

**Town of Preston
Board of Education
Finance Sub-Committee Special Meeting
Thursday, February 8th, 2018
PPMS Library
6:00 pm**

1. Call to Order

Chairman Nugent called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

Sean Nugent (SN)
Ed Gauthier (EG)
Tom Turner (TT)
Melissa Lennon (ML)
Superintendent Seitsinger (SS)
John Spang (JS)

Guests: Andy Depta

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Public Comment

Mr. Depta asked why ML was not indicated in any way in our minutes to be the BoF Liaison to this sub-committee. Mr. Depta also expressed concern that, while the minutes indicate that a quorum was not required, the fact that EG left early was not indicated in the minutes. Mr. Depta also informed us that he was taping the meeting.

4. Approval of Minutes

- The team discussed the concern that the November 9th, 2017 draft minutes had not been approved. The reason for this is that the original quorum no longer existed following the November 2017 municipal elections. **A motion was made by ML and seconded by TT to accept the November 9th minutes as submitted as the change in board membership resulted in a quorum change for the Finance Sub-Committee. All in favor; the motion carries.**
- The team felt that the February 1st minutes should reflect that ED left early, that a comment made by SS should be included, and that some additional minor adjustments be made to the minutes. **A motion was made by ML and seconded by ED to accept the February 1, 2018 minutes as amended. All in favor; the motion carries.**

5. 5-Year Capital Plan

SN thanked the citizens of Preston, the BoF, the PTO, and a number of citizens for their support & effort in getting the 5-year Capital Plan approved. SN also reminded this sub-team that it also serves as the BoE's building committee.

The team reviewed the BoE capital items and will recommend to the full board that SS move forward immediately on the planning efforts associated with (a) PPMS Science Lab upgrade, (b) PVMS gymnasium floor replacement, (c) wheel chair lift equipped vehicle, and (d) three (3) 71 passenger school buses. It was agreed that we would revisit the remaining items (PPMS Student Lockers, PVMS playground surface, and bus garage repaving) in the spring.

6. FY18 Budget Update

JS reviewed the January YTD report. We are currently trending toward returning at least \$119k to the Town at the end of this fiscal year.

7. FY19 Budget Workshop

- SN again reminded everyone that no quorum was required for this portion of tonight's meeting as it was a budget working session and no formal actions would be taken.
- SN reminded everyone that the budget is made up of fixed components and variable components. Tonight's focus will be to go through the bulk of the variable components.

- SW & JS walked through seven (7) budget roll-up areas:
 - Administration (5% of the overall budget):
 - Retirement incentives significantly reduced.
 - 5-year history requested.
 - Utilities & Supplies (2% of the overall budget):
 - Utilities:
 - Shared purchases with Town.
 - Current rates locked in place through September (CMEEC)
 - ED requested that we look at a regular schedule of 'testing the market' in this area.
 - 5-year history requested.
 - Supplies:
 - JS indicated that a new approach was used wherein the individual schools developed their requests based upon needs and experience. The one thing that surfaced from this exercise was that more technology support is required than traditional supplies.
 - As the report presented is a mix of supplies, technology needs, and staff development; SN asked that the individual elements be broken out so that we can understand the requested supplies and technology requests.
 - Transportation (2% of the overall budget):
 - Two major reduction shifts were presented. The first is that we are spending less on repairs with the onboarding of the three new buses. As such, we expect this number to go down more with the recently approved 5-year capital plan. Secondly, we are seeing more 'in-house special education' which is leading to a reduction in the transportation budget related to out-of-district SPED transportation.
 - It was also noted that transportation fuel is a shared purchase with the Town.
 - Plant Operations (2% of overall budget):
 - Environmental monitoring at PVMS has come to an end, which provides a significant reduction.
 - A scag mower and floor scrubber are requested purchases (totaling \$33k). SN asked SS to meet with the 1st Selectman to evaluate the opportunity to outsource Lawncare services for the Town and District (another shared service opportunity) as there are three groups who require these services (Town, Parks & Rec., and BoE).
 - Mike House and JS were asked to further explain why 'Other Maintenance' is not covered in the 'Maintenance Repairs' bucket.
 - 5-year history was requested.
 - Miscellaneous (2% of the overall budget):
 - ML inquired as to how our lease agreement works as there appears to regular issues with the copiers. JS will look into this.
 - Explain how 'school bus training in 'Professional & Technical Services' is different than the 'training' line item in the Transportation bucket.
 - 5-year history was requested.

- Information Technology (2% of the overall budget):
 - Change “Technology Repairs” to Technology Services” to reflect the fact that these costs cover our service provider, EASTCONN.
 - JS was asked to update the support data to ensure that the numbers being requested are justified.
 - JS was asked to highlight ‘grant monies’ by bolding those line items in the IT Budget details report.
 - 5-year history was requested.
- Emerging Priorities
 - SS discussed seven (7) emerging priorities that he and his staff see based upon their experiences this past year. The team suggested that two of these emerging priorities [0.5 FTE Social Worker & Amplify ELA Software] are rolled into the FY19 budget proposal for discussion with the full board. The budget impact of these two priorities is roughly a \$52k increase to the current draft proposal.
- The team then discussed additional questions raised during our separate reviews of the Salaries, Health/Dental, Secondary Tuition, and Special Education Tuition. SS informed us that NFA’s budget request had just been released and it was 0.5% lower than we were planning for. In addition, JS & SS provided updated documents from the 2/1 meeting to reflect the changes requested.
- The team then reviewed the FY19 pie chart and discussed the make-up of the BoE budget and what the key drivers are to the budget request. We then discussed the recently released Governor’s proposal (which is lower than his original FY19 numbers) and agreed that these are the numbers we should use in planning the FY19 request. SN provided a draft report showing the full picture for FY19 based upon the materials provided to-date along with what the budget impact would be with a 2% reduction or a 2% increase over FY18’s approved budget. Lastly, SN also provided a draft ‘holistic picture’ for the team to begin to understand the total picture.
- As additional meetings are required to develop the FY19 budget, the following schedule was suggested by SN:
 - 2/12: First presentation of ‘draft budget’ to full BoE
 - 2/15: Special FC Meeting to address comments/questions/feedback from full BoE
 - 3/5: Special full BoE Meeting to finalize FY19 proposed budget
 - 3/6: FY19 Proposed Budget submitted to BoF

8. Public Comment

No comment provided/offered.

9. Adjournment

A motion was made by ED and seconded by TT to adjourn the meeting at 9:14 pm. All in favor; motion carries.

Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 15th at 6:00 pm at PPMS.

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Nugent