Minutes - Dover School Committee
Date: 3/7/07 9:00-12:00 - Administration Building

Attendees:
Kathy Gill-Body, Chair
Susan Hackney
James Stewart
Bob Springett
Dr. Perry Davis
Richard Mathieu
Ken Corning
Bob Ferrari
Nancy Simms

1. The Chair outlined that the committee would be discussing what further actions they should take with the operating budget to meet the goal of a $200,000 cut to the budget, requested by the Warrant Committee. In addition, the committee would be determining whether they could cut 10% from their Capital Budget.

2. There was a brief discussion regarding an update that School Committee received at their February meeting, which referenced significant savings in the Special Education budget. Dr. Davis confirmed that he had asked Sally Winslow, the SPED Director, to provide monthly budget updates, going forward, to the School Committee. Richard Mathieu will provide a template for the SPED Director to use in updating the SPED budget. One goal of this update would be for the School Committee to be able to see potential budget savings or overages on a month-to-month basis.

3. The capital budget was looked at in detail with the goal of trying to cut 10% from this budget. The main focus was on the network and computers. It was determined that the capital budget could be cut by $3,000, but that the current schedule of computer and network replacements were necessary and should be maintained.

4. The discussion turned to the operating budget. Items up for discussion in the operating budget were: Instrumental Music program, Physical Education, Library Aid, and the Kindergarten Schedule

Removing the instrumental program was discussed, and the Pine Hill model was considered. However, the committee did not feel the change should be made in the 07/08 school year. A motion was made by Mrs. Hackney to consider moving the instrumental music program to a fee-for-service after school program in the 08/09 school year. This motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

To achieve the remaining $30,000 required to reach a total $200,000 cut, the committee agreed to remove .4 PE position ($18,028 savings) after Mr. Ferrari explained that the block scheduling plan that will be implemented for the first time next year will make all
blocks 40 min in length, and that all PE classes can be taught by the 2.0 FTE PE faculty we have if we reduce the frequency of PE to once per week for the kindergarten classes. Many schools, including Pine Hill, provide PE once per week for kindergarten classes. Making this change in scheduling and frequency of PE for the kindergarten classes still allows adequate preparation time for the PT teachers and adapted PE classes each week. A motion to remove the .4 FTE PE position was made by Mrs. Hackney, seconded by Mrs. Gill-Body and approved unanimously.

The committee then revisited 2 salary items. It was agreed to remove $1000 from the principal salary line item because the contract for the new principal, Mr. Downing, has now been finalized at $114,000 and we budgeted $115,000 for this salary when we were constructing the budget. Dr. Davis recommended removing $2000 from the Curriculum Coordinator salary line item, anticipating that whoever is hired to fill this position will have less total overall years of experience teaching than Dr. Hamblett. A motion to reduce these two salary line items as noted above was made by Mr. Springett, seconded by Mr. Stuart and approved unanimously.

The library aide position was reviewed, and Mr. Ferrari and Dr. Davis identified a minimum of 3-4 hours per day of aide coverage as necessary to not detract from Mrs. Chase's ability to teach students when they have their classroom visits to the library. We currently have 30 hours of budgeted aide help per week. The committee agreed to cut the aide budget in half, thereby reducing the aide coverage to 15 hours per week for next year, and noted that volunteers will need to be recruited to fulfill some aide duties. A motion to reduce the library aide line item by $9084 was made by Mrs. Gill-Body, seconded by Mr. Stuart, and approved unanimously.

After these changes, the total amount that the 08 budget will be reduced is $200,539. Mr. Mathieu will generate updated reports that reflect these changes made to the 08 budget.

The committee identified the library aide position as the one item that, if funds allow, they would like to see reinstated ($9084).

5. The committee discussed when members might be available to meet with Warrant Committee and Capital Budget Committee with a report of our changes to the 08 budget. Mrs. Gill-Body will communicate with Mrs. Hunter, Chair of the Warrant Committee about a possible time next week. Mrs. Simms will check with the Capital Budget Committee about a possible time for a follow-up meeting with them.

The meeting ended at 12:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Hackney