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**APPROVED**  
TOWN OF PELHAM  
BUDGET COMMITTEE - MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, November 12, 2020

**CALL TO ORDER** – at approximately 7:00pm

Chairman David Cronin opened the meeting and read aloud “A Checklist To Ensure Meetings Are Compliant With The Right-to-Know Law During The State Of Emergency” (*regarding access to the meeting*)

Mr. Cronin asked Committee members, when their name is called, to please confirm their presence and to please identify as the right to know law requires, who, if anyone, was in the room.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

PRESENT: David Cronin – Present in person  
Amber Capone – Present in person  
Bob Sherman – Present in person  
Meg Bressette – Present in person  
Philip Haberlen – Present in person  
Jason Croteau – Present via Zoom  
School Board Representative Deb Ryan – Present via Zoom  
Board of Selectmen Representative Bob Haverty – Present via Zoom

ABSENT: Kannan Sasi – excused  
Jas Moorjani – excused  
Eduardo Martony - excused

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**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**MINUTES REVIEW:**

**November 5, 2020:**

**MOTION:** (Capone/Sherman) To approve the November 5, 2020 meeting minutes as written.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:** David Cronin – Yes  
Amber Capone - Yes  
Bob Sherman – Yes  
Meg Bressette – Yes  
Philip Haberlen – Yes  
Jason Croteau - abstain  
Deb Ryan – Yes  
Bob Haverty - Yes

(7-0-1) The motion carried.

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**2021 SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE**

25 Joining the meeting via Zoom were Superintendent Chip McGee along with Business Administrator  
26 Deborah Mahoney and Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Sarah Marandos.

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28 Mr. Sherman made a motion to place \$35,612,298 on the floor for discussion. Ms. Capone seconded.

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**MOTION:** (Sherman/Capone) The figure \$35,612,298 was placed on the floor for discussion.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:** David Cronin – Yes  
Amber Capone – Yes  
Bob Sherman – Yes  
Meg Bressette – Yes  
Philip Haberlen - Yes  
Jason Croteau - Yes  
Deb Ryan - Yes  
Bob Haverty - Yes

(8-0-0) The motion carried.

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31 Mr. Cronin described the review vote process.

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33 *Pelham Elementary School*

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35 Figure for consideration: \$7,771,727.00 (increase of \$411,504). There were no amendments.

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38 *Pelham Memorial School:* \$5,554,169.00 (increase of \$227,382). There were no amendments.

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41 *Pelham High School:* \$8,864,908 (increase of \$220,001). There were no amendments.

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43 *District General Fund:* Ms. Capone asked for clarification on page 17 (Adobe page 138), line 330  
44 professional services. She questioned if the amount of \$109,600 should be removed. Ms. Mahoney  
45 explained in order to fund the need it had to be budgeted both as a current position as well as the  
46 incremental difference. Should the default budget become the actual budget they needed to make sure they  
47 had funding available to complete the need because it was an IEP driven requirement. Going forward, it  
48 will be an adjustment to a future budget. Mr. McGee offered another description. He said assuming they  
49 are able to build the position, that line could be removed next year. Given their legal obligation and the fact  
50 that the new position would not be included in the default budget, they had to have it budgeted in both  
51 places this year. If they are able to have the position within the district, they won't have to pay contracted  
52 services.

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54 To allow Mr. Cronin to offer an adjustment he asked Ms. Capone to take the chair.

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56 Mr. Cronin referenced page 22 under School Board services, salaries. He proposed raising each School  
57 Board member's salary by \$460; the total salary line would increase \$2,300.

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59 Ms. Bressette appreciated the thought behind the proposal; however, because the School Board did not ask  
60 for an increase, she was unsure if it was the most prudent proposal especially with the article for Memorial  
61 School.

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63 Mr. Haverty seconded the motion for discussion.

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Mr. Cronin stated his consideration was in recognition of the hard work the board members had done. He was sure the members would say no; however, he felt in some way his proposal would show recognition they were doing a good job and to keep up the good work.

Mr. Sherman inquired the stipend received by the Selectmen. Mr. Haverty was unsure. After looking up the information found the regular member received \$900 and the Chair receives \$1,200.

Ms. Ryan agreed with Ms. Bressette's thoughts. She recalled during her first year on the board (2012) the salary (stipend) was cut from \$1200 or \$1500. She appreciated the thought and stated it would be up to the Committee to make a decision.

Ms. Capone questioned if thought had been given to a step increase. Mr. Cronin felt the increase was an incentive/thank you. He noted his proposal would cost a total of \$2,300 in a budget over \$35 million.

Ms. Capone suggested increasing members \$160 each and consider an increase during next year's budget review. Mr. Cronin accepted the friendly amendment and the second agreed.

Mr. Haberlen inquired if the School Board members could reject the increase. Mr. Sherman replied the additional amount would remain in their budget. He noted the figure could be reduced during Deliberative Session; subsequently, the adjusted figure would still come back to the Committee for a final vote.

**MOTION:** To increase each School Board member's stipend \$160, for a total budget increase of \$800.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:** David Cronin – Yes  
Amber Capone – Yes  
Bob Sherman – Yes  
Meg Bressette – abstain  
Philip Haberlen - Yes  
Jason Croteau - Yes  
Deb Ryan - abstain  
Bob Haverty - Yes

(6-0-2) The motion carried.

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The amended District General Fund figure is \$11,530,131 (increase of \$186,701). Ms. Mahoney confirmed the figure was correct.

*Food Service:* \$1,134,298 (increase of \$42,010). There were no amendments.

*Grants Funds:* \$705,865 (level funded). There were no amendments.

*Other Special Funds:* \$52,000 (level funded). There were no amendments.

The amended figure for consideration is: \$35,613,098 (increase of \$1,486,229). Ms. Mahoney confirmed the figure.

**MOTION:** (Capone/Sherman) To approve \$35,613,098 as the 2021 School Operating budget.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:** David Cronin – Yes

Amber Capone – Yes  
Bob Sherman – Yes  
Meg Bressette – Yes  
Philip Haberlen - Yes  
Jason Croteau - Yes  
Deb Ryan - Yes  
Bob Haverty - Yes

(8-0-0) The motion carried.

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The Budget Committee approved \$35,613,098 as the 2021 School Operating budget.

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**Proposed School District Warrant Articles**

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The first article was the election of officers.

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Mr. Cronin read aloud Article 2 - \$31,900,00 for the renovation of Memorial School. Mr. McGee provided the Committee with a presentation of the proposed Memorial School renovation project and highlighted the amendments from last year's proposal.

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Ms. Capone questioned if the Town had outgrown the school in its current state. In terms of physical space, Mr. McGee explained it was full but was missing updated science labs and necessary middle school programs. He felt they needed room to grow band, consumer science, STEAM/Technology, and special education space. He said it wasn't an expansion in the sense of adding a lot of classrooms, it was upgrading the building. Mr. Capone asked if the proposed figure included air conditioning. Mr. McGee answered yes, it included air conditioning.

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Mr. Sherman inquired about the accreditation of Memorial School. Mr. McGee was unsure if it had. He added accreditation was not required of a middle school and didn't know how it could have been given Memorial School's lack of programming. Ms. Marandos pointed out it was currently considered an elementary school. Mr. Sherman understood the renovations could upgrade/change that status. Mr. McGee replied that would be their goal. Mr. Sherman reminded the community that the bond for the municipal building was coming to an end; they would no longer be paying that bond when the middle school renovation bond begins. He believed the school district would be seeking State aid and suggested the State Representatives seek funding to be applied to the project.

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Ms. Capone also spoke to the community. She said they had done a good job staggering out projects; the last thing they wanted was to have two schools at the same time needing renovations. She said the elementary school and high school have been done and the next step in that process is Memorial School.

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Mr. Sherman inquired what term the bond would have. Ms. Mahoney replied they were looking for a twenty-year bond. They reached out to the New Hampshire Municipal Bond Bank who provided an estimate based on 2.5% interest rate; however, that is a conservative number and noted on their document they received a 1.67% with July 2020 sale.

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Ms. Capone asked for a reminder of how many votes the article failed last time. Ms. Bressette believed based on the percentages it failed by approximately 80 votes.

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Mr. Cronin wanted to know the projected length of time to complete the project. Ms. Mahoney believed it was an estimated two-year timeframe. Ms. Ryan recalled the renovated school would open in August/September 2023. Mr. Cronin questioned what plan would be in place to keep the students educated

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140 during the project. Ms. Ryan discussed the project company were experts in staging school projects to  
141 allow students to continue being educated. The same company did the high school project. She pointed out  
142 they would maintain the existing portable classrooms until such time they weren't needed.  
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144 Mr. Cronin then read aloud article three, the operating budget. He noted the Committee would bring the  
145 articles forward at their next meeting for a vote.  
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147 **Proposed Town Warrant Articles**

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149 Mr. Cronin reviewed the proposed articles submitted by the Town. The monetary articles to be considered  
150 by the Committee will be:

151 Article 4 – Operating budget

152 Article 6 – Purchase and equip an ambulance through the Ambulance Replacement Revolving Fund

153 Article 7 – Highway Block Grant

154 Article 8 – Compensated Trust Fund  
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156 Mr. Cronin informed there may be one or two additional articles coming forward for consideration.  
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158 Mr. Haverty spoke to Article 8. He informed the current balance was approximately \$350,000; the  
159 Department of Revenue Administration recommends the Town hold 50% of its total liability. He said at  
160 this point in time they believe the total liability to be approximately \$1,000,000. He noted the last time they  
161 added to the fund was in 2016.  
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163 **ADJOURNMENT**

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

**ROLL CALL VOTE:** David Cronin – Yes  
Amber Capone – Yes  
Bob Sherman – Yes  
Meg Bressette – Yes  
Philip Haberlen – Yes  
Jason Croteau - Yes  
Deb Ryan - Yes  
Bob Haverty - Yes

(8-0-0) The motion carried.

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166 The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:15pm.  
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Respectfully submitted,  
Charity Landry  
Recording Secretary