

Moultonborough Advisory Budget Committee Minutes –20 January, 2023

ABC Present: Kay Peranelli, Jean Beadle, Linda Murray, Joe Adams, Mary Phillips, Kathy Garry

Chairman Peranelli opened the meeting at 1:05 P.M.

The first order of business was approval of prior minutes as follows:

- December 15, 2022: January 13, 2023- Motion made by Joe; seconded by Kathy; unanimously approved

Next, Kay led a discussion on the school budget version 3. A preliminary draft of the ABC School Report had been circulated to all committee members, soliciting comments and suggestions for additional recommendations. Kay noted she had received an excellent detailed summary spreadsheet including graphic pie charts prepared by Mary of variances between Budget Version 3 and the prior year approved budget.

Questions received via email were addressed as follows:

- Increase in Special Ed Salaries and Benefits: Addition of 4 para professionals over prior year budget and increases in health insurance due to greater participation by several staff members.
- Cost of book purchases for school libraries: Books are ordered to supplement targeted classroom projects and to support computer software programs based in the libraries.
- Cost per student: Moultonborough is high due to economies of scale. Moultonborough compared to similar districts with pre-K to grade 12 (Sunapee and Lincoln/Woodstock) is comparable. For 2022 Moultonborough \$29,469, Sunapee \$29,545, Lincoln /Woodstock \$ 28,253. Overall State increase for 2022 versus 2021 was 5.2%; Moultonborough 2.0%.

The Committee held a discussion on the effect of retiree health insurance on the overall experience rating used to determine premium costs. While both the retired School and Town employees can available themselves at their own cost to Town/School health insurance; the fact that older adults tend to utilize insurance far greater than younger adults has a negative effect on the overall premiums charged to all. A suggestion was made to bring in an organization such as Service Link to help retirees understand alternative options available to them at a potentially a lower cost to them than remaining on Town/School plans.

Next, the Committee focused on the Town Budget. Kay explained the Town Budget was still a work in progress. The ABC had been present the last two Friday's listening to each Department Head present their raw budgets. Kay asked Jean to give her perspective on major items within this preliminary budget. Jean prefaced her comments with the statement that the following are her personal opinions and that the Select Board would meet as a group over the next few weeks to discuss as a group the various budgets. Jean highlighted the following:

- Recreation: Includes a request for an additional headcount to replace the former position of Program Coordinator. Continued emphasis on adult programming, Phase out of the Recreation Revolving Fund.
- Fire Department: Future transition of a primarily volunteer Fire department to a department staffed, 7 by 24 with full time employees while retaining the volunteer force. This would entail six additional full time fire fighters. The Committee felt that further investigation and discussion with the smaller surrounding towns should be undertaken prior to full commitment of 6 additional employees.
- Administration: Revisiting the position of Human Resource Director that has remained open for the past two years.
- Misc.: Dollars for the Coalition Community Fund should be added as well as a small contingency to cover unexpected expenditures.
- Planning Department: Department has requested another full time Code Officer as well as upgrading 2 part time positions to full time. The Committee noted that some of the code work could be facilitated by the Fire Department as in other communities.
- Police Department: Several open positions have been full year budgeted from July 1 on. In addition, overtime has been increased by approximately 100 % year over year related to the open positions. Another look should be taken related to the expected timing for hiring of all open positions and the budget reset accordingly.
- DPW: Buildings and Grounds asking for one additional full-time employee. Currently staff has one full time and two part time employees.
- Library: Continued emphasis on adult programming. Transition of bookkeeping of accounts payable to the Town in order to have one repository for all financial information. Town currently handles and records Library payroll. Consideration for non-resident library fees.

Finally, Kay reminded all that she would update and send out the School Report. She asked the Committee to review and submit any final changes within the next few days. The report needs to go to the School prior to the School Public Budget Hearing scheduled for February 7, 2023.

Motion to dismiss: Moved by Joe and seconded by Kathy to adjourn at 2:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Beadle, ABC

Note: The Committee has set up an email account. Access to that account can be found on the Town web page at <https://www.moultonboroughnh.gov/advisory-budget-committee>. All emails will be monitored by the committee and responded to during the subsequent meeting.