

February 8, 2018

7:00 P.M., Town Hall - Kendall Chase Auditorium

The Epping School Board held its annual Deliberative Session at the Epping Town Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and amend articles to be presented on the Official School Ballot on the March 13, 2018 annual Voting Day.

The meeting was called to order at 7PM by Moderator Bob Goodrich beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Goodrich asked the boards to introduce themselves:

Budget Committee members in attendance were Chairman Don MacClaren; Vice Chairman Steve Ozols, Jeff Leombruno, Mark Nickerson, Board of Selectmen's Representative Adam Munguia, Jacklyn Ulban, Jen Chapman, Michael Charkowski and Cody Belanger.

School District Clerk Joyce Blanchard, School Board Members; Chairman David Mylott, Vice Chairman Deborah Brooks, Heather Clark and Daniel Haugh. SAU #14 Superintendent Valerie McKenney, Business Administrator Bonnie Sandstrom, School Attorney Anthony Muir.

Moderator Goodrich read the Rules of Procedure to the audience along with the First and Second Session to the audience.

Moderator Goodrich read the following:

Article 01: Bond for HVAC Renovations to the Epping Elementary

Shall the Epping School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,300,000 for the construction and renovation of the HVAC system at the elementary school and authorize the School Board to issue not more than \$1,100,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33) and to authorize the School Board to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereof, with the balance of \$200,000 to come from the Buildings and Grounds Capital Reserve Fund; and, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$16,763 for the first year's bond payment and authorize the School Board to take any other action necessary to carry out this vote? (3/5

ballot vote required). The School Board (4-0-0) and the Budget Committee (8-0-0) recommend this appropriation.

School Board Member Chairman David Mylott made a motion to accept Article 1 as read. Seconded by school board member Deborah Brooks.

Chairman David Mylott introduced Steve Caufield from Turner Engineering sitting in the audience and he will be available to answer questions regarding the HVAC renovations. Mr. Mylott reviewed the power point presentation regarding the problems, options, solutions and benefits to the school and town in support of this bond for HVAC. The inadequacy of the current HVAC has been an issue for quite a while. Air quality is not to present health standards and the equipment is outdated and beyond its useful life.

There were three options considered with a variable refrigerant flow heat pump system chosen. This will benefit the school with having air quality that exceeds standards for the staff and students. The bond will benefit the town by saving money on energy cost, electrical incentives, rising fuel cost, inefficient window air conditioners and better than the conventional and current options.

Tom Gauthier from Bartlett Street asked how much the other 2 options would cost. Mr. Gauthier thinks this is a very high price. Business Administrator Bonnie Sandstrom answered the cost of \$1.4 million for the conventional air conditioning and \$700,000 to renovate the existing system. Mr. Gauthier was assured this will go out to bid.

Mark Vallone from Blake Road worked in the school for 20 years and thinks it's about time this is done. Not all the parts of the current system works all the time which has some of the rooms having the windows opened in January or the air conditioners running. Mr. Vallone also believes with better air quality there will be a health benefit with less sickness as the air will be properly filtered which means a reduction in absenteeism. He fully supports this warrant article.

Chris Sousa from Harvest Way asked about the tax impact and how this article effects the Capital Improvement Plan that includes a HVAC for the High School, a million dollar roof for the Elementary School along with an addition. Chairman David Mylott explained the warrant article to increase the reserve fund will help fund the new roof that will be held off for a few more

years. There is going to be a space analysis for the elementary School to see if space can be better utilized. There will not be an expansion in the near future. Ms. Sandstrom reported an average of \$.17 for 10 years will be the tax impact for the new HVAC system. Which was presented to the Budget Committee.

Vice Chairman Deborah Brooks explained this new system will have heat pumps and all new technology that is extremely inexpensive to run. The Capital Plan includes a new HVAC system in 2021 and the board plans on hopefully waiting until then to take care of the High School.

Mark Vallone from Blake Road asked if there was going to be any state aid. The answer is there is no state funding. Mr. Vallone reported a loss of \$390,000 from state aid.

Adam Munguia is the Board of Selectmen Representative to the Budget Committee and a past member of the Budget Committee. This is an expensive project but needs to be done. This topic has been discussed and pushed off for 10 years and cannot be pushed off anymore. He believes this is the appropriate action to take.

Michael Charkowski on the Budget Committee spoke personally in favor of this system. He recently installed a heat pump system to his home and has seen his heating bills cut in half. This system will save the town a significant amount of money over the next 20-30 years. Mr. Charkowski is hoping when the bids go out the prices might be a little lower and the electric incentives might be more.

Budget Committee Chairman Don MacClaren asked engineer Steve Caufield to speak on what the project consists of. Mr. Caufield from Turner Building Science & Design was hired to study the air conditioning, the complete mechanical system and what it would take to improve both. The 4 major components that will be $\frac{1}{4}$ of the project cost are the air conditioning, ventilation system, upgrading controls and replacing original boilers from 1980. There are other items/concerns/issues that are at the end of their life that the entire cost will address.

Heidi Dunham from Fogg Road asked the projected length of time this renovation will last. Mr. Caufield responded 20 years is a reasonable estimate for a life span.

There was no other discussion. Article 1 will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 02: Operating Budget

Shall the Epping School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$19,308,993? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$19,273,354, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Epping School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. The School Board (4-0-0) and the Budget Committee (8-0-0) recommend this appropriation.

School Board Member Chairman David Mylott made a motion to accept Article 2 as read. Seconded by School Member Vice Chairman Deborah Brooks.

Mrs. Brooks explained the staff adjustments in the 2018-2019 Budget. Three years ago the school board hired an outside agency to do a study regarding special education. One of the recommendations was to hire someone in the district to focus strictly on curriculum, instruction and assessment. This will benefit all the students across the board as a Competency Based System is being implemented. The Family Consumer Science position will go from a part time position to a full time. This will allow for the addition of 2 more health classes for the youngsters to be life ready. There will be a reduction of one Special Education Building Coordinator and one elementary school teacher.

The budget increases include the teacher agreement and increase in salaries & benefits for non-union staff. There will be a MTSS Consultant (Multi-Tiered System of Support) added that will respond to an intervention process. A space evaluation for the elementary school will be completed before asking for more funds. A new phone system at the middle/high school, SST tuition increase along with the substitute teacher increase were other budget increases.

The list of reductions for the budget were discussed and are as follows: reduction in expected Special Education Services, software, fuel oil, equipment at the high school, reduction of supplies, textbooks and reference books because of the transition to Chromebook.

Cody Belanger from Elm Street asked why students from UNH were not hired as substitute teachers. Mrs. Brooks replied Mr. Vallone did utilize the 5th year UNH students. The 2nd and 3rd year UNH students apply, teach a day then never come back. Mrs. McKenney agreed that the students think substituting sounds good but it is a long hard day and completely exhausting.

Mark Vallone from Blake Road added that substitutes do gravitate to the higher paying districts. He believes raising the per diem will help with hiring substitutes. Mr. Vallone is very concerned in cutting the first grade teacher at the elementary school. He believes it will cause problems with class sizes. Mrs. Clark assured him that the current enrollment for next year did not warrant having 5 first grade teachers. But if more students move into the district over the summer this subject will be revisited. Mrs. Brooks reported that as of now next year will have 17 first graders, 17 second graders and 21 third graders which are all below the class standards. Mr. Vallone is advocating for the first grade teacher position.

Cody Belanger from Elm Street asked what the average pay range is for substitute teachers. Mrs. McKenney replied \$65-\$90 depending on the wealth of the community.

Mr. Mylott strongly supports small class sizes and the board strives every year to make the classes as small as possible. He reported the state standards for kindergarten, first and second grade is 25 students and Epping's standard is 20. The state standard for third grade is 30 and Epping's standard is 25 or below.

Adam Munguia complimented the school district on a tremendous job managing their funding. This budget is only increased \$35,639 over the default budget. Mr. Munguia thanked the school board for making the Budget Committee's job easier.

There was no other discussion. Article 2 will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 03: Paraprofessional Association Collective Bargaining

Shall the Epping School District vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Epping School Board and the Epping Paraprofessional Association which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level over those paid in the prior fiscal year:

Fiscal Year	Estimated Increase
2018-2019	\$45,770
2019-2020	\$45,799
2020-2021	\$49,048

and further to raise and appropriate 45,770 for the upcoming fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels? The School Board (4-0-0) and the Budget Committee (8-0-0) recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

School Board Member Chairman David Mylott made a motion to accept Article 3 as read. Seconded by School Member Vice Chairman Deborah Brooks.

Mrs. Heather Clark reported the minor changes and updates being made to the contract. Sick leave changes and service award increases were reviewed. The total cost over the 3 year agreement is \$140,616.97 which breaks down to an average of \$46,872.32 per year.

Susan McGeough from Prescott Road highly respects paraprofessionals and their dedication. They take courses and continue to learn and have professional training. This modest increase covers the 3 schools. Teachers rely on the support that paraprofessionals give them and the students. They do a great job.

There was no other discussion. Article 3 will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 04: Add to Buildings and Grounds Capital Reserve

Shall the Epping School District vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of \$200,000 to be added to the Buildings and Grounds Capital Reserve Fund previously established in 2013? This sum to come from June 30 fund balance

available for transfer on July 1. No amount to be raised from additional taxation. The School Board voted (4-0-0) and the Budget Committee (8-0-0) recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required.)

School Board Member Chairman David Mylott made a motion to accept Article 4 as read. Seconded by School Member Vice Chairman Deborah Brooks.

Selectman Daniel Haugh clarified what this \$200,000 Buildings and Grounds Capital Reserve Fund would be used for. This reserve fund was established in 2013 to save money for future school buildings and ground improvements; such as the elementary school roof and renovations, athletic fields with access, concessions and storage along with the elementary and high School HVAC. No money is raised from additional taxation.

Mr. Munguia spoke in favor of Capital Reserve Funds as they save money for the short and long term projects. The money is already raised and instead of buying the tax rate down it is used for these funds. Business Administrator Bonnie Sandstrom reported the balance of the Capital Reserve Fund \$246,000.

Budget Committee member Jeff Leombruno is in favor of the fund. With an elementary school roof needed in the next few years, this would be better than a big warrant article.

There was no other discussion. Article 4 will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 05: Add to Special Education Capital Reserve Fund

Shall the Epping School District vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of \$50,000 to be added to the Special Education Capital Reserve Fund previously established in 2017? This sum to come from fund balance and no amount to be raised from additional taxation. The School Board (4-0-0) and the Budget Committee (8-0-0) recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required.)

School Board Member Chairman David Mylott made a motion to accept Article 5 as read. Seconded by School Member Vice Chairman Deborah Brooks.

Mr. Haugh said this Special Education Capital Reserve Fund was established in 2017. Special Education is always unanticipated. The sum will come from fund balance and no amount will be raised from additional taxes. There is \$50,000 in the fund as of this date.

There was no other discussion. Article 5 will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 06: To transact any other business which may legally become before this meeting.

As there were no more discussions, Moderator Goodrich closed the meeting at 8:15 PM. Moderator Goodrich informed the audience Candidate's night will be held on February 21th here at the Town Hall at 7PM. The Town and School elections will be March 13th at the Epping School Gym 8 AM – 7 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Blanchard

School District Clerk