



**Joint Finance Committee Meeting
Minutes April 13, 2023 – 5:30 p.m.
Franklin School District – SAU Office**



In attendance: Councilor Vince Ribas (Chair), Councilor George Dzujna, Councilor Valerie Blake, Deb Brown (Co- Chair), School Board Chair Tim Dow, School Board Vice Chair Delaney Carrier

Absent: None

Others in attendance: City Manager Judie Milner, Finance Director Pessy Gaudette, Superintendent Dan LeGallo, Business Administrator Jefferson Braman and members of the public, Leigh Webb.

Deb Brown (Co-Chair) opened the meeting at 5:34 p.m.

Agenda Item I.

Consider the minutes of the October 27, 2022 Joint Finance Committee Meeting:

Motion was made by Tim Dow to approve the minutes of the October 27, 2023 minutes with minor typographical corrections. Seconded by Councilor Vince Ribas.

Deb Brown asked if there was any discussion.

6 in favor: motion passes.

Agenda Item II.

FY23 Budget Status Update:

Judie Milner shared information regarding Tax pickups in the revenue, and reviewed the process of the budget sheets she shared with the attendees.

Judie Milner asked Jefferson Braman to review Adequacy Aid. The budget coming out of Concord is much better than we had anticipated. Judie suggested that members reach out to Senator Innis and recommend the House Budget be passed.

(Phone: 603-285-1150 Email: Daniel.Innis@leg.state.nh.us)

Tim Dow reviewed that he participated in a phone conference with our Representatives in Washington DC and there are not going to be any Federal Bills for Free and Reduced lunches. However, the State House in Concord is moving along with funding for the FF&V program as well as some additional nutrition aid. There are lots of discussions in Washington DC regarding Medicaid funding for students. There is a huge bill coming out of the Department of Agriculture that will help continuing to fund the FF&V program. He asked the Washington DC contingency to

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look at funding for learning loss so that we could continue receiving these funds.

Leigh Webb asked what the poverty level is set at this year to qualify for Free & Reduced. Jefferson Braman said he did not have those numbers with him but it is dependent on family size.

Judie Milner will send contact information for Senator Innis so that as a group we can support both the Medicaid Bill and House Budget. (Phone: 603-285-1150
Email: Daniel.Innis@leg.state.nh.us)

Budget 101 – Pessy Gaudette and Judie Milner are putting together slides to explain how the budget process works. The intent is to remove some confusion. People often note that Payroll should be the highest portion of the budget, but it is not in Franklin. They plan to touch on the Tax Cap; Gross Budgeting (they are going to show some examples of how it works), Tax Rate versus Tax Cap. Because the Tax Cap is in place, the taxes can only be a certain amount which in turn affects the Tax Rate because property values do not decrease. In addition, they will be explaining Exchange Fees that are not a tax. They will explain what a TIF District is. This is all happening next Wednesday the 19th at City Hall at 6pm. We may have Jamie Dowd from the Department of Revenue (DRA) come to the meeting. Hoping it takes a maximum of 2 hours, but Judie Milner will stay until all questions are answered.

Judie informed the committee that Budget Hearings will begin Wednesday the 3rd for the School District, and then the 8th the 15th and the 22nd for the other departments.

Tim Dow requested that if any Councilors have questions before the presentation (once Judie sends the School Budget to them) they should send questions directly to Dan LeGallo and Jefferson Braman so he can provide feedback before the presentation.

Next Meeting items:

- a) How do we raise revenue in order to cover programs instead of cutting services?
- b) Tax Cap discussion – How to raise taxes without removing the Cap?
- c) Setting service priorities

The City will host joint meetings in February and August and the SAU will host in April (13th) and October (12th). The hosting entity will be responsible for minutes and meetings will be held mostly on the second Thursday unless otherwise noted. The Next meeting will be held Tuesday 9/19/23 at the City Hall 5:30pm.

Tim Dow asked Judie Milner if she could explain how the tax cap can be changed. Judie did a white board presentation with simple numbers. The council with a 2/3rds majority vote can remove the Capital expenses and Debt expenses which does not increase the tax rate. This Tax Cap has been in place since 1989 and only twice has this been done. We need to stop telling the council they can't do this because they can and they should.

George Dzujna: When the poverty rate is increased, how will that affect the Franklin School

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district? Jefferson Braman said the average income is set nationally, not regionally based on the actual cost of living. It will however allow more families to participate if they did not qualify previously. This in turn will equate to more dollars for our District. There was much discussion regarding food insecurities. Delaney noted that HB572 is the Medicaid Bill that we need support.

There was no other business to discuss.

Motion to adjourn was made by Vince Ribas and seconded by Valerie Blake. All in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Colleen Conway
School Board Clerk