

SPRUCE MOUNTAIN SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2019 Budget Meeting

Thursday, February 15, 2018 6:00 pm Spruce Mountain High School Cafe

Present: Doug DiPasquale, Tammy Frost, Dale Leblanc, Shannon McDaniel (arrived at 6:14 pm), Michael Morrell, Shari Ouellette, Joel Pike, Denise Rodzen, Holly Richards, and Ann Schwab (arrived at 6:12 pm) and Robert Staples.

Absent: Sara Hughes

1 (Scott Jackson) Student Representative Present

1 (Orion Schwab) Student Representative Absent

~MINUTES~

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Rodzen call the meeting to order at 6:03 pm

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

3. **ATTENDANCE**

11 Present

1 (Sara Hughes) Absent

1 (Scott Jackson) Student Representative Present

1 (Orion Schwab) Student Representative Absent

4. **BUDGET OVERVIEW**

4.1 Spruce Mountain High School/Co-curricular

On page 5, SMHS Administration, you can see the areas of decrease involved are general supply, travel and books/periodicals. That reduction is \$3,500 due to lack of NEASC commitment for this year. As you look to page 14 and 15, SMHS Instruction, the increase of \$13,862.03 is primarily due to contracted salaries and benefits. Areas of decrease are professional travel, general supply, equipment and dues and fees. The proposed instructional line will continue to provide all essential supports for student academics. On page 17, SMHS Guidance, there is an increase \$5,325.75 and that is due to a combination of areas such as salary and benefits and contracted services. However, areas of decreases will decrease the impact; workshops, professional travel, general supply and software. The proposed increase of \$6,000 in contracted services will allow for student support in advanced college courses. On page 23 (SMHS Library, the increase of \$3,979.48 is primarily due to contracted salaries. Areas of decrease are contacted services, books/periodicals, AV materials. The proposed decreases will not impact the offerings for students in the high school. Page 26, SMHS –

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academics, the increase of \$6,761 is primarily due to contracted academic stipends. The proposed increase will continue to support the co-curricular stipends and activities. Page 26 and 27, SMHS athletics, the increase of \$2,541.50 is primarily due to the contracted athletic stipends. The areas of decrease are repairs and maintenance, general supply and equipment, decreases = \$15,200. The proposed decreases will not impact our student athletes. All current sports and co-curricular activities will continue to be offered.

4.2 Proposed Revenue

Superintendent Healey presented an overview of the ED279 and what it means. These are preliminary numbers and it is really important to remember that. One of the things to note is that the EPS formula for Jay is decrease of \$745,009.17 for Livermore an increase of \$68,087.17 and for Livermore Falls an increase of \$108,261.75. Local only debt is a little different from last year and additional local is \$630,121.09 less for Jay, \$100,381.23 less for Livermore and \$117,427.13 less for Livermore Falls.

We have done very well in comparison to other communities. We are fortunate that because of the loss of valuation in Jay they have received subsidies with less of a tax burden for the school portion. They did increase the overall revenue, but reduced system wide administration. In regards to tuitions we do not have our tuition counts from Fayette, as we get to final stages and they shift we will change that at that time. The cash balance from last year was \$200,000 and proposed cash balance for FY 19 of \$1,356,641.71. This is a combination of foregoing the extra subsidy last year with the promise to reduce taxes and the money left over from the audit. In the general fund increase, there is a decrease of \$1,387,234.50 in Jay, a decrease of \$36,309.55 in Livermore and a decrease of \$2,971.11 in Livermore Falls. These primary numbers per town are based on last year's budget and this year's budget. We are down \$1,426,515.16. The way it works what we would be asking for is \$1,392,234.50 less from Jay, \$41,309.55 less from Livermore and \$7,971.11 less from Livermore Falls. We have managed with carry forward and the valuation of properties in Jay the ability to go ahead and support the budget with reserves of money we are not planning on spending this year as well as the reductions. I believe this budget as proposed we will be able to fund it and still have \$565,000 in reserve which is 3% of the budget which is what the state wants us to have. We brought forward \$300,000 in debt service for energy efficiency in potential improved lighting, heating, roof repairs as a reinvestment in the district using the \$300,000 from debt service reducing it by \$120,000. I think we are in very good shape

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and have the ability to support the upcoming budget and the towns will pay less than they did last year.

Joel Pike asked on the cash balance at this point you are proposing to put all of the additional cash balance for this year's budget.

Superintendent Healey replied that we will be bringing forward \$522,000 from this year's additional subsidy and from the unexpended audited amount of \$834,000 for a total of \$1,356,000 leaving a 3% in reserve of about \$565,000. Had we not had the freeze last year, which meant we forwent things we needed in order to pay more important bills, the freeze was tough but ultimately it saved us for this upcoming budget year.

Shari Ouellette asked about splitting up the carry over for 3 years.

Superintendent Healey said we could do that but I used it the 20/80 split, I wanted to present the towns with a budget that they would not have to pay as much as this year.

If we use it over a 3 year period it would be significant shift for the other towns ultimately Livermore and Livermore Falls would pay more.

Shari Ouellette said isn't this going to bite us?

Superintendent Healey replied no I hope not, we are on track from this current budget and we have a solid amount to move to next year.

Shari Ouellette said this is why we were in the situation we were in.

Chair Rodzen replied that it was not the entire reason.

Joel Pike said I am for using it up front, last year unfortunately the portion was bigger than what was there, I am of the opinion that we use it this year, why should we just hang onto the taxpayer's money.

Superintendent Healey replied I concur with you Joel in this particular year we have the opportunity to make sure there is no additional taxes to the towns. At some point this budget hits its bottom, and we will have to have a modest increase to keep us going. Over the last many years we have taken many reductions through retirement and attrition. My professional opinion is that we are at rock bottom, maybe even a little less than right sized. Next year we will have to be asking for an increase for salaries and benefits and hopefully the board and community will support that natural increase.

Doug DiPasquale asked in the special education budget, it looks like in the salary line it is up by \$150,000. How many teachers are we adding?

Superintendent Healey replied that some grants are no longer there and we are at the point we have to start absorbing the cost. No additional staff other than 1 teacher and 2 education technicians are being requested. We no longer have that federal money.

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Chair Rodzen said that Tina talked about a family with 4 students that were tuition students from Fayette and now they have moved in district and they are no longer tuition students.

Joel Pike asked that Tina Collins bring in more of a presentation and why we should look at this request. What are you trying to accomplish and serve, a more detailed presentation to the board?

Superintendent Healey replied that he would have Tina do a presentation during our next budget meeting.

Tammy Frost stated there is no proposed cut to staff, no cut to sports, no cuts to activities. To me is a huge thing. Thank you to the administration, it is refreshing that we have not had to hurt the kids with this.

Chair Rodzen said I think every year budgets are contentious, we asked our administrators to come and present us with a fiscally responsible budget. The increase basically falls onto special education but I do believe that the administrators have presented us with a fiscally responsible budget that does not hurt our staff and students. We are giving the children advantages and it is still going to be less money to taxpayers, best of both worlds. I do want to thank Ken and the administrators for the good work you did together to come and give us something that is fiscally responsible.

5. BOARD QUESTIONS

Tammy Frost asked if we would see a class size list.

Principal Harrington said they would be available at our next meeting.

Doug DiPasquale asked if we would see the ED 279.

Superintendent Healey replied yes.

Holly Richards asked when GT services start for children.

Scott Albert replied that direct instruction began in middle school.

Holly Richards asked how are the kids needs being met.

Teacher in the audience replied that by knowing their kid's teachers provide that need.

Superintendent Healey said that at the lower levels it can be hard to identify who is gifted. They do have a process through consultation at the elementary for providing enrichment. Right now we have a GT grant to have one position that meets face to face with middle school students.

Bob Staples added that as a teacher for 33 years I saw parents who read to their children may start above the other kids but with time they may level out. Those children had a head start. When I was teaching we tried not to tag them until

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5th or 6th grade. It is a tough thing as a classroom teacher to meet the needs of all the children but we are doing well to have that consultation available. Superintendent Healey said our GT teacher is exceptional. I can't say enough about how he motivates his kids.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT AND QUESTIONS – None

Chair Rodzen said I want you all to contact Tina Riley and ask her support the bill that is in legislation that is trying to defend weapons on school property.

Superintendent Healey spoke of yesterday's events in Florida. I want to share with the board as tragic as these events were, one of the harsh realities is we need to work day in and day out with staff and students and what our protocols are, the best thing we can do is minimum and reduce harm to our students and staff. If someone is determined to do something they will do it. At our A team meeting today we reviewed practices. It appears that he pulled the fire alarm. The administrative group is dedicated to the safety of our kids, we have an incredible safety committee with first responders, police officers and more. They have told us we have one of the best safety protocols in the state but that does not mean that it will not happen here. I met with the leaders of the safety committee today and we will be discussing with the safety committee meeting next month. If you see a door ajar with a box in it you have to report that, we cannot have that. We have had good conversations about keeping staff and students safe. Chair Rodzen spoke of does and don'ts and what everyone needs to know, for example put phones on silent. You can post to mom and dad but do not put anything on social media

7. CALENDAR/ANNOUNCEMENTS

February 22, 2108 – Board Meeting – 6:00 PM Cedar Street Conference Room
March 1, 2018 – Budget Meeting – 6:00 PM Spruce Mountain Elementary School Gym
March 8, 2018 – Regular Meeting – 6:00 PM Spruce Mountain Primary School Gym
March 13, 2018 – Budget Meeting – 6:00 PM Spruce Mountain Middle School Café
*March 20, 2018 – Budget Meeting snow date if needed – Location to be determined
March 22, 2018 – Regular Meeting – 6:00 PM Cedar Street Conference Room

8. ADJOURNMENT

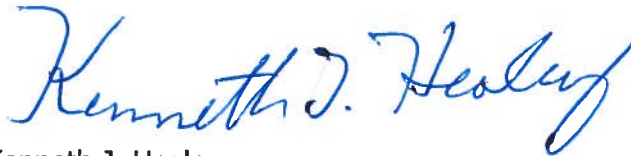
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Motion by Shari Ouellette and seconded by Dale Leblanc to adjourn at 7:01 pm.

**Vote: 11 Yes 0 No 0 Abstain
 1 Student Representative Yes**

Respectfully submitted:



Kenneth J. Healey
Superintendent of Schools