

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Mary Jo Holmes starting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Present were Committee members Mary Jo Holmes, Pat Martel, Gene Cordes, Jon Benson, Josh Yokela (arrived at 7:05), Gordon Muench and Steve Bonaccorsi; Recording Secretary Shawn Perreault. Emily Phillips had a family emergency.

Motion was made by Bonaccorsi to approve the meeting minutes of November 30, 2022 as presented, seconded by Benson. Motion passed by a vote of 4 Yes – 0 No – 2 Abstain (Cordes, Muench).

The Warrant Articles for the School have not been reviewed and were not ready for the Budget Committee this evening.

The meeting opened with Muench reading two emails that were sent to Nathan Castle along with the answers. These emails will be attached to these minutes.

Holmes questioned the following budget items:

Are there any grants in the works? Muench stated there is nothing at the moment, however, they are always looking for grants that meet the needs of the school and students. Grants have to be worth it as well, as most have some strings attached to them.

For those employees that are not under contract, were their raises done at the 2%? Muench stated he would need to ask Castle, as he was not certain of the percentage and didn't want to give out the wrong information.

How does the Food Services money work? Muench stated they contract with a company to provide the service and pay upfront. They then set the amount to charge for lunches in the hopes to break even. Then they are reimbursed by the USDA funds. During COVID, these numbers were different based on the closures and the State/Federal government funding this program. Further discussion was held on process.

Bonaccorsi questioned the following budget items:

It appears that the sick days increased by 71%. Muench stated this was mostly due to COVID. Health Insurance for social and guidance had a high increase as well. Muench stated this was probably due to employees opting into the health insurance that hadn't the prior year. This happens a lot with families when they are comparing to see whose insurance is better for their family.

Replacing Computers went up 53% and repairing computers increased by 40%. Muench believed these lines were for the servers. Martel also questioned a consulting request that wasn't there in prior years.

Increase in the Superintendent salary and Admin salary - Muench stated that these were contractual and due to an increase in hours. The Budget Committee discussed this a lot and would have liked to see this presented more clearly in the budget summary. Adding hours is different than receiving a raise based on an employee's contract. Further discussion was held on how the Budget Committee would have like to see this presented to them in the initial summary and how the School Board viewed the reasoning.

Vehicle gas increase to \$900. Muench stated that Paul is now doing all the landscaping and snow removal (except what the Town does for main lots) instead of hiring a company. Some equipment was purchased to make these tasks possible, which increased the amount of gas needed.

Cost of Fire extinguisher replacement/recharge had a high increase as well. Muench stated that cost of materials is up everywhere. He wasn't sure how many were replaced and how many were recharged, but can find out.

Holmes asked everyone to review the School budget again and come back with any ideas of where money could be pulled from. She would like to see the school level fund their budget. Muench stated that the School Board still has to discuss everything that was brought up by the Budget Committee. They are taking everything the Budget Committee has said into consideration. The School has to function with a surplus every year and having a \$300,000 surplus is not a high percentage of the actual budget. Holmes brought up the Trust Funds that are there in case something goes wrong. Muench reminded everyone those are for very specific uses.

Yokela would like to see the language for the Maintenance Trust. His concern is the School Board being the agents and being able to approve payments of \$500,000. He would like to see a cap put on the amount the School Board can approve before having to go back to the taxpayers. Muench stated when the voters approved the Trust Fund and the amounts added year to year, they are giving the School Board their permission to spend that amount of the items that fall into the specifics of those Trusts Funds.

Muench stated the School Board will be meeting on December 13 to review everything and they are hoping the GMR will be in even though it's not due until December 15. He also reminded the Committee that items were pulled out of some functions and placed into other functions that fit better, an example was the technology function.

Holmes asked that all questions be sent to Nathan Castle before the next meeting. The School will appear first at the December 14th meeting.

The next meeting on December 14, 2022 will be held in the basement meeting room at the Town Hall. A meeting will also be held on January 4, 2023.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shawn Perreault
Recording Secretary

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Gordon Muench** <gordonfremontboard@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Dec 5, 2022, 9:05 PM

Subject: Re: Next budget committee Meeting

To: Mary jo Holmes <mjcamy68@outlook.com>

We haven't received any word from Sanborn yet but are very hopeful that we will have the GMR before the 14th. In a perfect world we will have it on the 13th for the school board meeting and on the 14th for budget committee meeting. We are working on it.

Thank you for the heads up on the level funding. You have to do whatever you feel is right.

Did you want the administration there this week on the 7th or just the 14th? Realistically they won't have any new information until the 14th. As far as I know we've received no new questions from the budget committee this week.

Below are the only questions from last week.

Hi Nathan,

I am seeing \$9,624.97 budget request for FY24 Teacher's retirement for Guidance. This has never been requested before (per your proposed budget report). When I look back at the monthly expense report that you provided there is a budget entry in the amount of \$5,150.60 - can you send an explanation to School Board Rep Gordon so that he can discuss at our Nov 30th meeting? Just wondering why the guidance employee is now covered by NH Teacher's retirement. **One position for guidance was hired at 1 FTE (was .75). This resulted in her becoming eligible for retirement. This year (the first) she is split between a grant and the operating budget. Next year, we are asking she be 100% in the operating budget.**

Thank you!
Pat

3 Tibbetts Rd
Fremont, NH 03044

You asked for the wording on the high school trust fund below is that answer.

To see if the school district will vote to establish an Out of District Tuition Fund, an Expendable **Trust** Fund per RSA 198:20-c, V for the purpose of providing funds for unanticipated out-of-district tuition expenses and to vote to raise and appropriate \$100,000 from the June 30, 2015 fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2015 to be placed in the fund; further to name the school board as agents to expend from the fund. No Amount to be raised by taxation. Recommendations: Fremont School Board 5-0 Fremont Budget Committee 6-0 Majority vote required)

On Mon, Dec 5, 2022, 8:00 PM Mary jo Holmes <mjcamy68@outlook.com> wrote:
So any news on Sanborn ? I am letting you know I am going request a level funded budget.

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 5, 2022, at 11:21 AM, Gordon Muench <gordonfremontboard@gmail.com> wrote:

Good Afternoon Mary Jo,

I just want to make sure that I'm prepared for this Wednesday. I know you wanted the existing wording for the maintenance trust fund. If you not have not received it I will definitely have it for you. I also know Pat had a question that Nathan has answered. Does she need more details for this week's meeting or the next one?

We as a school board have a meeting on the 13th and we are working on getting the GMR as soon as possible and we are hopeful that we will have it before the 14th.

The administration has planned on being there for the 14th do you need them on the 7th as well?

Are there other things that you need?

I am truly sorry about being out sick last week but I wouldn't have been productive if I showed.

Respectfully,

Gordon