

**Timberlane Regional School District Budget Committee**  
Atkinson, Danville, Plaistow, and Sandown

Regular Meeting  
November 24, 2009  
7:00 p.m.

SAU 30 Greenough Road  
Plaistow, New Hampshire  
03865

1. Call to Order: Mr. Balanoff called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Roll Call: Present: Mrs. O'Neil, Mr. Balanoff, Ms. Rochford, Mr. Murray, Mr. Mullen, Mr. Mascola, Mr. Dhaliwal and Mrs. Copp. Administrators present were Mr. LaSalle and Mr. Stokinger.
3. Approval of Minutes: Mrs. O'Neil made a motion to accept for discussion the minutes of November 12, 2009. Mr. Mascola seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous.  
Ms. Rochford made a motion to accept the minutes of November 12, 2009, with the amendments made. Mr. Mascola seconded the motion. Vote: Unanimous
4. Correspondence. Mrs. O'Neil reported there were no emails received.
5. Delegations and Individuals: None
6. Reports of Committees:
  - a. Budget Committee Members: None
  - b. School Board Representative: Mr. Mascola reported the SAU Board met and reduced the SAU Budget by \$9500 for 2010-11.
7. Unfinished Business:
  - a. Sandown Vacancy: Mrs. Turner is scheduled to attend the first meeting in December.
  - b. Plaistow Vacancy: No new information.
  - c. 2010-2011 Budget: Mr. Stokinger distributed the financial Reports of the "Second Draft" which was being presented to the Budget Committee. This version is 2.99% above last year's Budget. Highlights of the changes in excess of \$20,000 was listed on page one for everyone to review. The items that were revised in this version of the proposed budget were discussed. One item is the revised GMR for Workers Comp and Property & Liability Insurance. Additionally, all employees will pay a higher co pay for their health insurance. Administrators who previously had no contribution requirements towards their health insurance will now be required to pay 5% towards their insurance beginning the 2010-2011 school year. One HS equipment line was increased in draft two because of adding the installation of a new phone system at the HS, including phones in all classrooms. Mr. LaSalle stated not having phones in all classrooms is a serious safety concern and needs to be addressed. Mr. Dhaliwal asked about the Nova Net licenses that were cut, but Mr. LaSalle explained they were not cut, but moved to the ARRA grant for funding. The HS phase II of the Lab Renovation was revised to a less costly design. Mr. Mullen asked if the Budget Committee could request this item be moved to a warrant article and it was discussed that the School Board makes the decision regarding what warrant articles are presented to the voters not the Budget Committee. Mr. Dhaliwal asked about the history regarding how often warrant articles pass in this district and other committee members stated smaller ones usually pass while larger items need to go before the voters 2 and 3 times before they pass. Mrs. O'Neil asked if a grant could be sought out for the phone system from Homeland Security. Mr. LaSalle stated the only grant that he thought had potential was the E-rate program but after further research even that program did not qualify. The specific type of technology in the new phone system was discussed. Mr. LaSalle stated the entire school district was listed in a bid request for a VOIP phone system. The administration has the decision down to two vendors, Avaya and Shoretel.

Mr. LaSalle suggested that the Budget Committee form subcommittees to work directly with the Department Heads who develop the various department Budgets to ask more specific questions and get a better feel for the individual department budgets. He believes it is hard for one Budget Committee member to feel completely comfortable with such large numbers. He suggests not trying to study the budget in its entirety, but to break it up into smaller more manageable pieces. As each subcommittee meets with their pertinent departments, they report back to the Budget Committee as a whole. This may make all the committee members feel due diligence has been properly performed.

Mr. LaSalle shared copies of his budget worksheet that he has been using to study the budget so that the committee could understand his process of auditing and looking for places to ask questions about. For example he sees that the supplies at the elementary schools are up. He knows this is due to the implementation of the new language arts program purchased by curriculum last year. Starting in 2010-2011 each elementary school is purchasing the language arts workbooks that go along with the new curriculum on their own. Mr. LaSalle noted that curriculum at the secondary level has an increase in the software line (650) which is a shift from the book line (640). Elementary Curriculum is purchasing both language arts for kindergarten and social studies readers, which is also tied to the new LA curriculum. Mrs. O'Neil mentioned that Mr. Coker, Director of Secondary Curriculum has moved to N. Carolina, in case any committee member hadn't heard this news. Mr. LaSalle stated he noticed that Technology Supplies seemed to be up almost \$20,000 and he would be investigating the reason for this increase. Department 41, Music has an increase in software due to the purchase of "Smartmusic". The committee was wondering about the current statistics of students using the program this year. Mr. LaSalle stated he did not have that information but he did know that this year is the "pilot" program and he would get that information for the committee by the next meeting.

Mr. LaSalle continued stating that he is still investigating what support staff positions can be eliminated. He did explain that when positions were rolled into the budget last year, Kevin Peck was missed thereby creating a discrepancy for us this year making that salary account look exceptionally larger than last year. The next item reviewed by Mr. LaSalle was the equipment lines at all levels.

At the next meeting Mr. LaSalle expects to report a reduction on the projects based on the results of the facilities meeting on December 1, and contract information based on the TTA contract ratification results at the union meeting on the December 2 and the school board meeting on December 3. He will also continue to investigate areas that can be revised in his audit of the proposed budget.

Mr. Stokinger stated that he knows the committee asked for each account to have an amount labeled as "contractual", "legal" or "discretionary" but he continues to struggle with how to actually do that and has attempted, in the reports distributed this evening to present that requested data, in as much as possible. Mr. LaSalle stated that the object codes in the 600's and 700's are discretionary along with staff. Ms. Rochford stated she would like the committee to look at other areas before even considering looking at reducing staff. Mr. LaSalle stated that he has reduced administration by one position for each of the past two years as well as teachers and paraeducators. He will continue to make sure that the staffing is at the appropriate levels.

Mr. Mullen stated he would like to know if we couldn't use curriculum from another school district instead of having the all the costs associated with developing our own curriculum. Additionally perhaps we should be outsourcing Technology for example, instead of owning all the employees and their associated expenses? Mrs. Copp stated that she needs to know what is contractual and what is not so they do not waste time looking at the contractual/legal items. Mr. Mullen suggested that the Budget Committee state an amount of money they would support and any amount over that, the administrators need to justify to the committee. Mr. LaSalle stated he did tell his staff to be extremely lean in their requests for budgeting this year, unlike what he has stated to them in the past, where he told them to ask for what is needed. Mr. Dhaliwal asked what the role of the Budget Committee actually is. It is his opinion that the committee approves the funds to support the school but not act as the Administrator. A very lengthy discussion ensued regarding the role of the Budget Committee and how best to perform this role. Mr. LaSalle excused himself from the meeting at 9:00 pm. Some committee members stated their concerns about not reviewing the details of the presented Budget, but wasting time on discussing the Budget Committees role and method of review when in a few short weeks the voters need to be presented with a budget.

8. New Business: Mrs. Copp brought up for discussion an email that was being sent between some committee members in regards to the validity of her holding both a seat on the Town Budget Committee and on the School District Budget Committee. She assured everyone that she is legally able to hold both seats but she was more concerned about the emails constituting a meeting. Mrs. Copp stated email cannot be used to communicate committee business outside of a regular meeting.

9. Other Business:

10. Future Agenda and Dates:

Budget Committee:

Thursday, December 10, 2009 SAU Office 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 22, 2009 SAU Office 7:00 p.m.

Other Meetings:

Thursday December 3, 2009-School Board-SAU Office 7:30 p.m.

Thursday December 17, 2009-School Board-SAU Office 7:30 p.m.

The Facilities Meeting on Tuesday December 1, here at the SAU Office at 8:30 am was discussed. This meeting is followed by the Safety Meeting since most of the same people need to be present for both meetings. Mrs. Copp asked if the meeting was open to the public because she may want to attend. She was told it was and she is welcome to attend.

Mr. Balanoff made a motion to adjourn at 9:15 pm.

Vote: Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Smith

Recording Secretary

Approved 12/10/2009