

**Minutes of the Litchfield Budget Committee Meeting
Held on January 8, 2015**

The Litchfield Budget Committee held a meeting on Thursday, January 8, 2015 at Campbell High School, 1 Highlander Court, Litchfield, NH 03052.

PRESENT: C Couture (Chair), A Cutter (Vice Chair), W Spencer, R Peeples, C Pascucci, D Vaillancourt, K Douglas, B Bourque (School Board Representative), F Byron (Selectmen's Representative)

Absent:

Mrs. Couture called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

3. REVIEW/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

Mrs. Couture indicated there was an addition to the agenda under New Business/Member Input, Budget Hearing Presentation.

4. REVIEW/ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes were not available.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs. Couture mentioned that she distributed the MS-27 worksheet, Mr. Spencer's school district budget reductions sorted by function, and FY16 Warrant Articles from the district.

6. SCHOOL BUSINESS

- **Budget Voting**
 - **Final Budget Voting**

- **Salaries Tabled Motion**

On December 18, 2014, the Budget Committee tabled a motion made by Mr. Bourque to add \$86,367 to the FY16 School Board Recommended Budget for administrative compensation payouts. The Budget Committee asked for more information regarding the amount contained in the motion. Mr. Bourque provided a breakdown of that number that includes a vacation payout of \$50,262.57 and severance of \$36,104.89. He indicated that he could not divulge the identity of the employees.

Mr. Spencer asked how many positions the payout involves. Mr. Bourque indicated there are three positions.

Mr. Spencer asked why this has to be done next year. Mr. Bourque indicated that it should have been done last year. Mr. Markiewicz commented that a settlement has to be negotiated with those individuals. He indicated that when a contract is changed a payout has to be negotiated.

Mr. Spencer asked why the contract had to be rewritten. Mr. Markiewicz indicated the School Board wanted all administration on the same contract.

Mr. Spencer commented it did not have to be that way and as a result it drives the total into next year's budget. Mr. Bourque commented if we wait longer it drives the total higher.

Mr. Spencer asked if this is the district's maximum exposure and wanted to know if the payout could be decrease through negotiations. Mr. Markiewicz indicated the payout will not decrease, but many not all be paid out next year.

Mrs. Couture asked why the district has to enter negotiations with the individuals. Dr. Cochrane commented the district cannot arbitrarily offer a new contract without making it a substantially equal value. He indicated it is a labor law expectation in the annual contract situation. Dr. Cochrane noted that all administrators from July 1, 2012 forward have been offered a contract with Earned Time Off (ETO), no accrual of vacation or sick days, and no severance. He explained the only severance would be unused vacation time, which provides limited long term exposure to the taxpayers.

Mr. Spencer asked if the individuals signed the contract. Mr. Markiewicz indicated they did not as this contract is for next year.

Dr. Cochrane indicated the strongly preferred option is to find a solution both sides can live with that will pay out what the individuals have accrued and make their contract going forward the same value.

Mr. Spencer commented the problem is finding the right number. Mr. Markiewicz commented the discussion was held in non-public session and expressed caution about how much is discussed in public session.

MOTION: by Mr. Bourque

Move to increase the FY16 Salaries and Benefits Account by \$86,367.46

SECOND: by Mr. Spencer

MOTION: by Mr. Spencer

Move to amend the motion to increase the FY16 Salaries and Benefits Account by \$40,000

SECOND: by Mr. Cutter

Mr. Spencer commented that he has no problem with the number that was computed. Mr. Bourque asked what would happen if the district has to pay out the settlement at one time.

Mr. Spencer commented the remainder can be taken out of the budget. Mr. Bourque was concerned that would impact the children's education.

Mrs. Couture commented that the School Board can make a decision to use unexpended year end funds to pay out the settlement in the following year. She noted that she understands the rationale behind the request, but does not feel comfortable adding the money to the budget. She indicated there is always attrition or and unexpended amount at the end of the year that can be used for the pay out.

VOTE ON THE AMENDED MOTION: 4-5-0

The amended motion failed.

Mr. Spencer commented that Mrs. Couture made a valid point about using end of year funds for the pay out, if available.

Mrs. Couture commented that she sat on the School Board in the past and there were many times we looked at salary adjustments.

Mr. Bourque was concerned that the Budget Committee is making it difficult for the School Board to negotiate and if the individuals settle the district may not have the money at the end of year. Mrs. Couture indicated that has to be part of the negotiations.

Mr. Markiewicz indicated he recommended to the School Board not to enter negotiations.

Mr. Byron cautioned that this could result in people being accused of negotiating in bad faith.

Mr. Spencer commented the Budget Committee is not recommending how the district spends the money in its budget, but is recommending a bottom line budget. He noted we are not restricting anything in those terms. He indicated that another point is you are thinking about negotiating a contract that is not yet complete.

VOTE ON THE MAIN MOTION: 3-6-0

The motion failed.

MOTION: by Mr. Bourque

Move to increase the FY16 Transportation Account 2721 by \$99,720

SECOND: by Mr. Cutter

Mr. Bourque indicated the Budget Committee removed two buses from the budget without a plan. He commented that the School Board and the district had conversations about reducing buses, but there has been no determination as yet. He noted the School Board has to have discussions with the schools regarding start and end times as well.

Mr. Spencer commented that the Budget Committee asked for information on schedules, loads and times and has not received any of that information. Mr. Bourque commented the bus company still has to cover the same routes and pick up the students.

Mr. Bourque asked why the Budget Committee removed buses this year and not last year. Mr. Spencer indicated the budget was presented with a \$1M increase and an \$800,000 decrease in revenues.

Mr. Bourque asked why remove buses. Mr. Spencer indicated the School Board raised that issue and it seemed logical to do.

Mr. Spencer asked if the district has information on bus loads and the status with First Student regarding this information. Mr. Markiewicz indicated that First Student's first recommendation would be combining high school and middle school runs.

Mr. Bourque commented there will be great concern if we put 5th graders on the buses with seniors. Mrs. Couture commented that she appreciates Mr. Bourque's concern, but when we put 5th graders on the bus with 8th graders there was negative feedback.

Mrs. Douglas commented without polling parents how can we say everyone is opposed to the idea. She indicated that we know the School Board presented a budget with a \$1M increase and did not try to mitigate it. She noted we have to have that discussion.

Mr. Peebles indicated we have to give the town a budget they can afford.

Mr. Pascucci commented for the sake of discussion, if it were one bus would that mean 5th graders would be on buses with seniors. Mr. Bourque indicated we do not have enough information to make a rationale decision.

Mr. Markiewicz commented that we asked First Student to look at having each bus service each school individually. He indicated the issue is the schedule at the middle school. He noted we are not just looking at the number of stops or the number of students getting on at the stops, but getting buses scheduled with the middle school.

Mr. Spencer commented that Mr. Pascucci raised an interesting question. He asked why not reduce the buses by one. Dr. Cochrane indicated currently the longest bus run is 32 minutes. He commented if we reduce one bus we are up to 35 minute runs; possibly 40 minute runs.

Mr. Markiewicz indicated we have 8 buses that service CHS, 10 that service GMS and LMS, and one bus for vocational education. He commented that moving the buses around the district with the existing bell schedule is tight.

Mr. Pascucci asked when First Student will be done with their analysis. Mr. Markiewicz indicated we cannot put a timeframe on it. He noted they mentioned August, but we can only work with them at this point. He commented they are getting new software, but it is not up and running yet. He noted they are working on a solution.

Mr. Pascucci commented that reducing two buses was the goal, but it is most likely impossible. Mr. Markiewicz indicated it is a very difficult challenge. Mr. Pascucci commented adding back \$100,000 is difficult as well.

MOTION: by Mr. Spencer

Move to amend the motion to increase the Transportation Account 2721 by \$49,863

SECOND: by Mr. Vaillancourt

Mr. Spencer indicated that his motion is to compromise and add back a bus.

Mrs. Couture believes a one bus reduction is reasonable. She commented that next year's projections are lower than they have been for 15 years. She indicated that somewhere over the last 15 years a bus was added and it seems reasonable to say we can reduce a bus. Mrs. Couture commented that the district was able to provide transportation years ago with more students and less buses. She indicated that the middle school start and end times has been changed a number of times and should not be a big problem. She noted if you come forward with a logical argument parents will accept the justification.

Mr. Bourque commented that the teachers' union is the issue. Mrs. Couture commented that we have one of the best unions and they have always worked well with us. She indicated she does not anticipate a problem.

Mr. Bourque commented we do not have the information from the past and it may have made sense in that timeframe. He indicated we do not have a plan and do not know what the impact will be.

Mr. Cutter commented he is not comfortable reducing buses.

Mr. Byron asked if we have any opportunity to collect data from the bus company prior to Deliberative Session. Mr. Markiewicz offered to ask the bus company.

Dr. Cochrane commented that we are not sure of the cost of the software for the bus company. He indicated that accurate information on time between stops is necessary, which is a several months process.

Mr. Cutter commented there is not enough information to make reductions in this area and this directly impacts students.

Mrs. Couture commented we did this in the past with more students and it is not unreasonable.

Mr. Spencer asked Dr. Cochrane if the district can provide transportation with one less bus. Dr. Cochrane commented the longer students are on the bus the more risk for behavior issues. He indicated theoretically this could work. He noted he would like to have a certainty.

VOTE ON THE AMENDED MOTION TO INCREASE THE TRANSPORTATION ACCOUNT 2721 BY \$49,863: 6-3-0

The motion passed.

VOTE ON THE MAIN MOTION TO INCREASE THE BOTTOM LINE OF THE TRANSPORTATION BUDGET 2721 BY \$49,863: 8-1-0

The motion passed.

MOTION: by Mr. Bourque

Move to increase the Salaries and Benefits in Account 1100 by \$55,000

SECOND: by Mrs. Couture

Mr. Bourque indicated that the enrollment numbers in grade 3 are 99-100 students. He commented that would put a class size of 25 in classrooms, which exceeds School Board class size policy.

Mrs. Couture commented the projections for grade 4 next year are 96 students. Mr. Spencer commented it is common to have ‘ups and downs’. He noted the criteria we use for projections is the October 1 data.

Mr. Bourque indicated that 96 students is still above the policy limits. Mr. Spencer indicated the policy also states “if the town can afford it”. Mrs. Couture noted the policy states “the district will strive for the class sizes”.

Mr. Cutter asked how close it is to the policy. Mrs. Couture indicated the difference is three students. Mr. Pascucci commented the number is still within the stated policy.

Dr. Cochrane commented that he understands the projection model, but he is not a fan of the 3-year weighted average. He noted there is transition there. He indicated that families usually move in grades 2 and 3 because they have to or because they want to. He commented the reality is that it is not a great model or consistent pattern, but an average that allows us to determine if it will work out in our favor. Dr. Cochrane indicated he cannot see how running classes with over 25 students will not cost the district more over time with identified students or tutors. He commented to ask fourth grade teachers to teach 25 students is not the best situation.

Mrs. Couture indicated we used the 3-year weighted average for many years. She noted sometimes they are accurate and sometimes they are not subject to the conditions at that time. She commented ten years ago we worked hard on a cut off for students in classrooms. She indicated an influx of students can result, but you have to deal with it.

Mr. Spencer commented that there are paraprofessionals in classes now that we did not have before.

Mrs. Douglas commented this is a serious tax increase. Mr. Bourque indicated the education of our children is more important.

Mr. Vaillancourt commented that he does not like to see jobs reduced, but there is a fine line with the enrollment projections. He noted he would be agreeable to a reduction of one teacher.

Mr. Cutter expressed support for adding back a teacher. He commented that it is a difficult decision to make. He indicated if the enrollment was far below the ration he would support the reduction.

Mr. Spencer indicated that ten years ago an article was presented that stated the Budget Committee should use the new School Board guidelines for class sizes. He commented that the voters did not approve the article saying that the Budget Committee should not use the School Board ratios.

Mr. Pascucci commented we have to base our decision on the numbers.

Mr. Vaillancourt asked about the average class size in grade four. Mr. Bourque indicated that the average class size in grade four is 21 students.

Mr. Peeples commented it comes down to the bottom line of the budget.

VOTE: 3-6-0

The motion failed.

MOTION: by Mr. Bourque

Move to increase the Tutors line in the FY16 Salaries and Benefits budget by \$22,800

SECOND: by Mr. Byron

Mr. Bourque indicated the motion is to add back the GMS part time math tutor. He commented that math is the largest challenge in the district.

Mr. Spencer commented that the Budget Committee reduced that so the School Board could bring it forward as a warrant article. He indicated it is considered a new position by Budget Committee practice and did not meet the criteria.

Mrs. Couture indicated the Budget Committee supported the position, but based their decision on the history of bringing forward new positions.

Mr. Pascucci commented he would support it and speak to it as a warrant article.

Mr. Spencer asked if the School Board would consider bringing it forward as a warrant article. Mr. Bourque indicated he would have to bring it back to the School Board.

VOTE: 2-7-0

The motion failed.

MOTION: by Mr. Bourque

Move to increase the FY16 LMS Technology budget by \$7,800

SECOND: by Mr. Byron

Mr. Bourque indicated the motion is to add back the lease purchase of desktops for LMS. He commented it is a four year lease for 30 desktops and the purchase price would be \$29,016.

Mr. Pascucci commented that he does not doubt that LMS needs the desktops, but he cannot support a lease in the budget. He indicated he would support a motion for the purchase cost.

MOTION: by Mr. Pascucci

Move to increase the FY16 LMS Technology budget by \$29,016 for the purchase of 30 desktops

SECOND: Mr. Byron

Mr. Vaillancourt believes a better price can be acquired. Mr. Markiewicz indicated these are price quotes and without knowing the specifications of the computers we cannot determine if we can get a better price.

Mr. Peeples was concerned that we are doing this without a solid technology plan. He indicated that desktops are going away and zero clients are the equipment of choice. He commented that he was talking with folks in Londonderry and they are going with virtual technology.

Mr. Markiewicz indicated that the district has a technology plan.

Mrs. Douglas asked if the district wants to purchase all the desktops in one year. Mr. Peeples indicated that the total cost of ownership decreases as their life is extended by stocking parts. Mr. Markiewicz indicated these will replace computers that are 7+ years old.

Mrs. Couture commented there is a technology plan for the new director to follow. She indicated the issue is with the lease purchase.

Mr. Spencer commented that a lease purchase makes sense, but he voted to reduce it because he is concerned that the lease purchase is not being approved by the voters. He indicated if this were a separate warrant article he would support it.

VOTE ON AMENDED MOTION TO INCREASE THE LMS TECHNOLOGY BUDGET BY \$29,016: 6-3-0

The motion passed.

VOTE ON THE MAIN MOTION TO INCREASE THE LMS TECHNOLOGY BUDGET BOTTOM LINE BY \$29,016: 6-3-0

The motion passed.

Budget Committee - Budget Voting by MS-27 Format

MOTION: by Mrs. Douglas

Move to reduce Function 1100-1199, Regular Programs, by \$55,000

SECOND: by Mr. Peeples

Mrs. Douglas commented she is concerned about the increase in the budget. She indicated there is a placeholder in the budget for long term substitutes in case something happens. She explained that her reduction is based on eliminating the additional music enhancement program, which she believes should be a warrant article; eliminating the furniture for the music room for which the furniture from the anticipated empty classrooms can be used; eliminated theater arts items, which she feels are wants and not needs. Mrs. Douglas indicated that she looked through the numbers and felt there are \$55,000 of items that are wants and not needs.

Mr. Cutter commented that these accounts were reduced a few weeks ago. Mrs. Douglas indicated the budget is still too high when you consider the potential tax impact. She commented that enrollment is declining and taxes are increasing.

Mr. Cutter commented he agrees with Mrs. Douglas' rationale, but would like to have had ample time to do some fact checking. He indicated he is not comfortable voting without checking the facts.

Mrs. Couture commented that the Budget Committee went through the budget line by line and Mrs. Douglas reviewed the budget further and has items she feels need to be reduced.

Dr. Cochrane commented that next year's freshmen class has five sections of at least 24 students in science and there are five math sections at maximum enrollment. He indicated the district cannot meet the education standards in math and science with the reductions there.

Mr. Markiewicz clarified that the long term substitutes appropriations are budgeted at district-wide levels and expensed to the individual location. He indicated that those lines are not placeholders and are fully expended out.

VOTE: 2-7-0

The motion failed.

MOTION: by Mrs. Douglas

Move to reduce Function 1200-1299, Special Programs, by \$79,000

SECOND: by Mr. Peeples

Mrs. Douglas explained she is reducing the extra teacher in kindergarten due to the declining enrollment. She commented that included in the reduction is the special education certification. She indicated that she understands the discussion about certification for our teachers and proposed that two people per school get certified. Mrs. Douglas noted that the reduction also includes equipment replacement (laptops), noting that \$1,000 per laptop is more than she is willing to spend; additional furniture (filing cabinets) as the cost is significant and the district can purchase less expensive filing cabinets.

Mr. Bourque asked Mrs. Douglas for the total amount of reductions she is going to propose. Mrs. Douglas indicated she is prepared to reduce \$368,000 from the budget.

Mr. Bourque requested to go through each individual item that Mrs. Douglas wishes to reduce. Mr. Spencer indicated the Budget Committee is voting the bottom line and not individual items.

Referring to Mrs. Douglas reduction in pre-kindergarten, Dr. Cochrane indicated that the district is required by law to offer special education in pre-school starting at age 3. He clarified that the additional teacher she is referring to is a pre-kindergarten teacher.

Mrs. Couture indicated there are six teachers listed in GMS special education budget. Mrs. Douglas indicated that during the discussion there was comment that there is typically one special education teacher per grade and that is what she used to calculate her reduction.

VOTE: 2-7-0

The motion failed.

MOTION: by Mrs. Douglas

Move to reduce Function 2000-2199, Student Support Services, by \$1,750

SECOND: Mr. Cutter

Mrs. Douglas commented that the reduction is based on reducing \$250 from the cost of each laptop.

Mr. Peeples commented the reduction is realistic.

Dr. Cochrane indicated that a quality machine is a machine that can be imaged and serviced and that is the kind of conversation we have been having.

VOTE: 7-2-0

The motion passed.

MOTION: by Mrs. Douglas

Move to reduce Function 2200-2299, Instructional Staff Services by \$43,600

SECOND: by Mr. Peeples

Mrs. Douglas explained that the Library items seem to be wants and not needs. She commented that the same rationale is reflected in instructional computer equipment.

Mr. Bourque commented that we do not speak for the teachers and their needs. He indicated they presented what they need and you define it as a want. Mrs. Douglas commented students are being educated appropriately without it. She indicated our students are scoring high with what we have now.

Mr. Pascucci commented there are a few ways to look at this. He indicated when sitting as a community member he had an opinion of specific wants vs needs. He noted we have done a good job of reducing the budget. Mr. Pascucci commented that taxes are increasing and he is not sure what the right number may be.

Mrs. Couture commented when we went through the budget line we ended up supporting reductions that she felt were reasonable. She indicated four years ago the district lost \$2M and had to make difficult reductions. She noted the district got the money back, but was unable to use much of those funds and we are catching up. Mrs. Couture commented that smart boards and additional equipment are there for a reason.

Dr. Cochrane commented that we had more requests at the elementary school this year. He noted that he has witnessed some amazing instructional lessons on smart boards and many teachers want to get the training to use them. He indicated that when smart boards are used the whole class is engaged.

Mrs. Douglas commented that she feels technology is valuable, but is concerned if people can afford it.

Mr. Peeples commented that he appreciates the thoughtfulness in constructing the rationale for the reduction. He noted there are some compelling documents about private schools that are turnout out students of equal caliber with differing technology. He indicated that teachers, not technology, make the difference in education.

Dr. Cochrane indicated if you have strong teachers the technology can be used to enhance instruction.

Mr. Cutter commented that when we started the district budget process he and the Superintendent had a bit of a debate over my proposal to reduce the budget by \$1M. He indicated the Budget Committee has reduced approximately \$900,000 and he feels comfortable with the reductions to date.

VOTE: 2-7-0

The motion failed.

MOTION: by Mrs. Douglas

Move to reduce Function 2400-2499, School Administration Service, by \$100,000

SECOND: by Mr. Spencer

Mrs. Douglas commented that the motion reflects the reduction of an assistant principal. She indicated each school enrollment is below 500 students and the state requires an assistant principal for 500 or more students.

Mr. Peeples noted assistant principals are responsible for many things: teacher reviews, student discipline, special education meetings, etc. He commented he is unsure if he can support losing this type of position.

Mr. Pascucci commented he has this question and is satisfied with the Superintendent's answer.

Dr. Cochrane indicated that we have placed extensive expectations on building administrators. He commented we have good administrators who have high expectations for themselves. He noted we are fortunate to have administrators who are teacher leaders and who retain certification, as well as original certifications in instruction. Dr. Cochrane indicated building administrators understand curriculum theory and assessment theory. He commented we are asking people to change their teaching practice and have made strides in the last four years. He noted teachers are the core of what we do, but they cannot do it by themselves – they need leadership. Dr. Cochrane indicated the caliber of that leadership is why we are where we are today.

VOTE: 1-8-0

The motion failed.

MOTION: by Mrs. Douglas

Move to reduce Function 2500-2599, Business, by \$875

SECOND: by Mr. Pascucci

Mrs. Douglas indicated that the motion reflects the reduction of office partitions, which seem like wants and not needs.

Mr. Byron called the question.

VOTE: 7-2-0

The motion passed.

MOTION: by Mr. Spencer

Move to reduce Function 2600-2699, Plant Operations and Maintenance, by \$23,000

SECOND: by Mr. Pascucci

Mr. Spencer commented that he is comfortable with the reduction to date, but is trying to mitigate the addition of \$78,000 in the budget. He indicated this is a global reduction in this account.

Mr. Byron asked how Mr. Spencer arrived at that number. Mr. Spencer indicated it is a broad-based number as there are many items in that function and there will most likely be unexpended funds.

Mr. Bourque disagreed with reducing the \$78,000 addition with a bunch of numbers.

Mr. Pascucci expressed support for the rationale. Mrs. Couture commented she does not believe in that type of rationale.

VOTE: 5-4-0

The motion passed.

MOTION: by Mr. Spencer

Move to reduce Function 2700-2799, Student Transportation, by \$26,000

SECOND: by Mrs. Douglas

Mr. Spencer commented that originally he amended Mr. Cutter's proposal of \$76,000 to \$50,000. He indicated he agrees with Mr. Cutter's original number and rationale. Mr. Spencer noted he is reducing the special education transportation.

VOTE: 7-2-0

The motion passed.

MOTION: by Mr. Peeples

Move to reduce Function 2800-2899, Support Service, Central and Other, by \$31,730

SECOND: by Mr. Pascucci

Mr. Peeples indicated the motion represents the salary increases the town pointed out we left in the budget that created an inequity between the town and the school district. He commented Mr. Byron pointed out the Budget Committee was being unethical in not approving the town wage increases.

Mrs. Couture commented the \$30,000 proposed by the town is to implement a wage schedule. She indicated this pool in the district budget is to add increments to administration salaries.

Mr. Peeples commented he believes they are both increases in the salaries of non-bargaining employees.

VOTE: 7-2-0

The motion passed.

Mr. Cutter indicated the revised bottom line of the FY16 School District Recommended budget is \$21,031,613.

MOTION: by Mr. Pascucci

Move to approve the FY16 School District Recommended budget bottom line of \$21,031,613

SECOND: Mr. Spencer

VOTE: 6-2-1

The motion passed.

o Warrant Articles

Article 2: District Technology Database Administrator \$79,535.57

Mrs. Couture read the article, which noted that the position will support the new Student Information System.

Mr. Spencer asked what the penalty would be if the position is not approved by the voters.

Dr. Cochrane indicated that the district will not be able to implement the new Student Information System (SIS). He explained that extensive research, site visits and demonstrations were made by the SIS Committee and the Committee recommended the purchase of Infinite Campus, which is the best fit for a small district. He noted that districts that have these newer systems have a database administrator. Dr. Cochrane indicated the SIS Committee unanimously recommended not to attempt migration to a new SIS without this position. He commented that support has been discontinued on the existing system and it is dysfunctional.

Mrs. Douglas asked if this position is for implementation or continued support. Dr. Cochrane indicated the position is needed for at least two years and further need will be determined. He noted this would be for basic functionality (attendance, grading, learning management functionality and parent portal).

Mrs. Douglas was concerned that once the position is approved it will remain. Dr. Cochrane indicated if the position is approved and the SIS implemented, we could be using less technology in two years.

Mr. Pascucci commented after two years there is a ramp up and a move to 1 to 1 computing. Dr. Cochrane indicated there is a built in learning management module that will support 1 to 1 computing. He commented that we are understaffed in technology support. He noted the plan for 1 to 1 computing is to start with the incoming freshmen. Dr. Cochrane indicated there are different methods to support devices for students that have to be discussed and determined. He believes the three technology positions will meet the district's needs and there will not be a reason to extend it beyond that.

Mr. Peeples commented the school will need more support. He indicated that the cost of the SIS is not broken out in the article and we do not know if we are getting the system. Dr. Cochrane commented we have the costs for Infinite Campus and Aspen Follet and are anticipating there will be a modest savings to the entire system.

Mrs. Douglas asked if 1 to 1 computing will be presented on a warrant article as we are increasing server capacity and there will most likely be an associated cost. Dr. Cochrane indicated we are currently piloting a BYOD in our freshmen class. Laptops for those teachers will support the computing and a relatively small number of teachers are part of the pilot.

Mr. Spencer commented that one article proposes a cost of \$80,000, another proposes a cost of \$80,000 and one proposes \$50,000. He indicated he is not sure he can support all three with that kind of impact to the taxpayers.

MOTION: by Mr. Byron

Move to recommend Article 2

SECOND: by Mr. Spencer

Mr. Bourque commented that Mr. Spencer is suggesting different items should go on the warrant, but expressed that he will not support the three presented here. He asked if Mr. Spencer would express support if the School Board brought forward warrant articles instead of money in the budget.

Mr. Spencer indicated we are back where we started with the budget increase and these articles will add to that increase. He commented if the School Board comes forward with a reasonable budget and reasonable articles, he would support them.

Mrs. Couture commented the Budget Committee decided last year we would propose a bottom line for the budget and the School Board said they would not honor it.

Mr. Cutter commented many items are recommended as articles, but that does not mean we have to vote in favor of those articles.

VOTE: 9-0-0

The motion passed.

Article 2 was recommended by the Budget Committee 9-0-0.

Article 3: Exterior Security Enhancements \$80,000

Mrs. Couture read the article, which proposes exterior video capacity to include the main entrance and perimeter of each school building, new call box/system for visitors entering the building during school hours, and exterior annunciators for emergency broadcast.

MOTION: by Mr. Byron

Move to recommend Article 3

SECOND: by Mr. Spencer

Mr. Pascucci commented that extra security is a good thing, but he believes the voters should decide if they want to increase safety.

Mrs. Douglas indicated she will abstain from voting since she requested to see a proposal for this and did not receive it. Mr. Markiewicz indicated he did not receive that request.

Mrs. Couture indicated her notes indicate there was a question about the additional cost, but no official request. She noted she will email Mr. Markiewicz to provide more information for the Budget Hearing.

Mr. Vaillancourt expressed support, but believes this is not the year for this warrant.

Mr. Byron expressed support because the security of the students is important and we owe the voters the choice.

Mr. Cutter called the question.

VOTE: 3-2-4

The motion passed.

Article 3 is recommended by the Budget Committee 3-2-4.

Article 4: Reclaim/Resurface GMS Paved Playground Area \$47,380

MOTION: by Mr. Byron

Move to recommend Article 4

SECOND: Mr. Bourque

VOTE: 9-0-0

The motion passed.

Article 4 was recommended by the Budget Committee 9-0-0.

Dr. Cochrane thanked the Budget Committee for their hard work. He expressed his appreciation for their honesty and candor.

7. MEMBER INPUT/NEW BUSINESS

Budget Hearing

Mrs. Couture commented that she will compile ideas and a draft for the budget hearing presentation. She indicated it would be more of a narrative with our version of tax increases and some history.

Mr. Spencer agreed with Mrs. Couture's method of presentation. He suggested viewing in the position of the voter and what they want to know. He noted they have to understand what is in the budgets.

Mr. Pascucci commented there is a reduction in revenue, which needs to be explained. He indicated some people feel intimidated and are afraid to ask questions. He noted it is the responsibility of all elected officials to help make that process easier.

8. PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

- **Upcoming meetings**

The next meeting of the Budget Committee is scheduled on January 15, 2015.

MOTION: by Mr. Cutter

Move to adjourn.

SECOND: Mrs. Douglas

VOTE: 9-0-0

The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:47 p.m.

Minutes by: *Michele E. Flynn (Recording Secretary)*

Date approved: **January 31, 2015**