

SOMERSWORTH SCHOOL BOARD

February 13th 2018

City Hall Chambers

7:00pm

1. **CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL - PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Austin called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Upon call of the roll the following members were present: Austin, Brennan, Richardson, Cannon, Larson, Hanlon, Hiller, Yoder and McCallion. Absent: None
2. **Comments by Visitors:** None
3. **CONSENT CALENDAR:**
 - 3.1 **Removal of items from the consent calendar:** None
 - 3.2 **Approval of Consent Calendar:** A motion made by Hanlon seconded by Yoder to approve the consent calendar as presented. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously. Approved were:
 - February 6, 2018- Minutes of the Somersworth School Board Meeting & Budget Workshop
 - January 23, 2018- Minutes from the Somersworth School Board Meeting
 - Idlehurst Newsletter-February
 - Maple Wood News-February
 - Middle School News-February
 - HS/CTC News-February
 - Family Dinner and Game Night Information
 - Enrollment-February
4. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Lane stated that on Tuesday night, February 20th Idlehurst Elementary School will be hosting a Family Game Night from 5:30-7:30. She stated that there will be food. She stated that this is a combined effort from Title One, SYC and the PTA. She stated that The National Honor Society from the high school just went on an amazing trip to Washington, DC with their advisor Scott Seeley. She stated that they did a lot the few days they were there and it was an amazing experience for them. She stated that it is a rich experience when students can see where the heart of our country is. She stated that Maple Wood is starting a Reading Buddies Program. She stated that you will have younger students reading to older students. She stated that the kids get very excited to be reading with their buddies. She stated that there is also talk about having some of the older elementary students read with some of the Middle School students. She stated that Somersworth High School is going to be hosting a Citizens Town Hall on Education. She stated that the organization that is sponsoring this is Reaching Higher New Hampshire. She stated that this is a non-partisan advocacy group that helps to inform the public of various legislation in front of the Department of Education and laws having to do with education. She stated that the House and Senate have some interesting bills right now that could impact education in New Hampshire. She stated that this information session will be held on Thursday, March 8th at 6:30 at the CTC Mulligans Grill.
5. **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**
 - 5.1 **Recognize Spelling Bee Champion: Reilly Quist-Idlehurst School-4th Grade:** Lane introduced Reilly Quist a fourth grader from Idlehurst School. She stated that she had watched about 25-30 students start in a spelling bee and go through this experience. She stated that Reilly survived 21 rounds of spelling words, standing up in front of the entire school. She stated that he won on word 183 and it took 2 ½ hours to complete. She stated that the winning word that he spelled was conundrum. She presented him with a certificate naming him Top Speller at Idlehurst School. She asked Reilly if he gets to do more spelling. Reilly stated that he is not going onto the state spelling bee because he has hockey playoffs the same day and he does not want to let his fellow team players down.
 - 5.2 **Standing Committees**
 - **Budget & Revenue:** Austin stated that they have been focusing on the Budget Proposal to present to the City Council.
 - **Building, Grounds and Transportation:** McCallion stated that they had met that afternoon. He stated they had discussed the approval of transportation. He stated they discussed the issue with the

flooring in the Culinary Department which is being taken care of. He stated that there is also an asbestos issue that we will be taking care of this year in a whole wing of the high school. He stated that instead of doing one room at a time they will try to do a bigger chunk at one time. He stated that the kitchen HVAC was discussed along with funding for its repair. He stated that we discussed Waste Management and the contracts we have with them and if we could partner with the City to save money. He stated that we have received a \$16,000 grant for security camera updates. He stated that another item we are looking at is to purchase radios that can communicate between schools. He stated that we will be trying to have more meetings so we can move forward faster with items to help staff and Andy Lucier. He stated that he hoped the City would realize that as things break down they need to be fixed.

•**Curriculum & Activities:** None

•**Policy Committee:** None

•**Joint Commission of City Council and School Board:** Austin stated that they had met just prior to this Board Meeting and that they are in the process of keeping the City Councilors up to date on the budget.

5.3 City Council Update: Marty Pepin stated that at the Public Safety Meeting there was a discussion about the monitoring system for the fire sprinklers and burglar alarms at the school and City buildings. He stated that presently this system is at the Police Station and is answered by the dispatchers there but it is going to be removed due to its age. He stated that it will not be replaced. He stated that because the dispatchers monitored the calls there was no cost to the City. He stated that the Police Chief thought it may cost the City around \$3,000 for the monitoring of the City Buildings. He stated that in the near future the school will need to find a way to monitor the sprinklers and alarm system in their buildings.

5.4 Student Representative Report: Rachel Wattimena: None

6. ACTION ITEM

6.1 Policies 2nd Reading: Hanlon stated they are looking for a 2nd Reading on these policies but he made a motion, seconded by Hiller to remove two of the policies for re-evaluation and reconsideration at a future Policy Committee Meeting, being Policy DIH Fraud Prevention and Fiscal Management and Policy KF Use of School Facilities/Community Center. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously. Hanlon made a motion, seconded by Richardson to do a 2nd Reading of the remaining policies as a block. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously. Hanlon made a motion, seconded by Richardson to do the 2nd Reading of the policies by title only. He then read the following: BEDB-Agenda Preparation and Dissemination, BEDG-Minutes, BEDG-R-Access to Minutes and Public Records Process, EBCA-Emergency Plans, EH-Data Management, GBCD-Background Investigation and Criminal Records Check, IGE-Parental Objections to Specific Course Material, IHAK-Character/Citizenship Education, IHAM-Health Education And Exemption From Instruction, IHAM-R-Health and Sex Education Exemption: Opt-Out Form, ILD-Non-Educational Questionnaires, Surveys, and Research, IHCD-Advanced College Placement, IMDA-Patriotic Exercises, JICFA-Hazing, JICD-Student Conduct, Discipline and Due Process, JLF-Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect VOTE: motion passed, unanimously.

7. OLD BUSINESS

7.1 Vision 20/20 Committee: Yoder stated that they had had their first meeting on Monday, February 12 and are reorganizing and deciding what direction to move in.

7.2 Budget: Austin stated that they are diligently putting together a budget proposal for the 18-19 school year. He stated that the Budget Committee and Board have been holding many workshops to put this budget together that will meet the tax cap limitations of the City of Somersworth. He stated that we are pretty much at the level we need to be in order to present it to the City Manager. He stated that our current operating budget that has been approved is about 25.7 million dollars. He stated that we asked Building Administrators during the process what they thought that they needed and we also took a look at our revenue projecting process and made some philosophical changes in the way we view our revenues based on some of the issues we ran into this past year. He stated that we found that the needed initial increase was about 1,187,561.00.

He stated that with a loss of revenue from this current year of \$573,000 and a tax cap allowance of \$574,000, which pretty much wash each other out, we needed to reduce the budget to reach the tax cap limit by \$1,186,143.00. Lane stated that these were very difficult decisions to make. She stated that this is a lot of money to try to come up with so we have tried to spread the cuts across various areas to have one area not take the entire hit.

Budget Summary

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

Austin stated that this is a starting point. He stated that what is required of the School Board in order to make a presentation to the City Manager is to meet the limitations of the tax cap. He stated that the board feels that they cannot support all of these cuts although we recognize that it is necessary to present the budget this way. He stated that we are working with the City Council and the committees of the City Council to have discussions as to what the impacts are and how we might come to a more palatable solution and working together to find what we can do to mitigate some of these changes. He stated that we are in a very tough budget year and we will not find a way to eliminate all of these cuts. He stated that we will have a challenging job in the spring to figure out what our priorities are that we may be able to add back into the budget. He stated that we have spent a lot of time looking not only at the expense side of the budget but also on the revenue side and we believe that our projections for the next fiscal year are more in line. He stated that the Adequacy Aid number, which is based on the number of students that we have in our schools, we decided to include in the budget at a number that is 95% of what the State estimates we will get for next year. He stated that we felt it was appropriate to build our budget on that guaranteed number. He stated that we have looked at Catastrophic Aid and Medicaid numbers and tried to be as realistic as possible and a bit conservative so we do not find ourselves in a hole. He stated that the Budget Committee is very confident that the numbers we are using to build our budget are pretty firm. He stated that the cuts we are requesting are cuts of items from when the budget was first put together and they may or may not be an actual cut to the existing budget. He stated that the process moving forward will look like this. He stated that next Monday evening, February 19th at 6:30 there will be a formal presentation of the budget at City Hall, followed by a Public Hearing at 6:45, followed by a regular board meeting at which time I expect this board to make a motion to forward the projected budget to the City Manager. He stated that this will be the beginning of the process and discussion. He stated that this is not the final answer and we will not be at a final budget for several weeks. He stated that hopefully we will be able to come up with a solution that will continue to provide the services to our students. Krauss stated that there is also the update to the current budget. She stated she wanted to thank all the Building Administrators as they have been keeping an eye on the substitute line to keep that line down. She stated that that line has increased by \$21,000 and that this is one line that has consistently always been over budget. She stated that we are keeping an eye on our utility bills. She stated that Lori, Andy and myself have a conference call tomorrow with the broker for our utilities to see if we can get some lower rates. She stated that for our homeless students we are seeing a big increase in our Sped. Transportation so we are expecting some reimbursement from other districts for the cost sharing and this should help minimize some of the cost to us. She stated that this line is currently over budget right now so we will keep an eye on it. She stated that there has been no change in revenue since the last report. She stated that we still are waiting for some Medicaid reimbursement to come in. Austin stated that Krauss and Lane have been doing a lot of looking at the current year budget item by item to determine where we are.

7.3 SB193 Establishing Education Freedom Savings Accounts for Students: Austin stated that this is an item he had brought to the last meeting and he apologized as he promised he would draft a letter to the governor and State Finance Committee. He stated that it is about half done and will be done in the next few days and will share it with the board at that time. He stated that he came up with some interesting statistics that he wanted to share. He stated that the way it will work is that a family will apply for a scholarship that will be managed by a third party. He stated that they can apply if they are within 300% of the poverty level. He stated that in 2017 the Federal Poverty Level was \$75,000. He stated that the median income in the City of Somersworth is \$54,000 so that sets up a scenario that there are a lot of families in Somersworth eligible to apply. He stated that the amount of money allocated to students accepted for a scholarship would be \$3,454.00. He stated that this is 95% of the Adequacy Aid per student. He stated that they cannot qualify for free and reduced lunch and not qualify for Special Education services with an IEP. He stated that 5% of this goes to the third party administrator so a family will get \$3400.00 to spend. He stated that the range of cost for alternative institutions that qualify to accept these students is from \$9,500.00 a year to \$42,000.00 a year. He stated that the average stated by the Department of Education is \$15,000.00 per year. He stated that the

family that gets the scholarship of \$3400.00 will have to spend another \$12,000.00 to send this student to school. He stated that the Department of Education has estimated that about 1% of public school students in the state will apply for these education scholarships. He stated that the City of Somersworth may have to absorb as much as 64,000 if 1% of our students apply and get scholarships. He stated that the bill right now is in the House Finance Committee but they have no idea how they are going to finance this yet. Hiller stated that Somersworth, being a low income area, the 1% may actually be 2% or 3%. Yoder stated that she finds this bill to be discriminatory and it would be unfair if it should pass. Hanlon stated that in looking at the cuts in the projected budget, we could really use that \$64,000. He stated that this is the State of New Hampshire forcing this on us. He asked are they going to continue to fund this or downshift the cost to the district and where does this end up ten years from now. Austin stated that children entering kindergarten only get 50% of the scholarship money and home schooled students can participate but at a reduced rate. Richardson stated that he was glad the School Board Association has been testifying on behalf of the districts. He stated that the Districts should also be sending representative to testify. He stated that getting the picture from the School Board Association is one thing but getting individual cities and towns reaction and how this impacts them might do more. He stated that he cannot believe that the State of New Hampshire, that should be supporting Public Education, is part of the attack against Public Education. Austin stated that in conversations with the Mayor we can expect some support from the City Council as joint signers of the letter. He stated that there was also a conversation about meeting with the legislative delegation from this area.

8. MAYOR FORUM DATES

- **February 17, 2018- Mayor, Ward 1 City Councilor and School Board Member**
- **March 17, 2018- Mayor, Ward 2 City Councilor and School Board Member**

9. NEW BUSINESS: None

10. FUTURE MEETING DATES/SUGGESTED AGENDA ITEMS:

- **February 15, 2018- Somersworth Joint City Council & School Board Meeting-6PM-Career Technical Center Mulligans Grill**
- **February 19, 2018- Somersworth School Board-6:30PM-Budget Presentation; 6:45PM-Somersworth SB Hearing on Budget; 7:00PM-Somersworth School Board Meeting-City Hall Chambers**
- **March 13, 2018- Somersworth School Board Meeting**

11. CLOSING COMMENTS

10.1 Visitors: None

10.2 Board Members: Yoder stated that she wanted to congratulate Reilly Quist. She stated that he did have quite the conundrum with hockey and the State Spelling Bee opportunity. Hanlon stated he wanted to congratulate Reilly also. Richardson congratulated Reilly. He stated that in his day hockey players were not the best spellers in the world. Cannon also congratulated Reilly. She stated that she was never a good speller.

12. NON-PUBLIC: A motion made by Cannon seconded by Yoder to exit into nonpublic session in accordance with Chapter 91-A: 3 II (b) Personnel and (e) Negotiations. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously. Exited into nonpublic session at 7:55 pm. A motion made by Brennan seconded by Larson to exit out of nonpublic session. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously. Exited out of nonpublic at 8:20pm.

A motion made by Brennan seconded by Hanlon to accept the retirement of Judy Remick-Ward. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously.

Motion made by Brennan seconded by Yoder to approve the nomination of Karen Raymond to fill a High School Special Education position. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously

13. ADJOURNMENT: A motion made by Hanlon seconded by Yoder to adjourn. VOTE: motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.

Melinda Sullivan
Board Secretary

Pending Board Approval