

Sunapee School District

Budget Hearing

SMHS Media Center

January 14, 2015

Call to Order:

Shaun Carroll called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m.

Roll Call:

Shaun Carroll, Chair

Kim Denney, Vice Chair – 7:13PM

Paul Skarin

Mike Ripley - Absent

Brian Garland

BAC Members:

John Augustine

Others Present:

Russell Holden, Superintendent

Kelly Wessells, Business Administrator

Jodi Bergen, SCES Principal

Sean Moynihan, SMHS Principal – 6:14PM

Meagan Reed, SMHS Asst. Principal – 6:23PM

Terra Geer, Director of Pupil Services

Wayne Palmer, Director of Facilities

Kate O'Connor, Board Secretary

Budget Overview:

Russell explained that a PowerPoint would be shown and that a budget overview had been handed out. He will give a brief overview and go through each warrant article, taking questions as he goes along. The packet is laid out as follows:

- Goals
- Warrant Articles

- Overview
- Budget
- Revenue
- 13-14 Cost per Pupil

Increases and decreases affecting next year's budget:

1. Increase – 3rd Year of Teachers Contract, \$157,000
2. Increase – 9.5% Health Insurance, \$55,000
3. Increase – Teacher/Employee Retirement, \$107,000
4. Increase – FICA/WC, \$35,000
5. Increase – Computer Technician, \$20,000
6. Decrease – OOD Tuition, -\$100,000
7. Decrease – New Bus, -\$51,000

SCES has enrolled seven new students this year, making them up from last year by one. SMHS enrollment is down making the District overall enrollment down from last year.

The warrant articles were reviewed as follows:

1. To choose a moderator, clerk and treasurer
2. To hear reports of agents
3. Budget/Default budget - \$11,456,085 and \$11,434,259
4. \$25,000 for Special Education Reserve account (Currently, \$312,437)
5. \$25,000 in SCES Capital Reserve account (Currently, \$128,313)
6. \$25,000 for the School Facilities Capital Reserve Fund (Currently, \$136,045)
7. \$36,000 to repave the front section of the SMHS parking lot
8. \$50,000 to create a capital reserve fund called the SMHS Athletic Fields
9. \$75,000 to create a capital reserve fund called the SMHS Roof
10. \$25,000 to create a capital reserve fund for the purpose of building development, construction and renovations
11. To appoint a deputy treasurer
12. To transact any other business which may legally come before the meeting

Russell explained that employee retirement rate has changed from 10.77% to 11.17% and the teacher retirement rate has changed from 14.16% to 15.67%.

John Augustine, Sunapee resident, asked how the teachers' contract is configured. Russell and Shaun explained there is a percentage every year with steps included within the contract up to fifteen years of service. The percentage this year is 3.1%. Teachers are also paying more of their insurance; next year they will be paying 20%. Russell stated that employees, non-teachers, are evaluated and given up to a 2.5% increase.

Al Peterson, Sunapee resident and former employee, asked about heating costs. Russell stated that they were able to level fund or reduce oil consumption. They are worried about electricity. The District is investigating solar panels and wood pellets.

John Augustine stated that he would like the District to look at other forms of health insurance, such as, both employees and teachers paying one rate and if you want to add dependents or spouses you would have to pay a higher rate.

Russell stated that the District is installing a handicap accessible bathroom on the second floor of SCES this year. Money from the SCES Capital Reserve Fund will be used for this project, which is why the Board is asking for \$25,000 as a warrant article. Russell stated over the past five years \$9,500 has been used from the fund to fix the modular roof, safety repairs and painting. Over five years ago, money was taken out to add to the modular building for preschool.

John Brandalene, Westwood Rd., asked why the Board needs such a large slush fund for the elementary school; can't they take one year off. Shaun responded that the Board puts money in every year, so to not raise taxes by increasing the budget; this way they take it out of the fund.

Russell stated that the School Facilities Capital Reserve Fund is typically used for the high school or SAU office. Last year, around \$20,000 was spent renovating the locker rooms and ventilation in the gymnasium.

Russell explained that the parking lot at SMHS is 2-3 years away from major repairs. There are two stages – one in the front and the back lot. John Brandalene asked the Board to consider taking the \$36,000 out of the School Facilities Capital Reserve Fund.

John Brandalene stated that the Board should consider soliciting wealthy townspeople to fund new athletic fields for the school.

Russell explained that phase 3 of the SMHS Roofing Project is complete being the pitched roof on the middle school section. It will take 3-5 years to get the flat roofs done. Wayne Palmer stated that the flat roofs will have a slight pitch installed on them when they get redone.

Russell stated that the creation of the capital reserve fund for building development, construction and renovation is for future endeavors.

The Deliberative Session is Monday, February 2nd and the vote is Tuesday, March 10th.

Jan Bettencourt, Fernwood Point, stated she is dismayed to see the School Board has no hesitancy in spending or asking for things. She feels the School Board goes ahead with projects that aren't needed, such as, replacing the SMHS media center carpet. She asked the Board to review needs vs. wants; the warrant articles are security blankets that aren't needed.

John Augustine stated that the tax rate would be a 4.5% increase over last year and the warrant articles add another .22 cents making it a 6.9% increase.

John Brandalene asked for a comparison between Sunapee and other NH school districts in regards to cost per pupil. Russell stated that Sunapee is in the top five which is pretty high, but you have to consider what the students are receiving in return.

Shaun Carroll adjourned the budget hearing at 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Kate O'Connor
Sunapee Board Secretary