

**Approved 01/08/2020**

Present: Board Members: Mary Jo Holmes, Michael Nygren, Joshua Yokela, Steve Bonaccorsi, Joe Miccile, Gene Cordes, Gordon Muench, Pat Martel; School Board Members Greg Fraize, Angela O'Connell, and Amy Leslie; Principal Sharon DeVincent, Superintendent Allyn Hutton, Business Administrator Sue Penny and Recording Secretary Shawn Perreault.

Chair Holmes called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm in the main floor meeting room at the Fremont Town Hall. All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Minutes**

Motion made by Martel to approve December 11, 2019 meeting minutes as amended, seconded by Cordes. Motion passed 8-0-0.

Motion made by Cordes to approve December 4, 2019 meeting minutes as amended, seconded by Bonaccorsi. Motion passed 8-0-0.

Holmes will send Carlson an email to post the November 6, 2019 and November 13, 2019 meeting minutes to the website.

### **School**

Superintendent Hutton began by answering questions sent to Penny by Committee Members. This included the following highlights:

The wellness/PE teacher encompasses two teachers and they both teach Wellness/PE. There is no division of work, ie: grade level.

This year the Social Worker is working with 11 students. One is at the High school, homeless students, there are out of district kids that came back into district. She is the first responder with behavioral issues in class and is a training teacher for other Staff, as well. She helps to develop student IEP's.

Sanborn enrollment is down by 12 students times \$20,000 why isn't the decrease more? The tuition went up which is why the numbers are different, 3% right now. (Approximate 7.6% in tuition and a 27.4% decrease in capital costs. The reduction in capital cost are directly related to the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students attending Sanborn in FY21).

Do we need a bus monitor? We have used one over the last three years and due to students needs we will need one again. Holmes noted \$6,000 in that line for the last three years, it didn't seem we used that much.

Last year's budget we expended everything, only \$684.00 remained unspent. The FY21 proposed budget is approximately \$345,000 less than FY20 adopted budget. If you factor in the amount that was transferred to the Trust Fund the reduction is \$545,000 as \$200,000 was added to the maintenance trust fund. Penny stated that based on the revenue projections for FY21 taxes are projected to decrease by \$0.51 (on the school side).

Yokela ask if this accounts for any warrant articles. Penny said that will not affect this budget. As long as we return \$115,000 in fund balance the \$0.51 reduction will hold. The District is anticipating an additional \$100,000 in Medicare funds, which should be received by the end of the year. The \$100,000 was the additional amount the State projected we would receive last fall. It is Fremont's share of the \$10 million the state added to Special Education aid for FY20. In addition we had a \$14,000+ refund from

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Sanborn; together these two sources of unanticipated revenue will total the \$115,000 in unassigned fund balance. This is unanticipated revenue. Penny said they can put it into the Trust Funds any amount exceeding \$115,000.

Miccile had asked what the cost per sub and what are the number of classes they teach. Uncertified Subs get \$70 per day, \$80 per day if certified. It varies on number of teaching classes, middle can be five different classes. They can also do half a day. Paras are following a student or small group of students, so support not teaching. Fremont has a very low sub pool because they pay one of the lowest rates in the area.

It was noted that Special Education is lower because the needs have changed over the last few years. Students have aged out, moved and some students came from out of district back into district. They are changing for Fiscal year 20. The default budget made the lines hard to track. Holmes discussed starting with contracts and required payouts with the default budget. Penny noted funds to go to Capital Reserve Funds and not the General Fund for the Disparity Aid. If we gave this money back to the District and reduced the tax base for one year, we would have a large increase the next year because we will not be getting this money again. This was a one time happening. Martel noted it is about a \$74,000 change.

The GMR from Sanborn shows a slight decrease. A handout was circulated showing a \$9,500 reduction to the budget that was projected. We used their estimate from November 15<sup>th</sup> for the budget. Their estimate was 3.0% and the number came it at 2.75%. Hutton noted the green sheet is the new budget comparison using the new GMR. The budget is decreased to \$354,382 which is down 2.88%. The pink sheet is the default budget. Based on the numbers received on 12/13, capital costs will be used for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade at the High School. There is a big decrease in the capital cost we will be paying because the High School is not using the entire building, so there is a 29% decrease in capital costs. There was a salary increase for Kingston/Newton teachers approved by their voters which raised costs. Operational costs of the High School are high.

Yokela noted it is the second highest tuition increase on the sheet. Hutton pointed out to Sanborn that when we are looking at our options of high schools, handing us a huge increase isn't a good idea. Nygren noted a lot of their costs are in the High School. Hutton reiterated that the contract is a challenge. When we are forced to cut, they have to be done at Ellis because that is the only school we locally control.

Yokela asked about the number of kids in the High School. Hutton noted declining numbers do cause the cost per student to go up because there is less to spread it out. Their teachers are paid more in Elementary. Fremont is working to address it, but are held to a contract.

Bonaccorsi asked about capital costs going down to help make it more appealing for us to stay there. Hutton feels Sanborn will still want our kids. There are six sight visits going on in February, and a number of schools that want our students. O'Connell said every penny is checked by Sue Penny and she gets any thing needed back. Martel asked Penny to check page 2 in the budget that says 4%. Penny thinks there is another \$40,000 because they were concerned about the GMR. Muench feels they need to be more upfront with the GMR, and if they want our kids, show us. Hutton is still talking to them about the GMR. Penny said the Green/Pink sheets will be resent with the updated numbers. The current ones show the 4%.

Hutton said the presented budget has been scrubbed as much as possible. They understand the challenge of the taxpayer. For that reason, they continue to look at class size, reduce teachers, and look for outside funds, but not at Ellis's cost. She came to the Committee with a budget that is fair, reasonable and is

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looking for the Committee's support of the budget presented. Penny said there will be another \$38,000 reduction from the 4%. We all work with a common goal and are faced with tough decisions. Holmes noted that January 8<sup>th</sup> is the Committee's next scheduled meeting. Hutton would like some direction. The School Board meeting was cancelled on 12/17, so Warrant Articles will not be done until January 7, 2020.

If there are funds left, the School Board decided to put any extra money, over the \$115,000, into any of the Trust Funds. They are going to put the one time money of \$280,000 from the State into Capital Maintenance Fund. Tuition and Special Trust funds are fine. The \$200,000 was in Maintenance Trust fund and was used for the roof. Penny noted that the 2600 tab has a list of things that are knocking on our door. We need a water filtration system too.

If they add the software update it would put about \$0.10 back on the tax rate. Holmes noted on average three teachers per classroom. This year we didn't lose any teachers. A Social Worker was added this year, but next year they are reducing by a teacher.

With questions on the Sub line, Penny did a five year comparison. The past five year average is \$79,000. Subs are used for sick days as well as Family Medical Act and if there is a long term sub, they must be certified. They had to have a long term sub last year from February to the end of the year and after 10 days they must be paid at the starting pay for a teacher.

Holmes noted an increase in the nurse line we have \$46,000 or \$48,000 for the salary versus ESY of \$73,000. That is a one on one nurse for a certain student. There is a year round nursing and an ESY nurse. There are nursing services that are required under a student's plan. These can be billed under Medicare.

Penny will send the group the new sheets tomorrow. Hutton will update the Committee if anything new comes in from Sanborn. The intent of the School Board is to decrease the budget. Nygren suggested that if they have the money this year for the software, to buy it now instead of increasing the budget next year. Fraize noted it has been the history of the School Board to give money back when there is money left over in the budget. Hutton noted that even if the software was added to the budget, it would still be down \$344,000. The current accounting system will not be serviced anymore within the next two years.

The School Board is trying to come up with a game plan to stop big things coming in at one time. Hutton asked the Budget Committee to consider approval of this budget with a decrease no less than \$375,000 from the \$12,312,076 adopted budget.

Yokela made a motion to recommend fiscal year 2021 School Budget of \$11,937,076 seconded by Bonacorssi. Motion passed 8-0-0.

Warrant Articles will be sent to the Committee once they are ready. Penny gave Holmes copies of the transfers she requested.

### **Town Budgets**

**4520 Park and Recreation:** Committee members reviewed a recommendation from Nygren that reduces Camp Fremont from an 8 week program (new proposal) to a 6 week program (as has been in past years). Cordes noted three resumes on the short list of Director candidates. There was discussion about the pavilion and a possible Warrant Article for creation. There were questions on the fund set up a few years ago. Further discussion was tabled pending the Director and trust fund information.

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## Revenues

Members questioned the amount forecasted for motor vehicle fees given current amounts. Cordes will look into this and get back to the Committee.

## Warrant Articles

Cordes noted they were a Board of two at last weeks meeting, but still voted on some of the Warrant Articles. They will probably revote so that all members are part of the vote.

**Article B** – Bonacorssi made a motion to recommend \$42,997 for the new officer, seconded by Cordes. Holmes reminded the Committee the \$42,997 is only for a partial year. If this passes, it would cost the Town \$96,367 a year starting in 2021. Motion not recommended by a vote of 3 Yes – 5 No (Yokela, Holmes, Miccile, Nygren, Martel) – 0 Abstain.

**Article D** – Library Maintenance Fund – Cordes made a motion to recommend Article D for \$5,000, seconded by Nygren. Motion to recommend 8 Yes – 0 No – 0 Abstain.

**Article E** – Fire Truck Capital Reserve Fund - Cordes made a motion to recommend \$50,000, seconded by Miccile. Motion to recommend 7 Yes – 1 No (Yokela) – 0 Abstain.

**Article C** – Fremont Computer Equipment Expendable Trust - Cordes made motion to recommend \$4,000, seconded by Nygren. Motion to recommend 7 Yes – 1 No (Yokela) – 0 Abstain.

**Article J** – Public Health Mosquito Control Program - Bonaccorsi made a motion to recommend \$49,550, seconded Cordes. Motion to recommend 7 Yes – 1 No (Holmes) – 0 Abstain.

**Article K** – Historic Museum Renovation Fund - Cordes made a motion to recommend \$15,000, seconded by Miccile. Motion tied 4 Yes - 4 No (Yokela, Martel, Nygren, Miccile) – 0 Abstain. This is considered a vote not to recommend.

**Article M** – Veteran credit - Cordes said the Board is still reviewing this, and Carlson is confirming all statutory language. The Board wants to make sure the voters understand what they are voting on and placing for the voters to decided.

**Article P** - 2% raise for the elected position of the Town Clerk - Cordes made a motion to recommend the \$714.00, seconded by Bonaccorsi. Motion not recommended 3 Yes – 5 No (Yokela, Nygren, Miccile, Holmes, Martel) – 0 Abstain.

There is no update yet from the Secretary of State on Deliberative Session.

At 8:55 pm Bonaccorsi made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Miccile. Motion passed 8 Yes – 0 No – 0 Abstain.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday January 8, 2020 in the first floor meeting room at the Fremont Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Shawn Perreault, Recording Secretary