

**TOWN OF CHESTERFIELD
BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 24, 2012**

Present: Bayard Tracy, Chairman; Dan Cotter, Gary Winn, Cliff Emery, Selectboard Representative; Marty Mahoney, Sharyn D'Eon, Principal; Darlene Dunn, Vice Principal School Board Representatives; Tim Ruehr, SAU Business Manager for Towns; Bill Bucknell, John Koopmann, Rich Kalich, Charlie Perry, Steve Laskowski and Elaine Levlocke, Chesterfield Fire & Rescue Precinct and School Superintendent Wayne Woolridge.

Absent: John Zannotti, Mike Wiggin, Spofford Fire Precinct Representative

Cotter moved to approve the January 17th minutes as amended. Winn seconded the motion, which carried.

Tracy passed out a spreadsheet he had done for the County Tax burden showing the compounded growth rates. He noted that if your tax rate is going up higher than your increases in evaluation you will have higher taxes.

School – Ruehr advised that there is a decrease of .83% in the budget if all warrant articles pass and an increase of 2.06% in the school property tax if all warrant articles pass. The increase is due to the unreserved fund balance of \$453,455 that was returned to the taxpayers last year. It was noted that there is a bill before the Legislature to change the law to allow the schools to keep these funds.

The trend of decreasing enrollment of the school was discussed. The revenue is going down because there are fewer students. There were 35 fewer students in 2011-2012 than in 2010-2011. The trend is going downward with an estimated student enrollment of 279, down from 2011-2012 by 14 students.. Mahoney advised there is approximately 25% turnover of student population annually. Ruehr advised the student population in Chesterfield School is as follows: Kindergarten – 1 teacher/20 students, 1st grade – 1 teacher/15 students, 2nd grade – 2 teachers/28 students, 3rd grade – 2 teachers/32 students, 4th grade – 2 teachers/29 students, and 5th grade – 2 teachers/49 students. There are 4 classroom teachers for the 6th – 8th grades/113 students. There are currently 17 classroom teachers, 4 full-time Special Ed that handle the caseloads and 5 aides for 1 on 1 assistants for SPED. There are 13 aides whose primary function is to support the SPED students. Next year there will be 16 classroom teachers and 13 aides. It was noted that the same enrollment trend of decreasing student population is found in other schools.

Wayne Woolridge stated there are communities that are combining schools to save. It was noted that would be a hard sell for some communities. Perry asked that they be given the average cost/pupil in Chesterfield. Tracy asked for a graph of High School student population. Ruehr will get this information to the Board. He will also update handouts for Saturday's public hearing.

Chesterfield Fire Precinct – Levlocke advised the operating budget is up .7% without the new line item of the Mutual Aid payment of \$20,351. The Budget Committee would like to have the budget come in at “0” increase less Mutual Aid. Levlocke stated the commissioners voted this budget of \$92,911 plus Mutual Aid of \$20,361 would be presented to the public.

Town Budget – Carrier advised the only change in the budget is the Parks & Rec Activities Enhancement Exp Trust. It is proposed that \$2,047 be added to this new ET. This is ½ the amount of the P&R budget that was not expended in 2011.

The Town Hall Annex CRF for \$25,000 was discussed. There is no plan at this time of what would be proposed but Emery stated there needs to be a start so that funds are available. He noted a survey that was done a few years ago called for \$120,000 to insulate and replace boilers in the annex.

Spofford Fire Precinct – It was noted that only the Warrant Article wording had changed. The operating budget is down 7.3% but does not include the Mutual Aid increase. There was a CRF increase. Tracy had been told by Wiggin that they had been under funding this for some time and there is a need to increase. Perry noted the WA #5 for the pumper truck; stating this is not a year to spend \$31,600 and it would be done each year for 10 years. Laskowski stated having a pumper truck had been necessary when they could only travel slow speeds due to the water; however, the pumper that is in Chesterfield can carry a full load and still go up Welcome Hill 75 mph. Laskowski noted that a survey was done saying we have enough equipment to staff a city many times our size. This would continue as long as there is a voting block to pass the budgets.

The public hearing is scheduled for this Saturday, January 28th at Chesterfield School. The School budget review will be held at 1:00 pm and the Town and Fire Precincts will be held at 3:00 pm.

The next meeting after the Public Hearings will be Tuesday, January 31st. This is when the Budget Comm will vote on the budgets.

Cotter moved to adjourn at 9:03 pm seconded by Winn, which carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol Ross
Secretary