

**Stratford School Board
Board Meeting-Budget Hearing-Public Minutes
February 8, 2017**

The Stratford School Board had a board meeting on Wednesday, February 8, 2017 at 5:30 pm, at the Stratford Public School in Stratford, NH. Present were: Mike Lynch, Wayne Hall and Bruce Blodgett. Also present were Superintendent Mike Kelley, Business Administrator Patty Brown and Principal Sandi Adams.

Wayne Hall called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

A motion was made by Bruce Blodgett and seconded by Mike Lynch to approve the public board minutes of January 11, 2017 and the joint meeting minutes of January 23, 2017 with the Northumberland board as presented. A vote was then taken and all were in favor.

Citizens Comments: There were no comments.

A motion was made by Mike Lynch and seconded by Bruce Blodgett to move into the public budget hearing at 5:31 for the 2017-2018 fiscal year discussion. A vote was then taken and all were in favor.

Patty Brown went down through the 2017/2018 budget summary outlining the significant increases and decreases with explanations. The overall budget increase is \$98,456, a loss of revenue of \$223,039 (\$218,111 of that is unreserved fund balance from June 2016 that was used to reduce taxes this fiscal year, 2016/2017) both combined equal a \$321,495 increase to the taxes to be raised. In March of 2016 we projected a tax rate of \$17.54, but with the \$200k fund balance that reduced taxes, the tax rate in October 2016 was set at \$13.30. The projected tax rate for next year 2017/2018 is \$17.56, \$.02 more than last March's projection. At this point we cannot project an unreserved fund balance for June 2017. Comparing the current tax rate of \$13.30 to our projected rate of \$17.56, as of right now it would be a \$4.26 increase to the tax rate.

The budget amount to be approved for the warrant article is \$2,286,644; the amount includes general fund, food fund and grant funds to be appropriated at the annual meeting.

A motion was made by Mike Lynch and seconded by Bruce Blodgett to come out of the public budget hearing at 5:41 pm and back into regular session of the board meeting. A vote was then taken and all were in favor.

Sandi Adams presented her report and mentioned there was a time change for the upcoming parent/student dance this Saturday. The school's 100 year project for the public will be in June and the students will present what they have learned. The GHS Chem Free Committee will be using the gym February 17th & 18th for their annual basketball tournament (fundraiser). Again, our 4th graders have been selected to take the NAEP test. Our current enrollment as of today is 64 students pre-K through 8th grade.

Michelle Mason's report was in the board packet, there were no questions or comments.

Karen Conroy's report was in the board packet with no changes or additions.

Mike Lynch asked when the new server would be installed. Sandi Adams responded that the new server will be installed during February vacation when no one is in the building using equipment. The new battery backup (UPS) is now in place and backing everything up.

**Stratford Minutes
February 8, 2017
Page 2**

Patty Brown presented her report with no changes, all the budget information was covered during the public budget hearing earlier in the meeting. There were no questions at this time.

Mike Kelley presented his report and briefed the board on the legislative update he attended on Monday. There are over one-hundred education bills currently and some are pertaining to school choice. The nomination of the commissioner was postponed for two weeks, but is expected to happen with no problems. The NHSBA responded to the school boards questions on school choice and our current agreement with Northumberland.

Any approval of school choice will be a financial impact to the tax payer. It could be private, religious or just about anywhere. This is designed for towns without those grades being provided in their town. Stratford has K-8, so this would be for grades 9-12 at the state average tuition rate. This would not include transportation, as we are not required now to provide transportation for high school students.

A motion was made by Mike Lynch and seconded by Bruce Blodgett to approve the proposed budget of \$2,286,644 for the 2017/2018 fiscal/school year as presented during the public budget hearing. A vote was then taken and all were in favor.

A motion was made by Mike Lynch and seconded by Bruce Blodgett to approve adding the business administrator as an authorized signer to all the student activity accounts at the Stratford Public School, per the auditors request during the last audit. A vote was then taken and all were in favor.

Mike Lynch suggested that the board sign another 1-year extension to the current tuition agreement. Based on what the attorney at NHSBA responded to their questions, the state may decide the choice decision for them within the next year. It's wise for the board to wait and see what happens down in Concord this next year.

A motion was made by Mike Lynch and seconded by Bruce Blodgett to approve the current tuition agreement for an extended one-year, with the tuition rates being prorated and charged as discussed. A vote was then taken and all were in favor.

Mike Lynch then commented that he was done with the mowing discussions; we can keep it as it is. Mike does ask that the school come up with a detailed description of the mowing expectations for the contractor to follow.

Wayne Hall asked about the plowing and how things were going so far this year. Everyone responded that they are pleased with the work and the contractor is here when needed.

The school board will not have their monthly board meeting in March (2nd Wednesday) and only have their Annual School Meeting on Monday, March 13, 2017 at 6:00 pm.

A motion was made by Mike Lynch and seconded by Bruce Blodgett to adjourn the meeting at 6:03 pm. A vote was then taken and all were in favor.

These minutes were respectfully submitted by Patricia Brown