The energy audit will be consist of heating, lighting, etc.

Is was asked if anyone else was retiring whose position may be eliminated.

Discussion was held regarding the athletic lines and why many of them were overspent.

Paul Doucette inquired by the schools are paying for water and sewer to the city. The answer from the city is that they get charged too.

The Summer Education line is for the Alternative Program at the Church.

There is no longer a \$4,000 charge for rent.

Discussion will occur next week regarding where the Athletic Director plans to make his reductions. Enrollment has decreased in some sports. Denise Sharlow, Grants' Manager, did a survey inquiring about students' interest.

Discussion was held regarding why we do not offer robotics in an after school program. Scott Burns stated that he hopes that the Youth Center will offer this program.

There may be access in Winnisquam thru STEAM.

Discussion was held regarding the need for another behavioral specialist at the PSS. There is only one principal and an assistant principal for 5 hours per week. Three out of Five teachers are dealing with behavioral issues. There is only one guidance and one social worker at PSS.

Discussion was held regarding what the booster clubs help with. It was stated that they cover equipment that is not in the budget, championship items and non-budgeted items.

Discussion was held regarding Department of Education minimum requirements for guidance which is 1 guidance counselor per 300 for Middle and High School and 1 per 500. Franklin is holds one of the highest rates of trauma. Discussion was held regarding job descriptions and what each ones role is. Each level is very different. There are many mental health issue and guidance needs to be readily accessible. As a matter of fact, the high school would like another social worker. Other matters handled through guidance are processing 504s, DCYF calls, trauma, homelessness, etc. The number of students even in the elementary level that go to Riverbend one day per week has increased tenfold. There is a waiting list of two months.

Discussion was held regarding the meaning of PPT – Pupil Personnel Team or Team Leader.

The City has stated that they are only receiving \$6 million in taxes. Many houses have and are currently in foreclosure. It was asked that the board propose a 50/50 split of tax/revenue to be considered by City Council.

Next year's decrease in stabilization alone is \$176,000 for next year.

Discussion was held regarding HB525.

It was stated that \$1.4 million equals to 25 teachers.

Winnisquam is already overcrowded and could not take on an entire district.

The Board and Administration both agreed that there is no joy in cutting. They also said that everyone needs to come out and support and defend education. It is up to the board to present the back up documentation to support the budget. These include information regarding mandated items, mandated services, discretionary services, area salaries, service related enrollments, special education related enrollments, etc.

There may or may not be a fund balance at the end of this year. The State cut the budget given to Franklin by \$115,000 after a budget had already been passed.

Discussion was held regarding all of the revenues.

Discussion was held regarding the possibility of a bond for the roof or a city bond. There are projects that need to be done year after year.

Discussion was held regarding the breaking of the tax cap. Which could be an increase of 10% of the taxes.

Many homes are under tax liens.

There is a meeting in Concord on March 13th at 3:00 PM to talk about Finance.

Everyone needs to look outside the box. But in the end the school district is only going to get what the city is willing to give. The board is not going to ask the administration to cut any more. The board needs to look outside the box.

The Commission of Education will be coming to Franklin to visit and tour for the day on March 14th along with a couple of representatives. From one pm to two p there will be a forum for city council and school board members at the SAU.

Scott Burns thanked Tim Dow and Deborah Brown for all that they have done. He also thanked all administration and staff for all that they do. This has been a good fact finding information gathering.

Soon there will be a public forum put on by the board to educate the public/community about the budget and budget process, etc. This will occur at the beginning of May.

The total reduced this evening is \$162,000.

Adjournment

MOTION: Paul Doucette moved to adjourn at 8:48 PM, seconded by Anya Twarog.

Motion Carried - Unanimous