

**Hinsdale School Board Work Session
Hinsdale Town Hall
January 22, 2024
6:30 PM**

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

Board Members Excused: Kendra Gardner

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

Budget Committee Attending: Alex Duso, Richard Johnson, Sean Leary, Dennis Nadeau, William Nebelski, and Dan Seymour

Budget Committee Absent or Excused: Mike Bomba, Ken Howe, and Karen Johnson

Minutes Recorded for the School Board by: Maria Webb, Executive Assistant

Call to Order:

A. Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

Citizens' Comments:

A. Anderson opened citizen comments for 30 minutes.

Budget Planning Work Session:

J. Fortson reviewed highlights from the Proposed Budget 2024-2025, including:

1. Building and Grounds
2. Information Technology
3. SAU and Districtwide

The Budget Committee asked regarding Special Education out-of-district placement costs. Currently, there is a range of 8-14 students in out-of-district placements. FERPA prohibits providing an exact number but allows a range. The state provides some Medicaid reimbursement, but J. Fortson noted that the percentage varies yearly. D. Ryan stated that last year, the state reimbursed approximately 19%.

J. Fortson noted that we have budgeted for pre-employment physicals for employees, as required by law. We would pay a co-pay amount if they have health insurance to cover the costs. This was not in the budget previously.

J. Fortson noted that Purchased Services SAU includes the MOU for the SRO. The Budget Committee requested data on the late bus usage. J. Fortson agreed to provide this.

Discussed the negative school meal balances. R. Johnson expressed that the school should provide only what is required by law for students with negative balances. The Board shared the attempts that have been made to collect the balances. J. Fortson shared that the state requires we count the meal at the end, after the students have selected their meals.

S. Leary stressed that he wanted it to be noted that it is not the sentiment of the entire Budget Committee to not feed children.

J. Fortson then shared handouts with information requested at the prior Budget Committee meeting.

Discussed the proposed new position, the Hinsdale Elementary School Behavior Interventionist. J. Boggio stated that this position is needed for the students who require more support during the day than the School Counselor can provide.

S. Leary stated he was frustrated with position going in and out of grants. R. Johnson emphasized that it is important to be transparent with the town and communicate up front regarding positions that are expected to continue after the grants end.

J. Fortson reviewed a handout with scenarios of how grants can aid in the funding of new positions, and the impact of grants on the operating budget.

K. Hemlow stated that the Board has heard the Budget Committee's concerns and is proposing warrant articles for some budget items.

S. Leary noted the need for a Strategic Plan for consistency. D. Ryan shared regarding work happening currently to establish priority areas and to develop a process to create a Strategic Plan, so that work will continue even with turnover.

J. Boggio stated that he has presented the proposed position to the Personnel Committee over the past several years.

A. Duso asked regarding health insurance costs. J. Fortson shared costs for the least expensive health insurance option for employees:

1. Single coverage will increase from \$12,111 to \$15,014.
2. Two-person coverage will increase from \$24,022 to \$30,027.
3. Family coverage will increase from \$32,430 to \$40,538.

J. Fortson noted that we only have six employees in the most expensive plan, and that is being discontinued.

The Budget Committee asked for details on the number of employees in the “middle” plan. J. Fortson agreed to provide this.

A Duso asked regarding staffing overall. D. Ryan stated that with the proposed budget, there is a net reduction in staffing of 0.6 FTE.

A. Duso asked regarding the estimated health insurance costs compared to FTE. J. Fortson shared that staff can change plans and we cannot plan for that. A. Anderson stated that the proposed budget has been gone over thoroughly. J. Fortson noted that she decreased wages where there were vacancies.

S. Leary asked regarding the unassigned funds balances. Last year, \$756,696 was unassigned and \$59,030 was assigned. S. Leary noted that the budget represents a \$2.35 increase in the tax, and the warrant articles could add an additional \$.30. Expressed concern about the increases.

S. Leary requested information on any additional revenues we know of at this time. J. Fortson agreed to provide any additional revenue numbers.

D. Seymour asked if there are any non-resident students attending without paying tuition, and the Board confirmed that there are none.

J. Fortson pointed out that the school’s portion of the tax rate is decreasing.

Other Business:

There was no other business.

The Budget Committee adjourned their meeting at 8:05 pm.

Non-Public Session:

H. Kennedy MOVED to go into a nonpublic session according to RSA 91 A:3 II (a) at 8:05 pm. K. Hemlow SECONDED. Roll Call: A. Anderson – yes, K. Hemlow – yes, H. Kennedy – yes, and J. Woodbury - yes. VOTE: 4-0-0, MOTION PASSED.

J. Woodbury was excused from the meeting at 8:05 pm.

K. Hemlow MOVED to reconvene the public session at 8:30 pm. H. Kennedy SECONDED. Roll Call: A. Anderson – yes, K. Hemlow – yes, and H. Kennedy – yes. VOTE: 3-0-0, MOTION PASSED.

K. Hemlow MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm. H. Kennedy SECONDED. VOTE: 3-0-0, MOTION PASSED.

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

_____ approved on _____
Maria A. Webb