

Somersworth School Board Budget Workshop

February 13, 2018

City Hall Chambers

6:00pm

1. **Call to Order-Roll Call- Pledge of Allegiance:** Austin called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. The following members were present: Don Austin, Mark Richardson, Kelly Brennan, Gerri Cannon, Maggie Larson, Matt Hanlon, Karen Hiller, Kyla Yoder and Tom McCallion
2. **Budget Discussion:** Austin stated that this is the final budget workshop before the presentation on Monday, February 19th at 6:30pm. He stated that the Budget Committee and the Board have been working hard on the 18-19 budget. The following Budget Summary was distributed.

Total Expenditure Increase Version Two	1,187,561.00
Total Loss of Revenue (including changing adequacy to 95%)	(572,916.00)
Total Net Budget Increase (including changing adequacy to 95%)	1,760,477.00
Tax Cap Increase	574,334.00
Amount over tax cap	1,186,143.00

Staff Reductions including New Staff Requests

Reduction: \$707,266

- Elimination of teaching (3) and para-educator positions (5)
- New requests include additional supports to help meet the mental health and behavioral needs of our students.
- Changes in secretary hours and numbers of contracted work days.

Technology Increases

Reduction: \$194,772

- Equipment replacement (staff laptops, projectors, student equipment)
- Infrastructure upgrades (Wireless Access Point replacement at IH, MW, and SMS)

Facilities

Reduction: \$30,000

- Maintenance lines for various projects in our schools.

Other Maintenance/Custodial/Facilities

- Asphalt Repairs District Wide **Reduction: \$15,000**
- Asbestos Removal & Floor Abatement (SHS) **Reduction: \$55,000**
- Custodial Supplies **Reduction: \$10,000**
- Equipment Repairs – CTC **Reduction: \$12,000**

Educational Program Reductions

Reduction: \$42,048

- Removal of additional program to support students.

Reductions from 2017-18

Reduction: \$100,057

- Building Cuts and Substitutes

NWEA Testing

- Removal of the NWEA testing program **Reduction: \$10,000**

Administration Professional Development

Reduction: \$10,000

- Reduction in available funding for coursework, etc.
- **TOTAL REDUCTIONS**

\$1,186,143

Lane stated that this list of reductions would look familiar from the last budget workshop but that she had combined some of the like areas of reductions. She stated that at the last budget workshop it was agreed to keep the Adequacy Aid at the 95% guaranteed amount. She stated that this had budget implications so we were tasked with creating a budget that comes in at the tax cap amount. Austin stated that this budget proposal meets the tax cap limitation and that's what we want to send to the City Manager by March 1st as required by the City Charter. He stated not to believe that this is the final number. He stated that this is a starting point and we will be showing the City Council at the joint meeting what the impacts will be. He stated that this process will continue until the City Council makes a final budget decision. He stated that we are being transparent with the numbers but they need to be aware of the actual impact on students. Hiller asked if any thought had been given to what we would put back in if the City Council asked us. Lane stated that they are looking at this as a process and right now this is what we have focused on. She stated she had met with the Building Administration Team and asked them to be thinking what they would want to bring back if they could. She stated they would be looking at \$150,000 increments. She stated that the work with them would continue so that they can be prepared. Hiller stated that she is concerned about the wireless access that was going to be paid by ERATE funds. She stated she would like that put back in. Lane stated that there is nothing on the list that she would not want to put back into the budget. She stated that there is a process that you have to go through for ERATE funds. She stated there is an application and a bidding process to make something ERATE eligible and you have to follow a timeline. She stated we will continue to move forward with this in hopes that we could put that back in. Austin stated that although we are required to present this we are not in support of it in any way. He stated that the Councilors will have just as much difficulty in preparing their budget. He stated that we have to do our share and present a budget that meets the tax cap. Hanlon stated that we have taken away from every priority area that we could. He stated that its conservative but it is pretty close to rock bottom as we can get. He stated that moving forward with long term planning we need to be proactive rather than reactive. He stated that all of the increases we had for technology have been removed. He stated the only thing we did not cut in this budget is sports which has taken hits in other years. Hiller stated that we have made cuts over the past four years but the cuts did not involve people. She stated that the State cutting money has made this worse this year. Austin stated that we are looking at revenues differently than we have in the past. He stated that we have decided to stay with the guaranteed 95% of Adequacy Aid. He stated that this should give us a firm number and we can budget according moving forward. He stated that we have made shifts on how we are building this budget. He stated that we are looking at each line item in the budget and determining what that number should be whereas in the past we have kept everything the same except perhaps three or four items. He stated that we have made a determination that that is not the best way to build a budget. He stated that if revenues come in more than projected, then we can give some money back to the City in the General Fund and then we will have a discussion with the City regarding that money. Richardson stated that each one of the board members sees things on this list they would like put back into the budget. He stated that having a list of things to put back in is a discussion we need to have. Larson asked if the Budget Committee would be keeping an eye on the revenues during the year with the chance of putting some of the items back into the budget. She stated that our students will not be able to access mental health services and technology and that is a huge impact and citizens need to know this. Austin stated that one of the things he and Lane have talked about is the committee

structure and how it works or doesn't work and that the Budget Committee will be meeting on a regular basis to do just that to see what the impacts are on the reductions and next year we can perhaps put the positions and infrastructure back into the 19-20 budget. He stated that we need to continue to monitor what is happening financially on a regular basis. Larson stated that everything on the list directly affects the students. Cannon stated that the reductions were across the board. She stated that we need to watch the incoming revenue and look at the priorities and how to apply that revenue. Hanlon stated that someone years ago had said "we don't make widgets, we make students." He stated that everything on this list effects students. He stated that we are hitting them socially and academically. He stated that the facilities are taking a hit. Hiller stated that these cuts were made thoughtfully even if they are not good. She stated that what bothers her is that we cannot do any forward thinking. She stated that everything that the Administrative Team asked for we had to say no to. She stated the mental health and behavioral services were a new added item that was needed and we had to cut that. Austin stated that this is not the final answer but it is a budget that meets the tax cap limitations which is what we need to present to the City Manager. He stated that we will continue to try to come to a final answer that will hopefully help us to fund some of these cuts that are priorities so that we can move forward. He stated that we are almost not able to do the things that we have to do. He stated that we will need to talk about statutory requirements, impacts on students and impacts on class size. He stated that we also need to keep the Council updated on this year's budget. He stated that the more we can convince them that we have our house in order the more likely they will be open to discussions. He stated that the process now will be to have a formal presentation of the budget next Monday, February 19th at 6:30, followed at 6:45 by a Public Hearing on the budget and at 7:00 a board meeting during which we will take a vote to move the budget on to the City Manager according to the City Charter. He stated that Monday evening would be an important evening with the budget process.

Adjournment: Austin closed the workshop at 6:35 pm.

Melinda Sullivan
Board Secretary

Pending Board Approval