

**ADVISORY BUDGET COMMITTEE
TOWN OF MADISON
November 21, 2022
MINUTES**

Members Present – Chairman Tino Fernandes; Ron Force; Ned Rogerson; Doug McAllister; Sharon Schilling; Selectman John Arruda; School Board Member Michael Brooks; Alternate Adam Price

Others Present – Town Administrator Linda Shackford; Librarian Sloane Jarell; Drew Gentile; Sepp Meier; School Board Members Jim Curran and Sarah DeMartino; Videographer Aysia Morency and Kasia Scentsas

Where and When Posted – Town Hall upper & lower bulletin boards and Madison & Silver Lake Post Offices on August 10, 2022.

Meeting Called to Order – By Fernandes at 6:00 p.m.

Elevation of Alternates – There is a full committee with no need to raise alternates.

Approval of October 25, 2022 Minutes - Motion by McAllister, seconded by Schilling to approve the minutes of the October 25, 2022 meeting as written. The motion passed **unanimously**.

MES Budget – The committee reviewed Version 3 of the school budget that included the health insurance and tuition numbers. The tuition is \$144,399 less than last year with health insurance increasing over last year by \$17,120. The overall increase over last year of the budget is 3.36%. Schilling would like to see a personnel and administration breakdown. Fernandes feels the only place to make a difference in the numbers is with staff; SPED and tuition are set. Fernandes added that the school board takes this seriously and they try to control costs; 3.36% seems like a tightly budgeted increase considering the cost of goods and fuel. Rogerson concurred that staff and SPED is where the costs lay. Force asked for the teacher to student ratio with Curran offering to get that answer adding that class size is set by the school board which is in line with state recommendations.

Fernandes, as a taxpayer, sees that we don't do as well on state tests – 140 out of 233 – but rank high at cost per pupil. Curran explained that years ago a good amount of the beginning of the school year was all about teaching how to take the tests versus overall education, that has changed. Jarell noted that some parents pull their students from the test which skews the numbers.

Force was pleased to see a decrease from Version 1 asking if there will be a Version 4. Curran expects Version 3 to be presented at the hearing.

Current Drawdown Budget Status – Arruda noted that we are 89% of the year with 81.6% of the budget spent. The Fire Department still has not done their member reimbursement which is a large number. Rogerson asked if there will be a surplus to which Arruda offered a hesitant maybe.

Preliminary Review of 2023 Budget – Arruda noted that the 2023 budget is about \$239,000 over the 2022 budget and that can be attributed to seven lines items that include heat, fuel and legal. Rogerson asked about the DPW with Arruda stating that the Foreman is in charge and the BOS are not looking for anyone. McAllister asked about a plan for the new truck. Arruda expected that we will trade in the one purchased towards a new truck.

Preliminary Warrant Articles for 2023 – Arruda reviewed the list of warrant articles with the committee. Many articles still do not have good numbers as it is still a work in progress.

Appointment of Reviewer of Petition Warrant Articles – Rogerson volunteered to perform the review again this year.

Such Items as Properly Presented to the Committee – The Budget Hearing is scheduled for February 14, 2023 at 7:00 pm at the Elementary School. The next ABC meeting is December 6 and the next School Board meeting is December 5th.

Public Comments – There were none.

7:25 PM –Force made a **motion** to adjourn, seconded by Rogerson. The motion passed unanimously.

NEXT ADVISORY BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING – The next Advisory Budget Committee Meeting will be on Tuesday, December 6, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Shackford,
Town Administrator
Recording Secretary