



HUDSON SCHOOL BOARD

18 Library Street Hudson, New Hampshire

6:30 pm Regular Meeting
Non-Public Session

Minutes – October 20, 2022

In Attendance

Board Members

Gary Gasdia, Chairman
Gretchen Whiting, Vice Chair
Ethan Beals
Mike Campbell
Maureen Dionne

SAU Staff

Dan Moulis, Superintendent of Schools
Kimberly Organek, Assistant
Superintendent of Schools
Rachel Borge, Director Special Services
Jen Burk, Business Administrator

A. Call to Order [0:00:04]

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Gary Gasdia called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Gretchen Whiting led the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Public Input [0:00:31]

There was no public input.

C. New Business [0:00:40]

1. FY2024 Budget (Discussion)

a. Hudson Memorial School

Hudson Memorial School principal Keith Bowen presented the Hudson Memorial School FY24 budget. Highlights include:

- Overall budget increase of 5.33%, of which 5.78% was due to salary and benefits; all other expenditures were decreased by .54%
- General supply accounts were level funded with some increases due to increased costs of goods or materials and/or shipping fees
- 700 students were projected for next year

Increased costs in the following areas:

- PE equipment additional – volleyball poles (\$2,400)
- Social Studies software – IXL (\$5,000)

- Music equipment – cabinet replacement (\$1,001)
- PLTW additional equipment – Robotics (\$1,200)
- Professional dues & fees – slight increases
- Furniture & delivery - cost increases
- Game officials increases (\$600)

Decreased costs in the following areas:

- Music equipment additional (\$1,242)
- Projector bulbs (\$430)
- Math book software (\$1,100)
- Nursing software – moving to IT budget (\$375)

Removed for 2023-24:

- Social studies textbook replacement (\$23,000)
- Majestic vibraphone (\$3,173)
- Spanish workbooks (\$460)
- Read 180 and System 44 consumables (\$2,000)
- Read 180 and System 44 software (\$2,950)

New for 2023-24 (in addition to increase cost items noted earlier):

- Transportation line for music program (\$2,500)
- Student health workbooks (\$600)
- New volleyball poles (\$2,400)
- Bass clarinet – Jupiter JBC 1000NC (\$1,931)

Capital Projects:

- Window replacement continuation
- Science lab renovation – two labs in FY24 (\$200,000); Adjustments to plan include moving electrical outlets for safety, reduce sinks, and add more mobility/space. There are eight rooms to be renovated in total, and two per year will be included in the operating budget. An idea was to do a warrant article to address all eight rooms at once in grades 6 and 7. Mr. Beals asked about the height and material of the tabletops and had concerns about a lightweight or particle board top. Mr. Bowen will inquire about this. There was discussion about the timeframe to accomplish the project over the summer. Uniformity within the labs' plan, setup, and style are important (similar to Alvirne). Labs 106 and 201 are most in need of work.

Other:

- Cafeteria table replacement plan (year 4, with three tables per year)
- Replacement plan for science tables and stools (one classroom remaining)

FY24 Proposed Budget: increase of 5.33%

Items with changes over \$5,000 include textbook replacement (-\$23,000), and furniture replacement (a chorus cabinet at \$6,675) due to increased shipping costs.

District wide parent-teacher conference scheduling software is being considered. Mr. Bowen will research having a less expensive or free scheduling software instead of PTC Wizard.

There was review of P.E. supplies:

- Consumable wellness supplies \$2,000
- Fitness supplies \$1,700
- Physical education supplies \$1,600
- Safety equipment \$1,100
- Health and nutrition supplies

Classroom management software was cut last year. There was discussion about the benefit of optimizing the learning environment in the classroom and monitoring any distractions to learning. One concern is that substitutes may not have access to the software. Ms. Whiting suggested that a proof of concept be done.

Priority items are social emotional learning coaches, a full-time student family interventionist, a BCBA for behavior issues, and an athletic trainer after school. Mr. Bowen doesn't see where cuts can be made where the budget is bare bones. Superintendent Moulis noted that areas of possible cuts, if necessary, could be the new volleyball pole (if there could be help from Alvirne) and cafeteria tables.

b. Alvirne High School

Alvirne High School principal Steve Beals reviewed the high school budget for FY24. He began by noting that this is a unique budget season where he was not present for a portion, and he thanked the Superintendent and Business Administrator for working with him. Highlights included:

- The overall budget is up 4.7%; salaries and benefits increased by 6.2%; all other expenditures are down by 5.4%
- A level-funded budget was sought
- New staffing requests are for academic assistance for struggling students totaling \$30,000 (as more students are doing HiSet, Adult Education, and using the math support center) This could be reduced to \$20,000 if necessary
- There are new expenses including: workshops, music equipment/supplies; science supplies; English programs; foreign language supplies; math textbooks and equipment (but with software decrease); and co-curricular transportation, as well as athletic training services and game officials

Individual account budgets were reviewed. Trustee information was not discussed.

Big ticket items include:

- Musical equipment: 5-year lease agreement (total value was \$27,500; the lease would be \$36,500 and not the best value) This could be an end-of-year unexpended fund balance expense or perhaps supported by the Trustees as part of "support and supplant"
- Agenda books: purchased for about 500 students, including freshmen
- Social studies: The Week magazine (reduce to one subscription for a savings of \$750)
- World language: classroom sets vs. individual books

- Textbook replacement of books over 15 years
- New programs and author visits (Shakespeare) due to new teachers; an example of Zoom-type field trips for students such as in AP was mentioned
- There was clarification that ALEX math software will be going away
- Clarification: three classroom sets of 10 graphing calculators (30 total)
- Furniture replacement: decision not to increase cafeteria tables to keep a level budget
- Marching band uniforms: current uniforms are 25 years old; scheduled to be a 6-year purchase with 100 uniforms in year one. Currently, there are about 70 students in band and the number will be growing. The color/blend of the material changes as the uniforms age. An idea is to seek quotes and put this on a warrant article for 115 uniforms and have the community vote. The cost is approximately \$449/each.
- Eliminating the e-hall pass subscription as it is not used successfully
- NHIAA changed how payment is configured: game fee plus mileage - look at teams and games typically played - the game fee would decrease from \$93/game on the varsity level to \$80/game. A suggestion is to increase the salary by \$5,000 (reduction of \$6,000) since there are always unexpended funds in co-curricular transportation and officials at the end of the year.
- Alvirne is the only school that pays for AP testing (paying for half the exam was suggested); PSAT testing could be reduced for Juniors; HiSet testing is necessary
- Read 180 coaching is necessary
- Reduction of \$1,000 from library book replacement account and remove the \$500 for DVDs and reduce the fiction/non-fiction to \$9,000
- Audiovisual: reduce \$800 in bulbs/AV equipment
- Professional membership: reduce to \$2500
- Preference is to hold graduation at SNHU for cost savings
- More elective teachers and paraprofessional support would be helpful if possible
- Academic support is an alternative to provide structure for struggling students (ALT program is helpful as another pathway)

c. Wilbur H. Palmer Career & Technical Education Center

Director Eric Frauwirth reviewed the CTE FY24 budget. Highlights included:

- All newly renovated spaces are open
- 625 students enrolled in CTE (including over 200 area sending students) with potential increases over the next two years
- Capacity for additional students
- All programs shifted to 80-minute classes in 2022-23
- Expansion of natural resource program (increased from 45 to 80 minutes; forestry and greenhouse management are set as course options for the second year)
- New position requests include:
 - Conversion of department chair to assistant director
 - F/T business instructor
 - F/T computer science instructor (from PT; note: the instructor had two blocks and an elective course for non CTE in game design, making this a full-time position)
 - F/T Welding/Mechanics instructor from P/T - difficult to fill these positions - not moved forward by the superintendent for FY24

- Business math classes would be taught by the math department freeing the current business teacher to cover accounting classes.
- The health and human services teacher would teach human services, social work, and human growth and development. There was discussion about education vs. health/human resources and career field paths. The board favors keeping the education pathway (early childhood education).
- As a region, a goal is to have a common application which will help to justify Hudson having its own classes
- Increase of \$2500 for health science equipment (biology embedded course)
- Construction trades and welding increases due to supply costs (could dip into revolving funds if needed)
- Banking and accounting textbooks: change of textbooks as accounting rules change
- Mr. Frauwirth will inquire about contracted services/building trades
- It was noted that projects were being done using own materials e.g., the lumber from the forestry program would be used to build a shed by the construction trades program
- For career and tech programs - it was suggested to point out Perkins-funding (required by law for gross-based budgeting)
- Priority of new positions requests: conversion of department chair to assistant director; F/T business instructor; and F/T computer science instructor (from PT)
- If possible, it would be helpful to move the culinary instructor to full time to expand the program based on student interest. Two pieces of simulator equipment would be helpful.
- It is a challenge statewide to hire computer science teachers

Mr. Gasdia felt that the town should vote on things using the fund balance. There are 56 positions listed as vacant that accounted for \$2.4 million. Historically, the average was \$1.1 million in vacant positions. Actual expenses year per year (budgeted amount for salaries/benefits vs. actual) ran from 93-96% because not all employees started on July 1 and ended on June 30.

The lowest fund balance since 2011 was \$239,000, the average was \$1 million. If larger purchases are put on the ballot as warrant articles, it would reduce the budget by \$419,960. Suggested items for warrant articles are the replacement chairlift, science labs, window replacements, playground phase 2, and marching band uniforms and removing the placeholder of \$200,000 for the food service program transfer, for a total budget reduction of \$619,960. The board heard requests from administration on additional staffing needs beyond what is in the budget when asked how they would spend the next dollar. They could add in 15 positions at \$50,000 each for a total of \$750,000, to cover salary & benefits. If the board considers a 99% spend rate in the area of salaries & benefits and adjust accordingly, we could still reduce the budget below the default. The difference between the proposed and default budget would be \$317,000. He realizes there are risks to this if more staff were indeed hired and supports still filling these positions. He feels academics should come first and the community should have the opportunity to vote. This is a way to fund a lot based on the reality of the current situation.

Ethan Beals made a motion to amend the agenda to add a non-public session. Gretchen Whiting seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

D. Non-Public Session - RSA 91-A:3 II (k) [2:32:58]

At 9:03pm, Mr. Beals made a motion to enter into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II k. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0. Roll call vote.

Student tuition agreements were discussed. Motion was approved 5-0 for this year only. A negotiations update was included as well as a Teacher of the Year update, and information on legal fees was shared.

E. Leave Non-Public and Adjourn [3:09:58]

At 9:40pm, Mr. Beals made a motion to return to general session. Ms. Whiting seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0. Roll call vote.

Submitted by
Susan DeFelice
Non-Public by Dan Moulis