

LNSU/LNMUUSD BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2017
GMTCC COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER

Board members present: Sue Hamlyn-Prescott, Laura Miller, Amanda Tilton-Martin, Andrew Beaupre, Angie Evans (by phone),

Others: Deborah Clark, Brian Pena, Sherry Lussier

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call to Order and Approval of Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 5:30. The agenda was approved.

2. Review Meeting Times

A. Evans expressed concern about being able to attend meetings because Thursday evenings conflict with basketball practice. She noted she could call in at those times, but to be at the tech center would be extremely difficult. A. Tilton-Martin recommended that she call in and everyone agreed that this would be fine.

3. Receive Budget Reports

A. Information Technology

Brian Pena reviewed the proposed IT budget. There are two separate areas – infrastructure and things that support curriculum. He first reviewed the infrastructure budget items. One of the main changes is that Hyde Park now has a full-time year-round IT coordinator, which means \$28K more in wages.

L. Miller asked why we are paying \$216K out of this year's budget for salaries when we voted for \$189K. D. Clark said the personnel committee approved the change from a part-time tech integrationist to a full-time person. (*S. Hamlyn-Prescott arrived.*)

D. Clark said this budget is for LNMUUSD only, not for the SU. There will be three separate budgets – LNMUUSD, LNSU, and Cambridge.

The budget has a reduction of about \$1500 for purchased services. Repair and maintenance is going up a bit. Some will be applied to aging infrastructure, to prolong the life of items we can't afford to replace. There is an increase for communications. B. Pena said he believes it is an increase because it was never really budgeted before. The budget takes into account the projected E-rate reimbursement. Some E-rate is in danger of not being renewed. Access switches will be a capital project, not paid for out of the operation budget.

L. Miller suggested it would be good to have an inventory of IT equipment and when it will need to be replaced so board members can understand the need for budget increases. B. Pena said we are starting with some asset management. L. Miller suggested a student could do inventory. B. Pena said we would have to hire someone to do that work, even if we used students. Once someone exceeds 20

hours a week they have to get benefits. S. Lussier said there are a couple of positions B. Pena will be filling that she knows her students could do. D. Clark said one problem with using students for work is that they may not be able to respond immediately if there is an emergency. B. Pena said child labor laws apply to students under 16.

The budget includes money to replace Chromebooks at GMTCC and to replace projectors if necessary. There is also money for teacher laptops at GMTCC. We are moving away from desktops. The committee discussed how much of the proposed budget is for GMTCC.

The proposed budget increase for infrastructure is 28%.

A. Beaupre said the amount budgeted for software to allow online forms seems high. Is there enough advantage to justify the expense? B. Pena said there are savings from not having to print forms. The error rate in filling out forms should go down. S. Hamlyn-Prescott said it will allow information entered in previous years to be saved so parents only have to enter any changes. The software links to PowerSchool. B. Pena said we should see decreases in the amount of time registrars have to spend on paperwork. A. Tilton-Martin said it should increase compliance with filling out free and reduced forms, bringing in more revenue.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said in the past the board has looked at what we absolutely need and what are wish list items. We have to prioritize. We will need a better understanding of what pieces are on the wish list.

B. Pena said his budget includes fees for renewing wireless access point licenses. It includes PowerSchool maintenance. Originally that was paid for solely by the high school but B. Schaffer has requested that the high school no longer cover all of it. D. Clark said she thinks S. Hamlyn-Prescott is asking about what the increases in the budget are for. (A. Evans left.) B. Pena said some of the increase is salary increases – increasing one position to full time and making it a higher level position and all the other salary increases. He said nothing has been added. There are no extra wish list items on here, except for the online form software, which was requested by the board, and new switches. Nothing in the budget is a wish list item. It is what we need to run IT. D. Clark said administrators are finding savings in other areas.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott asked if anything in the proposed budget could be paid for out of capital reserve. B. Pena said he has already taken out some expenses to be covered by capital reserve, such as switches.

The proposed increase for instructional technology (things that support curriculum) is 35%. S. Hamlyn-Prescott said we may have to look at where we can make reductions. B. Pena said it would have to be in 2222, but that takes away from modernizing technology in classrooms.

B. Pena discussed the main budget drivers in instructional technology. He said Johnson keeps their tech integrationist/tech coordinator salary in 2222, which is instructional technology. S. Hamlyn-Prescott asked, now that we are a MUUSD, why is their technology person there when everyone else does it differently? B. Pena said he believes it is because of the way he was hired. They pay him as a teacher. D. Clark said Charleen McFarlane has to work to swap him out. He does tech work but is coded as a teacher. If his salary is moved to a different line item, it means an increase in one line item and a decrease in another. B. Pena said we have 6 tech coordinators.

The budget includes smart bulb replacements, Chromebook and iPad repairs, and Lightspeed system repairs. There is an increase for Eden because they have some items that are old. The high school has a lot of need. There are a lot of items that break in the classroom – wall plates, connectors, projector bulbs, etc. Sometimes projectors are left on overnight or over a weekend, using up hours of bulb life. The budget includes supplies for classrooms such as thumb drives, mice, and key-boards.

L. Miller asked, what about special technology needs for special ed students? B. Pena said that is in a separate budget. There is a separate technology piece for special ed.

B. Pena said there is \$8K in the budget for software for Hyde Park. Diane Reilly reports she spends about \$8K on software per year. There is \$1K for Eden and none for Waterville or Johnson. They didn't report a need for software. D. Clark said the whole district only spent \$5610 last year on software. We need more information on Hyde Park's needs. Others agreed we need clarification. D. Clark said Hyde Park didn't spend anything for software for the last 2 years. S. Hamlyn-Prescott asked for clarification about how what software the money is for.

B. Pena said the amount budgeted for equipment is a big number. He plans to phase out projectors, replacing aging or broken ones with smart boards. He plans to replace all of them in every school over the next 3 years, so this budget calls for replacing about a third of them. Smart boards have a 5-year warranty. Ideally we can keep them for 7 years.

The budget includes replacement of Chromebooks on a cycle. Some will be unsupported as of July 18. When they are unsupported they no longer receive updates and they become a security vulnerability for the district.

D. Clark said some purchases could be made with capital reserve funds if we can't shave enough from other areas of the budget to cover them. B. Pena said we need to plan for replacement when we do capital purchases.

B. Pena said he wants to replace middle school and high school Mac lab computers. The current ones are old and don't run current operating systems well. Teachers say they lose on average 15 minutes per day per class waiting for devices to boot up, load programs, etc. because they are so slow. The technology is so outdated that teachers want to use the computers as part of the curriculum but can't. Fifty thousand dollars would cover 23 middle school and high school lab computers and buy 25 WinBooks. We are moving away from more expensive laptops for teachers.

L. Miller said she understands each child at Lamoille Union has their own device. B. Pena said they have an iPad. That is to ensure they can get to the internet, but not all programs are supported on iPads. Some programs don't work well on iPads and need more robust devices. The iPads also don't have keyboards.

L. Miller asked, Lamoille Union doesn't have carts with Chromebooks? B. Pena said no.

B. GMTCC

S. Lussier handed out copies of the presentation she had given at the LNMUUSD board meeting. She said last night she got tentative numbers from the state. The base number is \$9,847. Her proposed budget is a 1% increase. For salaries, she included a 3% increase, not a 3.4% increase. She did as Secretary Holcombe urged and took advantage of attrition. She will have one less salary in this budget. There is a bit of an increase in salaries for maintenance because we now have a secondary satellite program. The bond principal is expected to be \$41K.

There was discussion about students from outside our sending area coming to GMTCC. S. Lussier said those students can only come if they are in a program not available in their area. Ag, business, LNA, and HVAC are all programs some other tech centers don't have. No one else has HVAC.

S. Lussier said tech center enrollment is declining across the state. There is incentive for sending schools to keep students there and there is a stigma about going to a tech school. Some teachers and counselors tell students they can't go to college if they go to the tech center. Over 45% of our students go to college. They will tell students they can't be in the yearbook or shame them for coming to an info session. We have about 135 students at GMTCC. We are not allowed in this district to charge for our adults. Other districts in the state charge 40% of tuition for adults. S. Lussier has been told that when LUSD was conceived one deal was that any adult could come to the tech center for free provided they are a good fit and there is room in the class. Probably it is about 50-70% successful when an adult comes. We can't count them for our numbers. We have the new 4th block foundations class and we can only count 1/5 of a student for those attending that class.

A. Beaupre asked if the new sugar house is part of the ag program. S. Lussier said it is part of the forestry program. A. Tilton-Martin said there will be added

maintenance for the new sugar house, but S. Lussier said she doesn't think it will have much of an effect.

S. Lussier said two or three years ago we had 165 GMTCC students.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott asked how the adult ed program is funded. S. Lussier said it is a separate enterprise account. We get \$19K a year to run it. We use that money mostly for scholarship tuition. Normally adults have to pay.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott asked where the money comes from to pay the person who runs the adult ed program. S. Lussier said the assistant director/adult ed coordinator is part of the director's office budget.

L. Miller asked how grants work. Does S. Lussier have to apply for them? S. Lussier said yes.

C. Transportation

D. Clark said the proposed budget is a one percent decrease. Eden's revenue is being reduced by about \$50K due to the loss of the high school bus run. LVT will do the Eden high school run. Eden has 3 buses: a 2017, a 2012 and a 2011. They need to look at a bus purchase in FY19. Eden has a bus reserve with \$40K and a \$250K capital reserve fund. It is difficult to run buses. Lisa Tatro does a phenomenal job of it at Cambridge. But D. Clark doesn't know that we would give up on running buses out of Eden in 2019, so we would need a new bus for Eden.

D. Clark built \$30K into the budget because the question of preschool transportation lingers. Will we transport 3 year olds or stop transporting 4 year olds? An additional person will be needed on the bus if we are transporting 3 year olds. A. Tilton-Martin said if we transported 3 year olds we might have more enrollment.

D. Clark said for FY19 the question is whether to purchase a bus or eliminate more service. A bus costs about \$100K. L. Miller said if Eden contracts out then we don't have to buy a bus. D. Clark said if we stop Eden busing then we have RIFing issues because we are replacing union employees. L. Miller said we could offer them a job in Cambridge. They have 2 bus drivers retiring this year. D. Clark said Eden busing is a sensitive subject. A. Beaupre suggested a straw poll at town meeting about whether Eden residents want to spend the money to buy a new bus.

S. Hamlyn-Prescott said she thinks the question of whether the board wants to buy a new bus for Eden in FY19 and again in FY20 should come up at the next LNMUUSD meeting.

D. Vermont State Teachers Retirement System Payments

D. Clark said all teachers who were hired July 1, 2015 or later have an annual assessment that their district has to pay for their retirement. Last year our cost for this was \$30K (\$1097 per teacher.) For this year, our cost will be \$64K (\$1253 per teacher.) This will be an increasing cost to us in future years.

4. ***Discuss Future Agenda Items***

D. Clark said she would like to bring the LNSU budget to the next meeting. The committee will probably see a full LNMUUSD budget at the meeting after next.

The committee agreed that Jen Stevens should come and explain the special ed budget. L. Miller suggested she could help the committee understand costs for contracted services like OT and PT. Are we saving money on those?

5. ***Adjourn***

The meeting was adjourned at 7:54.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths

UNAPPROVED