

Hinsdale School Board Work Session
SAU Conference Room
January 3, 2024
5:30 PM

Board Members Present: April Anderson, Kendra Gardner, Kaylah Hemlow, Holly Kennedy, and Jeana Woodbury

Administration Present: John Barth, HMHS Principal; Joe Boggio, HES Principal; Jane Fortson, Business Administrator; Shawn Lee, Facilities Director; Dr. David Ryan, Interim Superintendent; Jeanne Sturges, Curriculum Coordinator; Justin Therieau, Director of Technology; Karen Thompson, Director of Personalized Learning; and Patricia Wallace, Director of Student Services

Others Attending: Alex Duso, Town Budget Committee Representative

Minutes Recorded by: Maria Webb, Executive Assistant

Call to Order:

A. Anderson called the meeting to order at 5:54 pm.

Citizens' Comments:

A. Anderson opened citizen comments for 30 minutes. The one citizen attending did not have a comment at this time.

Budget Planning Work Session:

J. Fortson reviewed the proposed budget. Noted the 25% increase in insurance costs and that administration has already decreased \$220,000 per the Board's request at the December meeting. The proposed budget is up 7.27% with 3.49% due to insurance costs increases.

Hinsdale Elementary School: Reviewed the proposed budget and highlighted the decreases since the board meeting. Noted that a classroom position was eliminated. Noted the decrease in Special Education. Summer School should be in the Special Education budget and not the ESY account. Going forward it will be 1210 accounts. Noted the decrease in the Nurse dues and fees, and software for the library. Under Administration, clarifications were made to reduce the hours for the office staff for the summer. Noted that the budget for field trips was reduced. J. Boggio noted that he hopes to find grants to offer educational field trips.

Regarding the classroom position that was eliminated, H. Kennedy noted that whenever there is a reduction, even if due to attrition, the HFT President must be notified.

Hinsdale Middle High School: Noted decreases in Special Education Supplies & Medical Hardware. Summer School will be going to 1210 account. J. Barth shared regarding software

that can help with credit recovery in the summer, such as Edmentum. Noted that the Middle School Counselor will go from 0.6 to 1.0 FTE. This will cause the Behavior Interventionist position to be eliminated. Noted a decrease in Travel and Conferences for Administration, and also Transportation for Field Trips. J. Barth noted that field trips will be to visit colleges and local businesses, so that students can see the connection between education and their future careers.

Building and Grounds: Noted decreases in custodian salaries for summer and temporary staffing, and the related decrease in social security. Noted that overtime should be under a different account. Noted a decrease in repairs and maintenance. Noted decreases in electricity, heating, and maintenance equipment. Will submit warrant articles for some items needed. S. Lee noted that Eversource has published the decrease in their rates.

Information Technology: Noted the decrease in PowerSchool Annual Support. Increased the copier/lease maintenance amount due to needing to replace the HMHS copier.

SAU and Districtwide: Noted decreases in Special Education Supplies and Medical Hardware and an increase in Tuition for SPED Private. Noted a decrease in Curriculum Stipends and in Travel and Conferences in Professional Development District. Plan to use funding from one of the Title Grants for this instead. Professional Learning Texts is a new line item, for textbooks for in-house professional development for teachers.

H. Kennedy expressed concern with posting costs of salaries, benefits and FICA with employees' names. Voiced concern for employees' safety in light of last year's district meeting. Expressed thanks to the administrators for all of the work they have done on the budget this year.

J. Fortson said that this budget is based on actual needs. D. Ryan noted that we want to convey to the voters that we are only budgeting what is needed and to share the costs that we do not have control over, such as contractual costs and the new Para contract. Noted that there still may be reductions that we can find over the next couple of weeks.

D. Ryan noted that developing the proposed budget was grounded around four key areas, per the Board's request:

- Priority Area 1 - Teaching and Learning
- Priority Area 2 - Culture and Climate
- Priority Area 3 - Finance and Operations
- Priority Area 4 - Community Relations

K. Hemlow noted that she is hopeful that the town will see the work that has been done.

A. Duso noted that there are challenges due to lack of population growth and the aging population. Feels the pool of available money is getting tighter and tighter. He is not opposed to a well-funded budget if the town can afford it.

D. Ryan noted that the work coming out of this budget will allow us to make improvements in student achievement and in a more cost-effective way. This will attract more families to move here and to attract students from other towns to attend school here. Stated that it is an investment that will help improve growth.

J. Fortson noted that the ESSER grants offset much of the increase. Wants the town to focus on both the revenues and expenditures.

K. Gardner noted that Hinsdale has a good rate of students going to college, trade school and the workplace and being very successful after graduation. Wants the town to understand this in addition to focusing on the test scores. K. Hemlow noted that our graduation rate is also high.

H. Kennedy noted that we fund approximately 48% of our budget through taxes, which is much less than other districts, but it has been difficult for the town to understand that.

J. Fortson noted that this has been an evidence-based budget and administrators worked hard on this.

Discussed the Special Education and Maintenance trust funds.

A. Duso requested monthly financial reports for the Budget Committee. J. Fortson noted that if the Board approves the proposed budget tonight, the Budget Committee should get them by this Friday.

K. Hemlow MOVED to adopt the drafted budget as proposed for submission to the Budget Committee. K. Gardner SECONDED. Vote 5-0-0, MOTION PASSED.

Other Business:

There was no other business.

Non-Public Session:

There was no non-public session.

K. Hemlow MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 6:56 pm. K. Gardner SECONDED. VOTE: 5-0-0, MOTION PASSED.

I attest that this is a true copy of the minutes:

Maria A. Webb

approved on _____