

**APPROVED 11/5/2012**

**Dresden Finance Committee  
Hanover Town Hall**

**Monday, October 15, 2012  
Hanover, NH**

Members present: James Dwinell (Chair), Peter Christie, Kevin Cotter, John Ruth, Kristi Fenner, Cheryl Lindberg, Nate Stearns, Mary Fowler, Heidi Postupack

Community members present: Hilary Pridgen, Gordon Spaeth

Members absent: Michael Gerling, Daryl Press, Joshua Durst

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM

### **Agenda Items Discussed**

1. Review/amendment of Agenda:

The Chair asked for comments on the agenda and there were none.

2. Public Comments on items not on the agenda:

The Chair asked for public comments and there were none

3. Minutes of previous DFC meeting

Discussion of minutes from the previous meeting was tabled until November due to lack of availability of minutes.

4. Discussion of Hanover High School class size and offerings – Principal Justin Campbell

Justin Campbell was not able to attend. James Dwinell will try to reschedule. In Mr. Campbell's absence, Kevin Cotter shared the following information:

Average HHS class size is 17.5 students

HHS census is down by 24 students

Ratio of certified staff to students is 1:14.7

Number of certified staff per content area is 55.3

Number of tuition-in students from NH = 66

Number of tuition-in students from VT = 33

5. Update on teacher contract negotiations

Kevin Cotter updated the committee on contract negotiations:

One 2-hour meeting has taken place, with the next scheduled for Oct 24

Negotiating committee includes Robin Carpenter, Neil Odell, Kevin Cotter, Atty. Matt Upton, Frank Bass, John Aubin

Contract must be settled by the end of January to be included in March 5<sup>th</sup> vote

If no agreement has been reached by early December, the committee will engage an independent negotiator/mediator

The committee's approach to negotiation is informed by last year's vote, which failed 2 to 1 against the contract. The guideline is the vote

## 6. Update on SAU budget

James Dwinell updated the committee on the following staff changes at the SAU:

Special Ed Director – who must attend all IEP meetings in addition to his regular responsibilities

Curriculum Director – now there will be one person in charge of curriculum coordination for all four schools: Ray School, Richmond Middle School, Hanover High, Marion Cross

Other new procedures of note include supervisor visits in every classroom at least once a month, conducted by the principal or asst. principal at the Ray School, and principal or superintendent at Richmond Middle School or Hanover High

## 7. Update of Dresden budget

Kevin reported the following information to the committee:

Budget guideline is tentatively set at 2.25% to 2.75% budget-to-budget increase, excluding teacher salaries.

Committee engaged in a brief discussion of the fact that Norwich is facing a per-pupil spending penalty, and was very close to the spending limit last year.

Teachers are being encouraged to move from the NH retirement package, where they vest after 10 years, to the VT retirement package where they vest after 5 years.

First draft of the budget reviewed by budget committee in Sept had estimated a 4.4% increase in certified special ed staff.

Gordon Spaeth (sitting in the audience) added that the school board is anticipating an 8% increase in health and retirement benefits and 6% increase in special ed costs. Discussion of CPI ensued, with Gordon stating it was 1.1% in September 2012.

Technology component at Richmond School was discussed. Two technicians were hired to cover both HHS and Richmond School, and 2 “carts” of iPads containing about 30 machines, are shared among all classrooms, at a cost of between \$25,000 and \$30,000 per “cart.” In October the school board will consider an incremental technology proposal. November 1 is “Technology Night” at Richmond, with is open to the public.

## 8. Discussion of DFC position on budgets and/or teacher contract

Committee discussed forming an opinion on school budget and teachers’ contract to share with school board in January. Committee members would like to see historical cost per student figures. It was noted that state figures are delayed by several years and therefore not relevant or timely enough to be useful to the committee’s opinion. Core message on teachers’ contract would be similar to last year: no increase in total compensation. It was decided that last year’s statement would be reviewed to refresh existing members and allow new members to weigh in.

Hilary Pridgen commented that the more pressing issue is the teachers’ contract, and suggested that last year’s statement was still valid and could be made clearer.

Gordon Spaeth offered to email the new Quick Model to the committee. James will ask John Aubin for cost-per-student over (at least) the last 5 years.

## 9. Tentative dates and topics of upcoming meetings

Next meeting was moved from Nov. 12 to Nov. 5 due to local/state/federal holiday of Veterans Day. DFC will convene at 5:30pm.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm when quorum was lost due to departure of John Ruth and Kevin Cotter.

Prepared by

Heidi Postupack

11/3/12

Submitted Mike Gerling, Secretary

