

Present: Committee Members Mary Jo Holmes, Jon Benson, Gordon Muench, Gene Cordes, Josh Yokela and Nancy Murray; School Administrators Nathan Castle and Ellen Halliday, and Secretary Shawn Perreault.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm by Holmes and was held in the first floor meeting room at the Fremont Town Hall, 295 Main Street in Fremont, beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion was made by Holmes to approve meeting minutes of 08 November 2023 as presented. Cordes seconded. Motion passed by vote of 5 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstain (Yokela).

School District Budget Discussion – Castle reviewed a list of all the questions that the members sent to him along with the answers as follows:

Budget Committee Questions for 11.15.2023

1. What was the amount of fund balance returned last year? **\$336,777**
2. Regular Education 10.1100.5563.30 - What is Tuition Academy HS? **This is tuition to Pinkerton.**
3. English Language Learners-1270 Previous budget \$ 0 FY24 \$ 1.00 Are we anticipating the need for ESL? If so, why \$4,000.00? **Yes, we are. We do not have an English as a Second Language teacher, so we will need to contract this out to a third party.**
4. Psychological Services 10.2140.5112.10 Is this the school psychological in house? What function was the previous outsource and how much did we spend FY23, was it the \$ 61,468.51? Was that 10.2140.5330.10? **This is the BCBA and Psychologist that we hired (2.0 FTE). It is in-house now and was split up between line 10.2140.5330.10 and the IDEA grant last year. The \$61,468.51 was the operating budget's portion of the costs. Another \$20,000 was allocated to the grant. That was for about .6 FTE, where now, we get the psychologist at 1 FTE.**
5. Function: SPEECH-2152 I assume this is a speech therapist? How many students needed that service FY23? **Yes, it is. The Speech Therapists serviced 57 students during the year.**
6. Function: AUDIOLOGICAL SERVICES-2153 What circumstances do we use this service for? Who receives the service? **This is for students that are hard of hearing. It covers equipment needed and the testing of that equipment to make sure they are always working. It also covers consultation with staff on how to use the equipment.**
7. Function: Physical Therapy-2162 How many students are in need of this service? **Our PT is .6 FTE as had 14 students last year.**
8. Function: OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY-2163 How many students utilize this service? **We have 1.5 FTE and together they had 61 students last year.**
9. Function: IMPROVEMENT OF INSTRUCTION-2210 Is this professional development for the teaching staff? **Yes.** If so, why is a contribution needed for FICA and Teachers retirement? **When there are opportunities for staff development during noncontract days (i.e., summer) we pay them to go to these trainings.** What are the differences between Staff Development 10.2210.5112.10 and Professional Learning 10.2210.5242.10? **Staff development is training and PD. Learning is coursework.** Why a requested increase of \$ 17,493.82 over FY23 actual? **The current CBA**

requires we budget \$30,000 for PD and learning. They may not always sign up for it, but it is required to be there.

10. Function: School Board - 2310 10.2310.5310 School Board Secretary Is this position typically filled by a current school board member or a non-board individual? **This is a hired position. The current person, Susan Defelice, role has been doing it since before I was here.** Same question with regard to the Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer. Who performs these tasks? **The Treasurer (Angela O'Connell) is an elected position. The Deputy Treasurer (Jennifer Brown) is appointed.**
11. Function: School Board - 2310 What is an example of an item that may be included in 10.2310.5890.00 that is not listed in the other budget lines of that function? **This line mostly includes bank fees and staff recognition.**
12. Function: SAU Office - 2320 10.2320.5434.00 Maintenance Agreement-SAU Is this building maintenance outside of Ellis School? **This line includes maintenance agreements for the SAU only.** What does this line encompass? **It encompasses the District's Zoom subscription, docstar subscription, website and accounting software.** Same question for Function: School Administration -2400 10.2400.5431.00 Maintenance Agreement. I am trying to understand what the 2 maintenance agreements cover. **This line covers the Ellis School agreements like: mail machine, attendance software, student pickup software, copier maintenance, etc.**
13. Function: Facilities - 2600 10.2600.5118.10 SALARIES CUSTODIAL How many members are on the custodial staff? **We have 5 employees that total 3.58 FTE.**

Holmes asked how many students were receiving ELS services and how often they were getting those services? Halliday stated that currently there is one student in need of services. It is hard to say how often services come in because it is student driven. A lot of the services can be provided by teachers and support staff based on recommendations made by the ELS contracted person. If there is not enough money in this line item, a transfer could be made from another line or function.

Holmes requested a clarification on the staff development line, does this include speakers brought in by the school. Castle and Halliday stated no, this is solely for the teachers to attend training or classwork. When the School brings someone in that is typical paid with grant money or out of another function. Holmes also wanted clarification on what a staff recognition would be? Halliday stated it would be a small gift to award 5, 10, 15 years of employment or something special for the Christmas Holiday.

Holmes asked for clarification regarding the SAU and Main office breakdown of staffing such as secretaries.

Holmes wanted to know why there was no longer \$1.00 in the bus monitor line. Castle stated that the only place that requires a \$1.00 as a hold is a function line. As long as there is money in the function that contains the specific line, he can zero it out.

Yokela asked Castle and Halliday to provide him with a list of where the completed projects listed in the presentation came from. They will have this information for him and the rest of the Committee at the next meeting. Halliday did state that some of the money, such as the sprinklers and adaptive playground equipment did come from ESSR funds.

Holmes asked if the school was going to need to purchase a sander. Muench stated that they received a grant to purchase a salt/sander that fits on the tractor Mr. Normandin has. Normandin came to the School

Board and requested to take over the landscaping responsibilities. They purchased a tractor and have been slowly purchasing needed equipment as the need arises. Normandin only does the walk ways and sidewalks. The Town still plows and sands the parking lot.

There was a lengthy discussion on the combining of the Social Worker and the Psychologist positions and how they were reflected in the default budget. Castle and Halliday stated they met with the School Attorney and under that recommendation placed the position under the psychologist line in the default budget. Yokela believed, under the law that is should be placed under the social worker position based on the employee's job description, that you can't rename the position, but can add responsibilities. Muench reviewed the reasons behind hiring an in-house employee vs the contracts that were in place prior. Castle and Halliday are going to meet with the Attorney and review this again, based on the information that Yokela provided. They will report back at the next meeting. Benson clarified what the School saved from last year's contracted costs and this year's proposal of moving those services in house.

Yokela started reviewing the default budget. There was a lot of discussion on some contractual lines not being the same in the proposed line and the default line. Castle stated he has the back up on the reasoning behind the numbers. He is happy to review all with Yokela to confirm the numbers are correct. Yokela is going to submit his questions, which Castle will answer. Castle is also going to review his numbers and the law, under RSA 40:13 9B. There will be further review at the next meeting once all the numbers have been looked at, verified that they are correct and why.

Holmes recapped some of the points in the last meeting for Yokela, such as decreased enrollment, trust accounts, Sanborn Tuition GMR and population housing because he missed the prior meeting.

In answer to Yokela, Castle and Halliday stated that there are no large/special projects planned for FY25.

Cordes confirmed that the \$336,777 that is coming back to the District will not change. Holmes stated that the Board has always supported the School because of the School's "good faith" promise of returning unused funds back to the Town instead of making large purchases at the end of the year.

Next meeting dates: November 29 (basement meeting room), which will be the school. Then December 6 and 13th with 20th if needed.

The Federal Primary was set by the State today for January 23, 2024.

Motion to adjourn was made by Muench, seconded by Cordes. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Shawn Perreault
Recording Secretary