

Dummer School District  
2007-2008 Budget Hearing  
Dummer Town Hall  
Monday February 12, 2007  
Minutes of Hearing

Present: Board Members – Julie Glover, Nancy Bisson, Jennifer Miller  
Administration: Superintendent Paul Bousquet, Business Administrator Pauline Plourde

Glover called the Budget Hearing to order at 6:05 PM.

The Board and Administrators introduced themselves.

Plourde started the meeting by presenting the tax impact of the budget. She continued by explaining that the hydro will be coming back onto the tax rolls. She stated that there is a projected decrease of \$5.16 on the tax rate for coming year.

Plourde presented the 2007-2008 Budget, which has a decrease of \$8889. This is due to a reduction of four students in regular education. There is also a decrease in special education account, as there is not a need for a paraprofessional at this time, although there is an increase in speech and psychological testing.

SAU share of the budget has increased. This is due to a staff member becoming full time, which includes benefits. The increase in salaries at the SAU was 3%.

Plourde explained the tuition expendable trust fund. She presented a special education summary, which includes an increase in speech and psychological testing

Public asked for the number of students receiving special education. Plourde stated there are nine students, with additional ones on 504 plans.

Plourde asked if there were any questions related to the budget.

Plourde pointed out that the Board's decision to place \$25,000 in an expendable trust fund. She explained that if it is prudent to have funds available in order to protect the district to avoid a deficit.

Bousquet presented examples of unanticipated tuitioned students.

Labrecque asked about the extended school year. Plourde explained the money in the preschool program, and the benefit now of grants that are paying for that cost.

Wyman asked about a reasonable target for the expendable trust fund. Bousquet stated that an out of district placement may cost up to \$90,000 although there are now affordable alternatives close by. Bousquet added that it may be several students tuitioning to Berlin and they may require special services.

Plourde explained that other districts can rearrange a bit – since they have revenues to possibly address the expenses, and Dummer does not.

Plourde explained that in the past, they included one student per level in the budget, to address the possibility of one moving in. She added that with the expendable trust, they did not include that extra student in the budget.

Plourde stated the tuition rates per grade level:

\$ 9,735. for elementary  
\$ 8,835. for Berlin Junior High School  
\$ 9,000. for Berlin High School

Public commented on the tuition rate at the elementary level is higher than the high school.

Plourde explained the formula of taking the rental charge of the building, the number of teachers, and then dividing the total by the number of students to arrive at the tuition figure. She stated that as the number of students decrease, the costs per student increase.

Plourde asked Glover if they wanted to discuss the withdrawal of the AREA agreement.

Bousquet explained the steps that he has taken so the withdrawal application would be ready. Bousquet stated that at this point, it hasn't been approved by the state yet. He has requested legal rights to the receiving schools. He added that Northumberland and the Gorham Co-op have responded that they would be able to service our students, but Berlin has not. Bousquet added that Berlin has sent a letter to the Co-op to discuss shared services between the Co-op and Berlin.

He added that the withdrawal committee had approved for withdrawing from the AREA with Berlin. He apologized for the timing and that they should have started in April, not August to have it completed in time. Plourde stated that the state is strict, but it is a good thing since everything has to be examined – course of study, tuition, transportation, etc.

Public stated, according to the RSA, withdrawal application needs to include specific information and then it needs to be published in the newspaper. Plourde responded that it has not appeared in the paper because it has not been approved by the DOE. Public commented that it will be postponed for another year and will not be on the ballot until next year.

Wyman asked who was responsible for publishing the district report. Plourde stated that the SAU is responsible for publishing it.

Diane Holt asked what makes the school tax rate so high. Plourde responded that it was the same budget and the rate is based on the town valuation. Plourde stated that the hydros were pulled from the tax rolls, and now they are coming back on, which will change the rate.

Diane Holt asked if the state had anything to do with budget. Plourde responded that the state education grant will see a slight increase next year. Plourde added that Dummer is averaging around 50 students, and it is staying a stable number of students. Compared to Milan it is a bit trickier, since Milan has double Dummer's tax base.

Wyman discussed what the town has anticipated.

Miller asked if there were any other questions.

Motion made by Miller to adjourn at 6:42 PM. Motion seconded by Bisson. Vote 3-0. Motion approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly A. Hockmeyer