**Budget Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, January 21, 2015 Town Hall 6:30pm**

**Acting Chair, Gail Klanchesser called the meeting to order at 6:34pm.**

**Present**: Acting Chair, Gail Klanchesser, Gail Pare, Michael Marconi, Leila Richardson, Kathy Latchaw, Brandon Arsenault, and School Representative, David Mueller (Sandra Sweeney, Alan Wilson and the Selectmen’s rep. were absent). Also present was Salvatore Petralia, SAU 50 Superintendent, Jim Katkin, SAU Business Administrator, Deirdre Link, School Board Chair, Peter Latchaw, School Principal and Martha Roy, Town Administrator.

**Minutes Review**: **G. Pare moved to defer minutes review until the end of the meeting. This was seconded by M. Marconi with all in favor.**

**School District Budget Request of $2,152,146: G. Pare moved to tentatively recommend $2,152,146 , K. Latchaw seconded. Motion passed 6-0-1.** (D. Mueller abstained) Before the vote, J. Katkin discussed the budget and education program. The proposed budget shows a proposed increase of $.21 on the tax rate. This is primarily due to Special Education increases.

Cost per student was discussed as well as enrollment and the increase in out of district tuitions for Portsmouth Middle and High Schools.

J. Katkin reviewed three warrant articles proposed. In addition to the operating budget warrant article the School is requesting a discontinuance of the Building Addition Capital Reserve Fund warrant article (approximately $23,750.) and a deficit appropriation warrant article ($40,000). These will help cover unanticipated special education costs.

Revenues and enrollment projections were reviewed with the Committee.

Various Committee members asked about new textbooks for students next year (not necessary due to computer literature and programs available), total number of students this year (38), comment made that all students have their own IPads and how much screen time they receive (average of 1-1.5 hours per day). Terms of the Area Agreement with Portsmouth were reviewed. Discussion was held about areas of the budget where cuts could be made that were not federally mandated.

It was suggested that the school and town combine their forces to receive the best price for generator maintenance if possible, depending on brand of generator etc. J. Katkin offered that the school uses Power Pro for generator maintenance. Color copies were charged a .051 with the copier contract in place at the school. Teacher turnover was requested and P. Latchaw reported it was eight years ago since a teacher had left employment with the school.

**Discussion of RSA 198:4-b I- 2.5% Budget Retention request**: **G. Pare moved to approve the request for emergency over expenditure of the Newington School District’s operating budget for FY 2014/2015. M. Marconi seconded the motion with all in favor**. Before the vote, J. Katkin discussed with the Budget Committee the reason to approve the over expenditure request. It was needed due to unanticipated special education tuition and related services expenditures. The source of revenue for this expenditure will come from the unassigned fund balance retainage. The retainage amount is $45,816.

The Committee reviewed the three warrant articles and G. Klanchesser reminded members that votes to recommend same were reserved for the Budget Committee Public Hearing.

**Minutes Review**: **December 17, 2014 minutes were reviewed. M. Marconi** **moved to approve the minutes of December 17, 2014. This was seconded by Gail Pare with a vote of 5-0-1.**

M. Marconi asked M. Roy to provide the Committee with a breakdown of the legal fees used by each department. Members also requested the balance in capital reserve accounts, encumbrances and warrant articles in advance of the public hearing.

**Adjournment**: **M. Marconi moved to adjourn at 8:10pm, seconded by G. Pare with all in favor.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha S. Roy

Town Administrator