

**Meeting of the
Candia Municipal Budget Committee
Sept. 9, 2015
Town Hall, Candia, NH**

Members Present: Chair Allyn Chivers, Matthew Broadhead, Dana Buckley, Kevin Coughlin, Mark Laliberte, Paul Leblond, Robert Stout, School Board Rep. Rebecca Cronk, Selectman's Rep. Carleton Robie

Chairman Chivers opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Approval of August 12 Municipal Budget Committee minutes as corrected (1st – Coughlin, 2nd – Stout). **Approved 7-0** (abstaining Buckley, Broadhead)

Answer questions from the last meeting

Security repairs – Laliberte asked about the Homeland Security repairs. Cronk said the report is non-public, but the repairs conducted are recommended from the report. Robie followed up with School Board chair Nicole LaFlamme to confirm these are not required repairs. LaFlamme says these were not required and that the Candia School District reached out to Homeland Security to do the report.

Chivers asked Cronk on the status whether a line item required \$1 in it to stay active. Cronk answered that the Department of Revenue Administration only required money within a function code, which has multiple line items

Chivers asked about the procurement process and whether encumbered funds had contracts. Also asked on when the district required bids.

LaFlamme said that all the encumbrances had contracts. As for the “playground” repairs. LaFlamme stated that it is more appropriate to call it repair of the grounds. She said there was no contract as of yet, but an engineering firm that has a relationship with surrounding districts provided us with an estimate. There was no money spent on this process.

Leblond asked about the procurement process and whether the district has written procedures in place. LaFlamme said that they have written procedures and they try to get three bids. However, due to either time or lack of vendors, they may not get three bids. She also invited the Budget Committee to the School Board meetings

Chivers asked if there a dollar amount that required to put out to bid. LaFlamme said she would send a written procurement policy to the Budget Committee.

Town Report

Coughlin asked about when revenues will come in as compared to previous years. Robie said that the changes are fluid and when the revenues come in happen at different times. Broadhead asked about winter maintenance. Robie said a small reimbursement from FEMA coming in, and Chivers said there is \$75,000 in the warrant article that has not been tapped. Because of this, some of the asphalt line item has not been spent.

Cronk stated that on Page 8 of the town expenditure report, there was a typo stating the paving was on Patten Hill Road. It was meant to say Chester Turnpike. Robie also discussed the Moore Fund, which is a non-expendable fund that can be used for road maintenance. Chivers asked Robie about the Fire Water Supply line item on Page 8. Robie said they haven't conducted the project yet and are holding off for now.

On Page 8 of the report, Laliberte stated that encumbered funds come from 2012. They actually come from 2014. Robie agreed and said he would change it.

School Report

Chivers discussed school encumbrances. Stout asked why there was the difference between the encumbrances and the expenditures did not add up. Chivers said she looked at that and showed that the math worked because there is a pending legal action with the Manchester School District, and money needs to be set aside once the lawsuit is settled. That amount is why there was a discrepancy with the two numbers.

Coughlin asked what happened if the school district prevails. Broadhead said it could be all, nothing, or some of the funds. LaFlamme stated since is a pending legal issues, she and the district would not comment on this. LaFlamme also reiterated to Coughlin that the repairs done in the schools have been encumbered and have a contract, while the architectural project outside the school, previously referred to as the "playground project," do not have a contract. LaFlamme said they are looking at options to pay for the project, such as a warrant on the 2016 school ballot. The district would express the option to the Budget Committee later.

Chivers had another question on the 2014-15 expenditure report. She asked about a \$14,000 overage on the legal services line items. LaFlamme said it involved the lawsuit with the Manchester School District; it also involves families wanting to send their students to high schools outside of Manchester. They can sue the district to have their students go to another high school outside the district, and that caused the overage. LaFlamme expected the line-item for this school year to be over the budgeted number as well.

Coughlin asked about the dental line item being over what was budgeted. Cronk said that there were more people taking advantage of the benefit. Broadhead said this is common with all insurance. Coughlin also asked about the difference between public school and public academy line items. Cronk said public academy stands for students that don't go to Manchester Central High School.

Chivers asked when students go to Pinkerton, do we pay the Pinkerton rate or Manchester rate. If

a student is placed to a high school outside of Manchester and there is a hardship, the district pays the full tuition cost.

Chivers asked if there was a projected enrollment for Sept. 2016. LaFlamme said she could get a NH Department of Education report that to the budget committee; however, she did not have much trust in the projection. She believes the numbers don't take some town-wide variables into account. LaFlamme does believe the number of students will decline in 2016-17. Chivers expressed concern that trying to raise the enrollment numbers could adversely affect the older, non-school-aged families living in town. LaFlamme said she would like to see new families in addition to those that already live here.

LaFlamme then discussed what would increase enrollment, which include informing that public about the concerns as well as a lack of businesses that the public expressed to the school board. LaFlamme says there are natural declines that affect the state, but our town has specific issues that go beyond that. Robie stated that Candia is one of two Rockingham County towns to show a population decrease since 2000. He said the bare-bones budget is part of the issue and there will be some changes in the next budget.

Chivers asked about the average class size in 7th grade, with 41 students. Why are there three teachers instead of two. Cronk said the top two grades, 7 and 8, have each teachers go over a specific subject, and that there are five subjects they learn (i.e. one teacher teaches math, another teaches reading). Laliberte asked if student enrollment drops, can they still do this? Cronk said if the numbers drop, it would have to be re-assessed.

New Business

Chivers informed the committee that she would work on the budget season calendar in the coming weeks, starting with getting dates from selectmen for their budget process. Broadhead mentioned that state law dictates time for when warrant articles have to be submitted, which caused conflict last year.

There was a discussion on whether to mail to each resident the budget process schedule, as had been done in the past. There was concern as to whether it was effective of if money can be saved by putting everything on the website and post it at public locations. The committee agreed to continue this conversation at the October meeting.

Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn (1st – Coughlin, 2nd – Broadhead) **Approved 9-0.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.