

**ADVISORY BUDGET COMMITTEE  
TOWN OF MADISON  
January 15, 2019  
MINUTES**

**Members Present** – Bill Lord; Selectmen Representative John Arruda; School Board Representative Jim Curran; Jeff Balogh; Ned Rogerson; Nicole Nordlund

**Others Present** – Selectmen Josh L. Shackford and Robert J. King, Jr.; Police Chief Ted Colby; Fire Chief Richard Clark; DPW Director Jon Cyr; Town Clerk Michael Brooks; Residents Steve Bartlett, Rob Rand, Ann Bartlett, Ron Force, Sloane Jarrell, Peter Stevens, Mark Totman, Tom Reinfuss, Tino Fernandes, Ted Kramer, David Cribbie, Peter Klomp, Recording Secretary Linda Shackford; Madison TV Videographer Carol Dandeneau and several other members of the public.

**Where and When Posted** – Town Hall upper & lower bulletin boards and Madison & Silver Lake Post Offices on January 8, 2019.

**Meeting Called to Order** – By Lord at 7:04 p.m. and reviewed the agenda for the meeting.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Motion** by Rogerson, seconded by Balogh to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2018 meeting as written. The motion passed with Curran abstaining.

Lord announced the resignation of Ron Force from the committee. Lord thanked Force for his six years of service to the committee and noted that his wit, humor, and analysis will be missed. In light of Force's resignation, resident Stephen Bartlett was nominated to replace Force bringing the membership of the committee back to five along with a selectman and school board representative.

**Motion** by Curran, seconded by Rogerson, to add Stephen Bartlett as a member of the Advisory Budget Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

**Oath of Office – Advisory Budget Committee Member Stephen Bartlett** – Town Clerk Michael Brooks administered the Oath of Office to Stephen Bartlett as an Advisory Budget Committee member. The Oath was signed by Bartlett and Brooks. Congratulations were extended to Bartlett and thanks were extended to Brooks.

**Discussion of the School Budget** – Lord stated that the committee is charged at this meeting with voting on three monetary school board warrant articles:

- Operating Budget of \$6,847,394
- Madison Portion of SAU 13 Budget of \$245,496
- Ed. Disabled Children Ed. Capital Reserve of \$25,000

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Lord asked for comments.

**Mark Totman of East Shore Drive** – Mr. Totman spoke to his concerns about the school budget. He expressed that he feels the School Board is working to lower the budget but it is still not low enough, given it has increased significantly over the rates of several standard US cost of living metrics. Mr. Totman asks the committee to reject the school's proposed budget.

**Ron Force of Marston Avenue** – Mr. Force is chairman of the newly formed Madison Concerned Citizen Coalition and thanked the School Board and Jim Curran for their efforts. Mr. Force cited the reasons for

his respectful request that the committee not recommend the 2019 proposed school operating budget. His rationale was 10 years increased expenditures yet decreased student population over the same period.

**Tom Reinfuss of Pine Hill Road** – Mr. Reinfuss supports a quality elementary school education but cannot endorse taxes to continue to increase unchecked as a result of continually increased school spending. Mr. Reinfuss asked the committee not accept the school operating budget as proposed.

**Tino Fernandes of Peak Vista Lane** – Mr. Fernandes cited concerns of student test scores and how tax dollars are being used and asked the committee to not recommend approval of the school budget. He based his request on the data of increased expenditures with decreased NH standard performance testing results.

**Peter Klomp of East Shore Drive** – Mr. Klomp stated he has been in education all his life and recognizes the thankless position these committee members are in. Mr. Klomp referred to reasons why not to accept this budget, that there should be greater accountability for results to the taxpayer, and stated he cannot support the budget as presented and asked the committee not to approve it as proposed.

**Peter Stevens of Plains Road** – Mr. Stevens reminisced about the positive memories of his childhood educator and that he believed the discussion was cavalier regarding the school situation and expressed particular concern about two positions that will be eliminated.

**School Board Member Sloane Jarell** – Ms. Jarell stated that she believed some of the facts expressed by Mr. Force were skewed. She stated the school budget is not only for a stand-alone school -- the funds go for special ed, transportation, high and middle schools. She felt that any substantial cuts would have a detrimental affect on the elementary school portion of the budget.

**Dave Cribbie of Heritage Road** – Mr. Cribbie asked if the million-dollar transportation budget mentioned by Mr. Klomp was accurate. The actual cost was determined to be closer to one half million dollars.

**Selectman Robert King** – Mr. King stated he does not support the cutting of \$109,000 (mentioned by Force) and questions the data of decreased student performance noting a sixth-grade improvement. This increase in taxes was no surprise given the votes made last March. King rhetorically asked why is the reduction of the budget being discussed now. Lord stated the School Board had not finalized the budget until last week at School Budget Hearing.

Lord stated that this committee this charged with making recommendations to the Town voters on the three monetary warrant articles for the school budget this year, therefore the committee needs to vote. The following reflects the **Advisory Budget Committee recommendations** for the Madison School District budget monetary-only warrant articles:

**ARTICLE 2:** Shall the School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, \$6,847,394? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$6,792,134 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the School District or by law. (The School Board recommends this appropriation 5-0). (The Budget Committee **DOES NOT** recommend this appropriation 2-4-1 with Curran and Rogerson in favor; Arruda, Lord, Bartlett and Balogh opposed; Nordlund abstaining). The committee thought that additional reductions should and could be found, without detrimental impact to the education of Madison students, and MES could operate effectively with the default budget value.

**ARTICLE 3:** Shall the voters of the Madison School District adopt a school administrative unit budget of \$680,886 for the 2019-2020 school year in which \$245,496 is assigned to the school budget of this district? (The School Board recommends this appropriation 5-0). (The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation 6-1 with Arruda opposed).

This year's adjusted budget of \$667,615 with \$240,711 assigned to the School District budget will be adopted if the article does not receive a majority vote of all the district voters voting in this administrative unit.

**ARTICLE 4:** To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 to be placed in the capital reserve fund previously established for the purpose of educating educationally disabled children. (The School Board recommends this appropriation 5-0). (The Budget Committee **DOES NOT** recommend this appropriation 2-5 with Arruda and Curran in favor; Lord, Nordlund, Balogh, Rogerson and Bartlett opposed). The committee thought the existing reserve amount (\$68,000) should be used before additional funds are added to this account.

Lord stated he would draft the input for the annual school report reflecting the outcome of tonight's meeting, coordinate it with all members, and send it to the SAU by their Friday deadline.

#### **MEETING SCHEDULE REVIEW –**

- January 22, 2019 Advisory Budget Committee meeting, 6pm, Town Hall
- February 4, 2019 School Budget Deliberative Session, 7pm, School Gym
- February 5, 2019 Town Budget Public Hearing, 7pm, School Gym
- March 12, 2019 Voting Day, School Gym
- March 16, 2019 Town Meeting, 9am, School Gym

**NEXT ADVISORY BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING** – The next Advisory Budget Committee Meeting will be on Tuesday, January 22, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the lower level of Town Hall.

**8:30 PM** – Curran made a **motion** to adjourn, seconded by Balogh. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Shackford  
Recording Secretary