

Wakefield Budget Committee Meeting
with the school
held in the Town Hall Opera House
January 10, 2023
Approved

Members present: Jerry O'Connor, Tom Daniels, Priscilla Colbath, Dave Mankus Denny Miller, Bob Ouellette, Ken Fifield, John Parker and Mark Taliaferro.

School Administration: Superintendent Anne Kebler, Business Administrator Frank Markiewicz by zoom, School Board members Brennan Peaslee, Sandra Taliaferro, Robert DeColfmacker and Mary Collins, Greg Hall, Peter Kasprzyk, Relf Fogg, Richard Mauser, Charles Newcomb, Wayne Robinson, Bo Keating, Larry Moody, Chief Mike Fenton, John Meyers and Max Gering with Clearview Community TV

Mr. O'Connor opened up the Budget Committee meeting at 5:37 to review the town and school's operating Budget and Warrant Articles prior to the Public Hearing. The school portion began at 6:38.

Mrs. Kebler told the Committee that there were a couple of corrections. Article 1 should read 2 School Board members for one year terms and 1 School Board member for a 3 year term. Article 4 should read \$90,000 not \$75,000. The estimate tax impact would change to 0.08. And the School Board vote was 4-1.

Mr. Daniels said when he compared the submitted budget with the updated budget the numbers weren't the same. He said some of it is probably housekeeping. Some of the health insurance lines were tweaked. Special Ed, 1200's is \$2,420,067 in the recent packet we received but that's not what we approved according to the minutes. He assumes the amount in the packet is correct but we have not voted on that number. Mrs. Colbath said there was some tweaking and she agreed that that new number should be voted on. He said we agreed in the minutes on a different number for electricity (page 21, Line 221 should read \$74,100 not \$113,650 and a couple of other changes would make the line \$686,876. Reduce the 1200 function total by \$39,550.

Mr. Daniels made a motion, seconded by Mr. Taliaferro, to approve the operating budget at \$11,732,550. Mr. Daniels rescinded his motion and Mr. Taliaferro rescinded his second. \$11,475,149 minus the \$39,550 is for the general fund budget which would make it \$11,435,599. Then you add in \$250,000 for Food Service and the \$300,000 for Federal Grants. The total for the Operating Budget would be \$12,025,149 less the \$39,550 which would make the new bottom line (gross number) \$11,985,599

Mr. Daniels made a motion, seconded by Mr. Taliaferro, to approve Article 2 the operating budget at \$11,985,599. (Vote 9-0)

Mr. Markiewicz explained how the estimated tax impact had been calculated the last three years and in the spirit of keeping it consistent with the way the town figures it he came up with the flowing figures \$8.71 for the proposed operating budget and \$8.50 for the default budget. Those figures will change a bit because of the reduction made to the bottom line.

Mr. O'Connor read an article from the NHMA about calculating the tax impact. He said using the formula Mr. Markiewicz figures seem like an accurate representation of what's going to be needed and should be close to what people will see on their tax bill. Mr. Markiewicz will recommend this process back to the School Board.

Mr. Markiewicz said the School Board had taken the recommendation of the Budget Committee and removed the original Article 6 and replaced it with a new Article 6, the paving of Taylor Way

Article #6: Paving of 76 Taylor Way Expendable Trust Fund

Mr. Daniels made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to approve Article 6, Paving of 76 Taylor Way for \$75,000. (Vote 9-0)

Article #4: Transportation Trust Fund

The School Board increased the amount for this article from \$75,000 to \$90,000. Mr. Daniels said, you are getting rid of two 77 passenger buses and a 14 passenger bus. You will have left 7 big buses and 2 small buses. There is \$150,000 in the CRF right now. What's the plan? What buses will be purchased. Anne said she has put out a bid for a 77 passenger bus. Mrs. Colbath said we have always put \$90,000 away each year for a bus and buses haven't been purchased on a regular basis in the recent past. They need to get back on track. Mr. Daniels is concerned that there doesn't seem to be a plan. Mrs. Colbath said she believes they are working on a bus replacement schedule. Mrs. Collins concurred.

Mr. Daniels made a motion, seconded by Mr. Miller, to approve Article 4, for \$90,000. (Vote 9-0)

Mr. Miller made a motion, seconded by Mr. Parker, to approve both the Budget Committee Town and School minutes of December 13th. (Vote 9-0)

Mr. O'Connor recessed the Budget Committee meeting at 7:10. He opened the school portion of the Public Hearing at 7:24 to be followed by the Town portion of the Public Hearing.

Public Hearing with the School

Mr. O'Connor read the budget summary stating the amount for each function. Operation and Maintenance was changed to \$686,876. The total operating budget is **\$11,985,599**. There were no questions from the public. Mr. Miller asked Mrs. Kebler if the Spaulding tuition had been locked in. The enrolment right now is 154 but she will give the up to date number at the Deliberative Session. Mr. Markiewicz said the tuition number for high school for 2022-2023 tuition is \$15,749.96.

Next Mr. O'Connor read each warrant article. The only question came from Mr. Kasprzyk who asked how the school budget could be so much more than the town budget. The Town has over 5,000 people and the school has 450. Mr. O'Connor said we have a lot of unfunded mandates coming from the federal and state government, requirements we have to meet and unions we have to deal with. Mr. Kasprzyk asked why we have to pay for unfunded mandates. Mrs. Kebler

said it's not just 450 students as we have 154 high school students, we have to pay tuition for and that alone is quite costly. Mr. O'Conner said that's \$2.5 million just for tuition.

Mr. O'Connor closed the school portion of the Public Hearing at 7:40.

After the Town portion of the Public Hearing: **Mr. Miller made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Colbath, to adjourn the Public Hearing at 8:45 p.m. (Vote 9-0)**

Respectfully submitted for approval at the next Budget Committee meeting,

Priscilla Colbath
Secretary Pro Temp