

**TOWN OF ALTON  
ALTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**ALTON BUDGET COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

**DRAFT**

**November 12, 2009**

Approved 11/19/09

MEMBERS PRESENT: Greg Fuller, Vice Chair  
Loring Carr, Selectmen's Representative  
Terri Noyes, School Board Representative  
Steve Miller  
Marc DeCoff  
Richard MacDonald

MEMBERS ABSENT: Karen Painter, Chair

OTHERS PRESENT: Kathy Holt, Superintendent  
Bonnie Jean Kuras, Principal  
Kathy O'Blenes, Business Administrator  
Pamela McLeoud, Technology Director  
Karl Ingoldsby, Building & Grounds Director

I. CALL TO ORDER

G. Fuller called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

IV. AGENDA REVIEW

L. Carr stated he had some answers from the last meeting but that he would give them to Karen for the next meeting. R. MacDonald motioned to approve the agenda and M. DeCoff seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote. (GF, LC, SM, MD, RM, TN / absent – KP)

V. NEW BUSINESS

TECHNOLOGY 1140

G. Fuller requested a summary of the budget, like what the Committee has received in the past. K. Holt stated that the request had been made at the last meeting and the Business Administrator had indicated she could get it to them in the next couple of weeks.

Pamela McLeod, Technology Director, presented the budget for her department. She presented a spreadsheet showing the various makes/models, types, operating systems, and quantity of computers that

are in the school. There are 233 workstations in the school. She spoke about some of the thin clients that were purchased last year with some grant money, for \$120/unit, but found that the low-end equipment might not have been best. She spoke about the pros and cons of the thin client machines. Thin clients cannot be used in the Technology Lab or to work with multimedia, as they have some limitations on memory. She reported that the computer replacement cycle was a little off and that about six machines were approximately six years old. She discussed some of the issues they have had with the current computer lab set up. She stated that her number one concern this year was to get the lab back up to date. The cost of computers has come down and there are flat screen monitors now in that room. She has requested twenty workstations for the lab and then for six workstations for the teachers with the oldest machines. She spoke about some of the cuts that the school board has made to the request for computers. Grant money has been received for servers and generally there is a request for two new servers every two years, however one server was purchased with grant money, so there is a request for just one server this year.

B. Kuras stated that grant money is drying up and spoke about the utilization of AARA funds for new projects.

The Committee reviewed the Technology budget on a line-by-line basis. S. Miller asked if the Salary would be correlated anyway to the teachers' contract. T. Noyes responded that it would not. The amount for Health Insurance will not be in until December 1, so a ten percent increase was factored into the budget at this time but it will be amended when the exact figures are received. The rates for Dental Insurance and FICA are exact rates. There is a large increase anticipated for 2011-2012. G. Fuller asked what Employee Benefit was and K. O'Blenes reported that it is one percent of the Director's salary and it can be put towards long-term or short-term disability, as they choose.

S. Miller noted the account was not used in 2007 and 2008. There was discussion about how much has been spent to-date for Tech Support and S. Miller noted that not all of the money in the account was spent in 2007 or 2008. T. Noyes noted that there was a budget freeze both of those years. P. McLeod reported that it was for tech support and training but that there had not been any training in the past three years because of the budget freezes. She explained that the training would be for her or her assistant. S. Miller asked if this included SmartBoard training and stated that it should only take about fifteen minutes. He asked if SmartBoard training was part of the Technology Plan. P. McLeod stated that it might be part of it but that there were some other seminars, etc., that she and her assistant would be attending that she felt they needed to take part of. S. Miller asked how much would be used for herself this year and P. McLeod stated it would be about \$4,000 for her training.

G. Fuller asked how much wiring that P. McLeod has done and she responded that there has been a moratorium on wiring because of pending building renovations. She stated that they have budgeted for it in case of an emergency. There is one network drop in each classroom and only a couple in the offices. K. Holt stated that the School Board has requested to hold off on anything that may be ripped out so there was no new wiring done. P. McLeod stated they have been implementing new wireless coverage. Wiring is now done by a couple of teachers who help her out and by her husband. G. Fuller asked why if there was a freeze in the past few years and yet the budget lines were the same, and P. McLeod noted that if there was an emergency, such as with the fibers running out to the modular classrooms, that it would easily be a \$2,000 hit. G. Fuller asked if they had done a "copy and paste" and P. McLeod stated that it was down (lesser amounts) from the previous year.

M. DeCoff asked how much of the Software in the budget line item was tech support related. P. McLeod stated that it was Microsoft School Agreement licenses but that the tech-support software was in the Technical Support budget line item.

G. Fuller asked what was used for Open Source software, such as Open Office, and P. McLeod reported they used a lot of free or open source software, from Open Office to graphics programs. She discussed some of the software and operating systems that are used.

G. Fuller noted that seventy netbooks were Linux operating systems and asked if anything was paid to Microsoft for the Apple computers. P. McLeod reported that the Apples are dual boot machines, as they run both the Mac OS X and Windows XP, so they paid Microsoft for those machines.

S. Miller asked if any staff had computers at home that belonged to the school. P. McLeod stated that they did not but they had the opposite situation as some teachers have brought in their own computers to use in their classroom. She spoke about the benefits of allowing teachers to bring in their personal computer.

R. MacDonald asked how many SmartBoards were being used now and P. McLeod stated they had just purchased their eleventh one.

S. Miller asked about the three \$500 stipends that were in the budget. P. McLeod reported that it was three stipends for three teachers who were the first on the line in technology in the school. They help with setting up new computers, training of other teachers, and serve on the school's Technology Committee. She reported the money for the stipends was from a grant.

#### BUILDING MAINTENANCE 2600

Karl Ingoldsby, Building & Grounds Director, presented the budget for his department. The Salary budget line item is for three full-time employees and two part-time employees. The salary adjustments are in the Superintendent's budget and are factored as a two percent increase, overall. S. Miller asked if that was a proper accounting procedure. K. O'Blenes stated it could go either way, as it could be in the Superintendent's budget or in the department's budget line. K. Holt stated that it was in the Superintendent's budget so that it would not be considered an "entitlement" by the employee but the raise was not a sure thing. S. Miller asked what was done in the other districts that K. Holt has been at and K. Holt stated that there were unions for the employees at the other schools where she has been at so there was a step/track. She reported the increases are not a promised amount but were set at the time the employee had his/her annual review.

There was discussion about a recent personnel change. A new person was added in 2008-2009. K. O'Blenes spoke about the changes in the costs to Health Insurance and Dental Insurance. There was discussion about the increase to Workers Compensation.

G. Fuller asked why there was a change in the budget line item for Purchased Technical Services. K. Ingoldsby reported that the Board has requested that the carpets in the school be steam cleaned each summer and that costs about \$4,000, as the machine could not be rented and would cost about \$20,000 to purchase. He spoke about what they had done last summer for maintenance to the building.

S. Miller asked if the bathrooms were going to be fixed now that everything was going to "on hold" and T. Noyes stated that it was discussed at the last Board meeting and they will be working on it. They will be upgrading the windows as well. S. Miller asked if substitutes were hired and K. Ingoldsby stated they hired substitutes if someone was going to be out for an extended period of time.

K. Ingoldsby spoke about the new window that will be placed in the Speech & Language room at the cost of \$5,000. The window will be put in during the December break. It will be taken out of the budget that is proposed for 2010-2011. He briefly spoke about unforeseen repairs.

S. Miller asked why there were unforeseen repairs in some maintenance categories and not in others. K. Ingoldsby stated that it was one all-encompassing fund and it was based on year-to-year expenses. S. Miller asked if there was an operational contingency fund for Building & Grounds. He stated he would like to see the whole number under Unforeseen Repairs so they would be able to see the total amount in that budget line item. K. O'Blenes stated there was not an account number for "unforeseen" and she would need to apply invoices to the proper line within a function.

G. Fuller asked why Insurance has gone down and K. O'Blenes stated she had already checked the numbers.

G. Fuller reviewed the budget line item for Telephone and asked if Voice Over Internet Protocol has been implemented. He spoke about the use of fiber-optic lines for VOIP in his workplace and felt it was good quality and savings. B. Kuras stated they had not implemented it yet but that the high school had tried it and found it was poor quality.

S. Miller asked about the cost of Supplies. K. Ingoldsby reported that it was for mop heads, paper towels, hand sanitizers, etc. He reported there are seven water coolers in the modular classrooms and two in the teachers' rooms.

There was discussion of the increases in Electricity rates for 2010-2011. K. O'Blenes stated that they were told there was no projected increase at that time. S. Miller asked L. Carr if he would check with Russ Bailey, Town Administrator, if the same rates had been discussed with the town when the budget was drafted.

S. Miller asked how the price of Bottled Gas was factored. K. O'Blenes reported that they reviewed how much they had spent in the past, the highs and lows, and factored it at about \$3.00/gal for the budget. There was discussion about the Energy Contingency fund and the utilization of the funds.

There was discussion about the cost of Gasoline-Truck. S. Miller asked if they used the town's gas tanks and K. Ingoldsby stated that they filled up at the station in the Alton circle. R. MacDonald suggested that they check with Russ Bailey for access to the pumps because there would be a savings for them.

K. Ingoldsby spoke about the cost of Equipment – Replacement, and noted that the batteries for the twenty-six radios needed to be replaced each year. He reported there were two radios that needed to be replaced but that none were replaced last year because they were on a budget freeze.

There was a brief break.

S. Miller asked stated there was a ten point one ratio of students to teachers, per the State's website, and reported on the ratio for other schools in some of the neighboring towns. He stated that we were at the low end of the Lakes Region on this issues. K. Holt stated that this is something they would be addressing in the upcoming year.

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION EXTENDED YEAR PROGRAM 1205

K. O'Blenes stated that because of the way this is coded, it was felt it was best this was separated out from the Special Education (1200) budget. It is not Summer School but an extended year program that is driven by an Independent Education Plan. There are students who receive Medicare/Medicaid in the budget and some funding comes from IDEA monies. This is so that students can maintain what they had gained during the regular school year. The Special Education program is monitored by the State and has to meet certain criteria to "pass" or "fail".

G. Fuller asked about the Salary budget line item. K. O'Blenes stated this is hard salary amount to factor because it was hard to plan that far ahead. The proposed budget is figured on the previous year's expense. The Extended Year Program for Alton high school students is included in the budget. This is based on staff at the school right now and is subject to change. The Salary budget line items are for Teacher – Elementary School, Teacher – High School, Para-Educator – Elementary School, and Para Educator – High School.

There was discussion about the cost of Professional Services HS-Extended Year. M. DeCoff stated that there were no expenses last year and K. O'Blenes noted that there were corrections to be made to the budget line item because of invoices received from the summer.

S. Miller spoke about the cost of Retirement and confirmed the increase. M. DeCoff spoke about the cost of Tuition Private Sources and noted that \$11,000 had been spent already this year and K. Holt stated that it was IEP driven.

#### ENRICHMENT 1280

There was discussion of the budget line item for Health Insurance. G. Fuller asked for the rates and plans that were available to staff. K. O'Blenes stated she could give them copies of the contracts they receive when they came available in December.

S. Miller asked about the costs for Destination Imagination coaches in the budget line item for Advisors. B. Kuras stated that there was \$3,000 for up to ten coaches. The program is for 1<sup>st</sup> Grade up through Middle School.

S. Miller asked how money was spent for Other Professional Services and what came in for assemblies. B. Kuras discussed some of the programs they have had in the past. S. Miller noted that this was cut because of expenses this year and asked what the money was going to be used for. K. Holt noted that some of the programs were funded by grants but now that money was not available so they were now charging for their programs. B. Kuras spoke about some of the programs that were presented into the school.

There is a new request for a video camera in the Audio Visual budget line item.

#### CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES 1410

S. Miller asked about the cost of Other Professional Services Assemblies and stated he thought that the cost of assemblies were for the enrichment for “gifted and talented” students. T. Noyes stated that all students were enriched by the assemblies. S. Miller stated they were really talking about approximately \$12,300 for assemblies. T. Noyes noted there were field trips included in the budget line item. B. Kuras reported on some of the assemblies such as TIGER, Literacy Extravaganza, SADD/Youth-to-Youth, and Read Across America. She spoke about the varied content and the various grades that take part in the assemblies that are available. S. Miller stated there were about thirteen assemblies per year and felt the cost of approximately \$1,000 per assembly was high. He requested a summary of the cost per assembly from the Business Office for review at the next meeting.

#### STUDENT ATHLETICS 1420

The budget line for Officials was moved to the budget line item for Salaries, per a request to the Business Administrator from the auditors.

#### SUMMER SCHOOL 1430

S. Miller asked how many students attended Summer School last year. B. Kuras reported there were about 70-75 students in the program last year. She discussed how students were enrolled or invited into the program.

G. Fuller asked about the budget lines for Salaries for teachers and educational assistants. K. O'Blenes stated that the numbers are based on last year's numbers but that it was difficult to project what the exact costs would be.

There is no government funding for Summer School.

#### GUIDANCE 2120

S. Miller asked what the State's recommendations were for this department. K. Holt reported that there is recommendation of one guidance counselor per three hundred students and one social worker.

G. Fuller discussed government mandates without funding. He asked how much of the budget was mandated and T. Noyes reported that eleven percent of the budget was mandated.

S. Miller asked for the justification for the two full-time and one part-time Guidance Counselors. K. Holt reported that they were responsible for teaching, the NWEA testing, and NECAP testing. There was discussion about the time the Guidance Counselors spend teaching and how much time they spend working with students mediating/counseling. He asked for to know what percentage of the time that the counselors spent teaching. B. Kuras stated that there could be review of the numbers but when the socio-economic situation was reviewed, that they felt very strongly two years ago when they proposed the position before the Budget Committee that another part-time Guidance Counselor was needed. She spoke about some of the challenges of the students in the school.

There was discussion about the budget line item for Travel. B. Kuras explained there might be home visits, travel to DCYF, and other needs. K. Holt stated they had not put in for it in the past.

#### HEALTH SERVICES 2130

There was discussion about the Tuition Reimbursement budget line item. K. Holt explained that it is part of the school nurse's contract. S. Miller asked if she received this because the teachers received tuition reimbursement. B. Kuras explained that it was part of keeping up with licensure. S. Miller felt that most employees had to pay for their own licensure, as it was something that they could take with them if they moved on to another job. He asked if there was a new amount in the contract for tuition reimbursement if this would be changed. T. Noyes stated it was not an expectation.

There was no Old Business, Public Input, or Correspondence.

## VI. ADJOURNMENT

M. DeCoff motioned to adjourn and R. MacDonald seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Krista Argiropolis  
Recorder