

**Inter-Lakes School Board Budget Work Session
Inter-Lakes Middle/High School Community Auditorium
1 Laker Lane, Meredith, NH
January 19, 2021**

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Richard Hanson called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. RECORD ROLL

Members Present:

Mr. Richard Hanson, Chair
Mr. Mark Billings, Vice-Chair
Ms. Lisa Merrill, Secretary*
Mr. Craig Baker*
Mr. Duncan Porter-Zuckerman*
Ms. Nancy Starmer*
Ms. Raven Strother, Student Rep.
Mr. Charles Hanson* (5:44 p.m.)

Members Absent:

None

*Remote attendance

Administrators Present:

Ms. Mary Moriarty, Superintendent
Ms. Trish Temperino, Asst. Superintendent
Ms. Ashley Dolloff, Human Resources Director
Ms. Elaine Dodge, Director of Student Services
Mr. Michael Bryant, ILES Principal
Mr. Scot Currier, ILM/HS Principal
Ms. Sarah Dumais, Athletic Director
Mr. John Martin, Technology Director
Ms. Erica Pappalardo, Curriculum Coordinator
Dr. Michelle Robinson, ILM/HS Asst. Principal
Mr. Brian Swanker, Facilities Director
Ms. Holly Vieten, Guidance Director

Others Present:

Mr. Jason Cornelissen, Auditorium Manager
Public

IV. PUBLIC INPUT None

V. BUDGET WORK SESSION

Superintendent Moriarty provided an overview of the proposed 2021-2022 budget; noting that it primarily maintains staffing and programs as presented in March 2020 prior to the global pandemic. She further commended the efforts of the school community for their work in helping develop a budget proposal that recognized the challenging times the Inter-Lakes communities and beyond are facing.

The proposed budget is \$28,501,780; and increase of \$249,898 or 0.88%.

Regular transportation now in the fifth year of a contract extended two years by agreement with First Student is \$997,484 up about \$27,000. Special Education Transportation is budgeted at \$369,658 a decrease of about \$3,000 as a result of a change in population.

There are some slight changes in hours for support staff with one exception, the addition of a full-time "floating custodian," as the District has been unable to hire a substitute to work shifts left vacant by illness or other absences. This is a 0.75 FTE increase to the custodial staff, which the administration believes is warranted by the need to maintain deep cleaning practices as a result of the pandemic.

The custodial staff salary line item would increase by \$83,672 while reductions would occur in overtime and the substitute custodian lines.

Superintendent Moriarty stressed that the proposed budget does not include any of the additional staff hired this year to address operating during the pandemic. Specifically, it does not include the additional School Nurse at Sandwich Central School, additional teaching sections that were added to support Virtual Pathways, Quarantine Teacher and the class size reduction teachers at ILES, paid for by grant funds.

The administration anticipates that the District will receive additional federal/state grant funds but they have not yet materialized. Those funds could be applied to address conductivity issues, and other challenges experienced as a result of the pandemic, but their use will be prioritized upon receipt.

Electronic information Access is budgeted at \$207,206 an increase of \$45,747 but Technology Director John Martin said in response to questions that the subscriptions and the usage they receive are being closely tracked.

The Guaranteed Maximum Rate for the District's health insurance came in at 5.4%. The GMR for Dental Insurance is zero. The total cost for health and dental insurance including retiree benefits is \$434,060 up \$16,327 or 0.40%.

One increase that will be felt throughout the budget is the significant jump in New Hampshire Retirement System (NHRS) costs, \$438,744 over the prior year. The rate for Group 1 Employees has climbed by \$341,012 and the rate for Teachers has increased by \$97,732.

It was noted that there has been a reduction in student specific programming within the Special Education budget.

Another area of concern in the budget involves Free and Reduced Lunch. While the federal government has allowed all students to qualify during the pandemic, the need for qualifying paperwork to be filed by families remains. Without that income qualifying information District's statewide will receive less federal funding. At Inter-Lakes those monies pay for a Title I teacher and related student supports.

The Superintendent also summarized the additional warrant articles that were approved beyond the operating budget last year, and were not funded by fund balance, but via additional tax revenue.

Last year, voters agreed to fund a \$373,699 contract with teachers. This year, a \$207,492 contract with Support Staff will be on the warrant. The administration is recommending the School Board consider using fund balance instead of tax revenue for this purpose. Similarly, consideration should be given to using a portion of available fund balance to add to the Special Education Expendable Trust.

Mr. Billings asked to be provided with the historical balances of the long-term Expendable Trust Funds.

Options were discussed that the School Board could consider to reduce the budget further is to withdraw money from the Health Insurance Expendable Trust. The fund was established when the District was self-insured and now has a balance of \$75,463. If the entire balance was applied it would reduce the overall increase in the operating budget from \$249,898 to \$174,435 or from 0.88% to 0.62%, or when combined with the Support Staff contract from a 1.61% increase to 1.35%.

If the proposed budget and support staff contract were approved it is now estimated that the tax impact for every \$100,000 worth of assessed valuation of a property would

be an increase of \$4.15 for Center Harbor; \$16.56 for Meredith and \$2.14 for Sandwich.

Superintendent Moriarty said more details will be shared during the January 26 School Board Meeting to add further shape to the 2021-2022 Proposed Budget.

Assistant Superintendent Temperino reviewed revenues noting that they were best estimates that would be adjusted in the fall just before the tax rate is set. An unreserved fund balance of \$150,000 is now estimated. Last year the School Board voted to use \$300,000 in fund balance to reduce the amount to be raised in taxation. This year is the last the District will receive \$115,000 in building aid that has been used to pay the Honeywell lease that runs seven more years. Special Education Aid of \$25,000 is anticipated as is \$75,000 in Medicaid reimbursement.

Some Capital Improvement Projects have been deferred including the girl's locker room renovation project at the middle high school, and bathroom updates a result of COVID-19.

The Facilities Expendable Trust Fund was not used to pay for the unanticipated replacement of the boiler at Sandwich Central School. One of the few pieces of new equipment included in the budget is a \$6,140 machine to meet a mandate to test student hearing at the middle high school.

Major Capital Improvement Projects proposed for 2021-2022 include \$140,000 for roof work at ILES; and \$175,000 to replace the gym bleachers, paint the gym, replace the scoreboard and deeply recondition the wooden floor. A proposed \$200,000 project to refurbish Laker Lane has been deferred as well as the air handling unit for the multipurpose room at ILES. It is anticipated a more cost effective solution for the air handler will be found.

VI. ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

A. Members of the Board None

B. Members of the Administration None

VII. PUBLIC INPUT None

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Tuesday, January 26, 2021

Inter-Lakes School Board @ ILM/HS Community Auditorium (Livestream)

- Special School Board Meeting – Budget Work Session – **6:00 p.m.**

B. Wednesday, February 3, 2021

Inter-Lakes School Board @ ILM/HS Community Auditorium (Livestream)

- Budget Public Hearing – **6:00 p.m.**

C. Tuesday, February 9, 2021

Inter-Lakes School Board @ ILM/HS Community Auditorium (LiveStream)

- Regular School Board Meeting – **6:00 p.m.**

D. Wednesday, March 3, 2021

Inter-Lakes School Board @ ILM/HS Community Auditorium & Gymnasium

- Annual School District Meeting – **6:00 p.m.**

E. Tuesday, March 9, 2021

Town Elections/School District Officer Elections

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Merrill moved, seconded by Mr. Billings, to adjourn at 6:24 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted.

Bea Lewis Wheeler
School District Clerk