

Raymond School Board Budget Work Session
Thursday, August 16, 2012
Raymond High School Room 101
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Approved October 17, 2012

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM. Present: School Board Members John Stewart, Kelly Lehman, John Harmon, Tina Thomas, and Maurice Titcomb; Superintendent Jean Richards; Business Administrator Ron Brickett.

Pledge of Allegiance: All those in attendance stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Proof of Posting: It was noted that the meeting was properly posted.

Budget Development Planning: Dr. Richards began the discussion by sharing facts with the Board. She reviewed the operating budgets approved by voters from 2008-09 to 2012-13. In 2008-09 it was \$21.9 million and five years later it was less at \$21.7 million. She stated that everyone had done an excellent job in budget development meeting the needs of the students while being quite fiscally responsible to the Town of Raymond. She stated the district has been praised for their work by voters at Deliberative Session, at public hearings, and by the Budget Committee. Each year, the administration and Board work with required contractual increases and still keep the budget less than level in its increases.

Dr. Richards shared the contractual/required costs for 2013-14 at \$229,983, not including any increases coming from NH Retirement, and including a 5% increase in health and dental. The Board and Administration do not spend unanticipated revenues and for the last 4+ years, have not spent any extras at the end of the school year in the well-managed budgets.

Suggestions were made by Mr. Stewart to think about privatizing food service by developing a request for proposals. Mr. Titcomb and Mr. Harmon reminded the Board that voters said no to privatization of food service four years ago. After discussion, the Board consensus was to keep working toward self-funded food service for the 2012-13 budget.

Mr. Stewart suggested that administration get estimates from Municipal Resources for human resources services. Dr. Richards shared that human resources is only a one-person department and this is much less expensive than an hourly contracted service.

The Board discussed supplies. Expense Reduction Analysts had said the District was doing very well in supply purchasing using SES and State bid lists.

Mrs. Thomas spoke about a letter from Iber Holmes Gove Middle School that she had just received asking parents to supply pens and pencils.

Dr. Richards reminded the Board that the district does budget for scholar supplies by student. The Board asked for a copy of the District bid lists (electronically) to look at costs of items. The Board requested to review tracked scholar supplies from 2011-12 to see what the school was purchasing and at what costs. Administration will develop a list of what/where LRES spent on scholar supplies.

The Board then discussed the Board parameters plus initiatives for the 2013-14 school year.

- Mr. Titcomb stated he wanted to see a little less than level-funded but not cut programs.
- Mr. Harmon stated he wanted to see a little more than level-funded. He pointed out that the school side of the tax rate over the years has been reduced and he does not want to cut staff or programs. He stated there has been an increase of .8% CPI over the past year.
- Mr. Stewart stated he wanted a decrease of .8% to offset seniors wanting to keep status quo in their home budgets. He would like \$119,000 below current expenditures.
- Mrs. Thomas shared her view of the performance of the district and stated that the district is not doing enough. Dr. Richards reminded the Board that many of the multiple measures show continuous improvement of all our instruction.
- Mr. Stewart asked to discuss the default budget Goffstown uses as he understands it. Mr. Harmon stated that the default budget is equally defined by RSA, which includes contractual obligations minus one-time expenditures. Accordingly, all districts must follow the RSA, including Raymond.
- Mr. Brickett reinforced Mr. Harmon's comments, reminding the Board that the district has reduced salaries each year which causes the default budget to be larger than the operating budget.
- Ms. Lehman stated that she supports a .5% increase.
- Mrs. Thomas stated .8% less would be her preferred direction. She feels that until the district starts improving, no funding should be provided. Mr. Harmon stated that he doesn't understand the full logic. Many areas are improving. Mrs. Thomas wants more improvement. Mr. Harmon agrees with continuous improvement but the budget must be reasonable. He stated that in 2008 the school tax was \$11.56 and in 2010 it was \$10.87 - \$.70 less. The School District has reduced taxes but still needs to not harm student programs.

Mr. Titcomb asked for the Board to be polled. Mr. Stewart asked for those members wanting the following parameter:

\$21,758,825

Tina Thomas	No
Maurice Titcomb	No
John Stewart	No
Kelly Lehman	Yes
John Harmon	Yes

\$21,530,682

Tina Thomas	Yes
Maurice Titcomb	Yes
John Stewart	Yes
Kelly Lehman	No
John Harmon	No

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Dr. Richards stated that this parameter would not be an easy task because the district has already reduced its operating budget each year since 2009. She stated that students do come first. Mr. Stewart stated that we are still in recession.

The Board then asked for a cut list needed to reach \$21,530,682 as well as new initiative proposals above this parameter.

Manifest Signing: A quorum of the Board signed the manifest. The total for Accounts Payable was \$265,815.31. The total for Payroll was \$137,585.28.

Adjournment: MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Maurice Titcomb, to adjourn the meeting. Voted unanimously in the affirmative. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Jean R. Richards,
Superintendent of Schools