

**APPROVED**  
TOWN OF PELHAM  
BUDGET COMMITTEE - MEETING MINUTES  
Monday, November 6, 2017

**CALL TO ORDER** – at approximately 7:30pm

PRESENT: Mr. Dave Cate, Mr. Michael Bailey (arrived after the meeting commenced), Mr. Bob Sherman, Ms. Daryle Hillsgrove, Mr. Dave Cronin, Selectmen Representative Doug Viger, School Board Representative Megan Larson. Also present was Interim School Superintendent Betsey Cox, Business Administrator Deb Mahoney

ABSENT: Excused: Ms. Deborah Gibbons, Brian Carton

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

## MEETING MINUTES

**October 30, 2017**

**MOTION:** (Sherman/Cronin) To approve the October 30, 2017 meeting minutes as written.

**VOTE:** (4-0-2) The motion carried. Ms. Hillsgrove and Mr. Viger abstained.

**2018 SCHOOL BUDGET REVIEW– (Representing the School’s 2019 Fiscal Year)**

Interim School District Superintendent Betsey Cox and School Business Administrator Deborah Mahoney came forward for budget presentation/review.

Mr. Cate stated that Board members had submitted questions regarding the proposed budget and opened discussion.

Ms. Hillsgrove recommended a reduction for the NEASC stipends from \$21,500 to \$17,500 (reduction of \$4,000) and commented that more information regarding NEASC would be helpful. Ms. Cox explained when Mr. Dempsey was reviewing the NEASC (self-assessment) process he considered his own experience of going through the process and the number of hours people served. Given that the NEASC process went all year, Mr. Dempsey felt the proposal was a reasonable request. Stipends are broken down as follows: 2 co-chairs @ \$5,000 ea.; 7 standard chair @ \$1,000 ea.; 7 standard co-chair @ \$500 ea.; 1 writer/editor @ \$1,000. The amount was determined based on his knowledge of the process and what others were paid in the District for their positions.

Ms. Larson asked that the Board discuss the importance of the NEASC process and the value it would bring to the School District. She commented that they hadn't done the evaluation in ten years and it would take a close in-depth look at the high school. She said there were a lot of improvements needed and without people delving in to analyze and communicate out what those areas are, she felt they would be doing a disservice to the community. Ms. Cox discussed the NEASC process which begins with a self-survey. She said staff then conducts a year-long study of their practices (curriculum, assessment, instruction etc.). They look at their textbooks and

43 consider how well their students are doing on their test scores and whether or not there are rubrics  
44 that match. She said it's an intensive process that's broken out and reported into different areas.  
45 Once that process is complete, the following year there is a visit from a committee. Ms. Cox noted  
46 that she had served on one of those committees in Portsmouth and described her experience. All  
47 the material goes to the NEASC Board and they render a decision in approximately six months for  
48 how the school fits against their criteria. The information about the high school is used by colleges  
49 where the students apply to determine against other standards, and other schools in the system, to  
50 show how Pelham's students compare to other schools.

51  
52 It was noted that the stipends would be in the budget for one year. The following year there would  
53 be a cost for the visitation committee. Ms. Larson noted it was a three year process, but the third  
54 year cost wasn't anywhere close to \$21,000. She compared the NEASC process to the CALEA  
55 process the Police Department had gone through. Mr. Sherman discussed his experience with the  
56 process at the Nashua School District.

57  
58 Mr. Cronin requested more detail to his inquiry regarding the total number of days paid out for  
59 long-term substitutes. Ms. Mahoney replied they had no long-term substitutes they were paying  
60 this school year (FY18) to date; however, there were several pregnant employees. She added that  
61 they had two administrators on leave of absence. They had to ensure they had the supervision of  
62 the building in place; they used an experienced administrator from one building to temporarily  
63 cover another building. That coverage is paid as a temporary assignment. In addition they moved  
64 a teacher into a temporary assistant principal role that was vacated by the temporary assignment.  
65 She then noted they hired a temporary teacher to fill the classroom. Therefore, the calculated  
66 expense isn't based on the \$210/day salary.

67  
68 Mr. Bailey arrived.

69  
70 In response to Mr. Cronin's question regarding the number of daily substitute days, Ms. Mahoney  
71 stated as of October 26, 2017 (FY18), they had 262 daily substitute paid days. She provided history  
72 from the last three years (total number per year): FY15: 1503.50 days, FY16: 1412 days; and  
73 FY17: 1346 days.

74  
75 Mr. Cronin reviewed the questions he had forwarded and the responses received by email prior to  
76 the meeting. He saw there were 46 participants in the vocational program that was divided to three  
77 different locations. He understood one location (Alvirne) only had two students. Ms. Mahoney  
78 believed that there was an arrangement made for those two students and unsure if they had a bus  
79 running to Alvirne.

80  
81 Mr. Cate confirmed that Board members received the information forwarded by Ms. Mahoney in  
82 regard to the Keno law as it relates to full-day kindergarten. He called attention to the elementary  
83 school budget, under nurse services; the line for AED replacement (\$897) was a duplicate and could  
84 be reduced by that number. Mr. Cate then reviewed the Board's previous questions and responses  
85 provided by Ms. Mahoney.

86  
87 Mr. Cronin asked for a brief explanation of the air flow/temperature issues at the elementary and  
88 middle school. Mr. Mahoney read aloud an update of all summer work composed by the Director  
89 of Facilities. It informed that the roof replacement for the elementary school went very well and  
90 came in on time and under budget. She noted they came up with an alternative to repair the  
91 underground storage tank at Memorial School and work on the piping. She described the work that  
92 had been done, which brought it up to code and resolved the fuel issues with the State. With regard  
93 to air flow, the issues at Memorial School are due to the age of the system designed in 1963/64,

94 which cannot circulate air like today's modern systems do. She described the maintenance  
95 performed, which has improved air flow. There had been similar issues at the high school, until  
96 that system was upgraded. The Facility Director feels that fans could help move air and give a  
97 feeling of cooler air and solar shades would also help; however, they are not a solution to high  
98 temperatures or humidity in the building. The noise from fans could be a distraction in classrooms.  
99 Ms. Larson stated that the School Board has spoken about air conditioning in the buildings, but  
100 didn't have a quote at this time, or enough information to bring forth. The schools are tracking  
101 temperatures in the classrooms and will also do so in the Spring.

102  
103 Mr. Cate summarized the proposed adjustment:

104 Elementary School: Duplication of AED - \$897

105 Memorial School: No proposed amendments.

106 High School: NEASC stipends

107  
108 Mr. Cronin spoke to his proposed adjustment to the SAU budget relating to the School Board  
109 Services stipends. He suggested increasing each position \$180 (total increase of \$900). Ms.  
110 Mahoney noted there were benefits associated with the stipend (social security tax) that would need  
111 to be adjusted.

112  
113 Ms. Cate proposed an adjustment for 'refreshments for meetings' reducing the line \$500. This will  
114 leave \$500 (level fund from last year). He understood there were a lot of meetings and noted there  
115 were other areas in the budget that had a similar lines. Ms. Cox stated the proposal was a product  
116 of the number of turn over staff they had. Mr. Cate proposed a reduction of \$2,010 in the district  
117 ground services line; there would still be an increase of \$5,000 over last year.

118  
119 Mr. Sherman wanted to know how much it would cost to bring irrigation to the parking lot medians.  
120 Ms. Larson recalled that the Facility Director spoke to Boyden Landscaping and it wasn't very  
121 feasible; however, he would come up with an alternative plan. She said Ms. Mahoney and Ms. Cox  
122 would follow up to see if there is an alternative. Mr. Sherman said possibly the proposed reduction  
123 amount could remain in the budget and be used for irrigation. Ms. Mahoney understood that  
124 irrigation lines couldn't be brought to the medians without damaging the parking lot.

125  
126 Mr. Cate discussed how the Board would conduct its review on voting night. He stated the Board  
127 would also be reviewing the School and Town warrant articles.

128  
129 With regard to the Town warrant article, Mr. Sherman would like additional information regarding  
130 the Conservation Fund balance. He was concerned about some of the article wording. In the past  
131 he recalled some discussion about having a fire station in the Little Island Pond section of Town  
132 and wanted to know if the wording would allow for such. Mr. Viger replied they would be working  
133 on specific wording. They would also explain in the Voter's Guide that they would only be taking  
134 a bond for what they would use. Mr. Sherman spoke about the Elderly Exemption proposal and  
135 questioned if it should include an inflation index based on social security. He wanted to know how  
136 the elderly exemption would fit with the veteran exemption passed last year. Mr. Viger said the  
137 Assessing Assistant will speak to the question.

138  
139 Mr. Cronin wanted to know if there was any possibility of Pelham offering science courses that  
140 would attract students from other SAUs to balance the money being spent on vocational courses  
141 with possible money coming into District. Ms. Cox replied they could explore doing so. Ms.  
142 Larson commented that they offer some specific science courses. She said with the robotics teacher  
143 leaving last year they were redesigning the program. She noted when those courses are offered,  
144 they are usually filled by Pelham students and didn't know if they would have room to offer them

outside. She said they could look at the courses students take outside of Pelham. She said some students are hesitant to leave Pelham because they miss a portion of other classes.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION / CLOSING COMMENTS**

Mr. Cate stated the Board would vote on the School Operation Budget during their next meeting. They will also review the School and Town warrant articles.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** (Sherman/Larson) To adjourn the meeting.

**VOTE:** (7-0-0) The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:11pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Charity A. Landry  
Recording Secretary