

**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT #64  
MILTON AND WAKEFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICTS  
JOINT BUDGET MEETING @  
The Paul School  
Tuesday, October 1, 2013**

**Wakefield Board members:** Bonnie Cyr, Bob Ouellette, Steve Brown, Relf Fogg

**Wakefield Board members absent:** Norma Joy

**Milton Board members:** Chair Doug Shute, Ann Walsh, Donna Marie Currier, Luella Snyder, and Andy Crone.

**Others present:** Mr. Tursi and Andrew D'Agistino

Chair Doug Shute called the joint Meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Donna-Marie Currier led the pledge of Allegiance.

*Doug Shute would like in noted that he was not the one who scheduled this meeting.*

**Public Comment:** No Comments at this time.

**2014 – 2015 Budget Review:**

Mr. Tursi presented the 2014 – 2015 SAU budget and stated that Andrew would answer any questions

The board may have.

- Luella Snyder asked if there was a 3% increase. Andrew stated that the salaries were increased 3% across the board. Andrew pointed out an organizational chart how the SAU is setup.
- Steve Brown would like to know who came up with the 3% increase for the 2014-2015 budget. Mr. Tursi responded that he and Andrew had gotten together and came up with the 3% increase anticipating on some increases and this is a proposed budget and the salaries can be finalized in the spring.
- Luella Snyder had stated to Steve Brown that this is just a presentation and the board can lower and increase the salaries.
- Steve Brown feels there will be problems handing out raises outside of the budget circle with salaries having a 9% increase in one calendar year.
- Ann Walsh asked Steve Brown where he was getting the numbers for a 9% increase when it was stated it was a 3% increase.

- Douglas Shute would like to know what personnel Steve Brown is looking at to come up with a 9% increase.
- Steve Brown stated that this has nothing to do with personnel, but this is just talking about positions itself of the superintendent and administrator. July 1, 2013 to July 1, 2014 these will end up being 9% increases. Steve Brown Stated that July 1, 2013 they received a 3% increase and then received a 3% increase outside of the budget circle and the 3% increase for this budget would be a total increase of 9%.
- Luella Snyder stated that Mr. Tursi was hired at a higher rate and should not be considered for him due to him being new to the position.
- Ann Walsh stated that when we hired for the superintendents position we were trying to fix a problem with the salary for this position and if we did that and to say we are not going to give a raise for 3 years then we are right back at where we started.
- Steve Brown raised the question of how many people in Milton and Wakefield are receiving a 9% increase in this budget. He feels no one else will.
- Bonnie Cyr responded that she believes that the economy is picking up and there has been growth and stability in the last 5 years, and stated that we as the joint board voted to make these changes to the salaries and now we have to except what was voted on as a joint board.
- Steve Brown finds it hard to tell the residents of Wakefield that the school board is handing out a 9% raise increases.
- Relf Fogg stated that with a bottom line budget we still have a chance to save on last year's budget. Steve Brown stated that he understands, but needs to justify a 9% increase to the tax payers.
- Bonnie Cyr had raised the question about the Grants Accountants duties being dispersed among the SAU staff, which had been discussed in a previous meeting and would like to know if this has been done and are they able to handle the added responsibilities. Andrew stated that he has taken the added responsibility and stated that if it something that becomes over whelming he would be able have the staff help him out. Bonnie asked if they are aware that they would not be getting a raise due to the added responsibilities. Andrew stated that they are aware that this would be part of their current duties. Andy Crone asked Andrew if they would be able to handle the additional responsibilities with their current 40 hours a week duties. Andrew feels that they would be able to handle the added responsibilities.
- Bonnie Cyr asked Andrew if there was any major changes in the budget from last year or anything that would raise a red flag for us to look at. Mr. Tursi stated that nothing out of the ordinary, but he did have a conversation with Back Bay and realized that we do not have district wide support for some of our software platforms particularly for Power School and Mr. Tursi had asked if they provided a service as part of our contract and we had received a quote today for \$30,000 a year to provide that kind of service. Mr. Tursi feels that this quote is too high and that there is really 2 ways to address this issue. One is to contract it out or hire someone to just deal with the software platforms for our programs. Mr. Tursi would like to avoid hiring someone at the district level and was hoping to be able to work with Back Bay, but after just receiving the quote today he needs to explore the options they have.

- Relf Fogg stated that we should be able to post this in the local newspapers to receive bids for the services requested. Mr. Tursi replied that this would be a great idea.
- Steve Brown asked if this was for the software or just the support for the software. Mr. Tursi responded that it is just for the support. Steve Brown came back to say that if that is just for the software and say we did let Back Bay take this on that would be \$164,000.00 a year for the services of Back Bay, Steve Brown stated that he feels that this has not gone out to bid and he would like to see the IT contract to be put out to an RFP. Andrew replied that the IT contract did go out to bid 2 years ago and Back Bay was the only company to deal with Apple or PC supported computers.
- Bonnie had requested to go through the budget line by line and explain any changes to have a better understanding, so when she is questioned she will be able to explain.
- Andrew had contacted their health insurance carrier and they stated on average increase is 9%, so this is what the budget is based off of. This does not mean that it will be the 9%, we will know when the rates are set in early November of this year. Andrew stated that over the years we have been a few percentage points below the average.
- Workman's compensation, disability, and unemployment insurance were increased by 5%, due to this seems to the average increase over the years.
- Douglas Shute asked if we pay 100% of single coverage health insurance The Cadillac plans that kick in the year of 2018 and the following cost for these plans will be single plan cost \$10,200, and the family plan cost \$27,500 and the taxes for both would be 40%. Andrew stated that he just went to a conference on this and in order for these numbers to be where they are at for the single plan the individual would have to pay \$6,000 a year out of pocket, but things could change in the next 5 years. Douglas Shute stated that is predicted that the Obama care cost will come from the 40% tax on these health plans. Andrew replied that the insurance companies are trying to come up with other options to work with that may be available in the future years, but for now this is where we are at.
- Douglas Shute asked if anyone wanted to raise the deductible on the singles health insurance due to not having a deductible to pay at this time.
- Bonnie Cyr had stated after looking at the percentages that the district pays for health insurance it is was set to be even in both districts. Andy Crone responded that it has been talked about since he has been on the board in March of this year, but nothing has been voted on.
- Douglas Shute would like to make a motion to change across the board of all 100% paid singles health insurance policy to be changed to 95% across the board, seconded by Luella Snyder. Douglas Shute asked if there were any discussion.
- Relf asked if the lower rates would go up to 95%. Douglas Shute replied no. Relf Fogg feels that it does not seem far to the ones paying 88% and maybe we should consider changing it to 90% across the board. Mr. Tursi stated that he has a 3 year contract for what the percentage is set at now.
- Bonnie Cyr feels that if you raise the cost too much or take the option away then you are going to get a different affect then what you are looking for.

- Luella Snyder suggested to raise it a little bit in increments over time so it is not a huge impact all at once.
- Ann Walsh replied that it is not fair to the 3 staff members in this office and tell them they will not be getting a raise next year, but a cut in pay due to changing the health insurance. She feels that we should compensate them this year in some way for this change and see what next budget season brings.
- Mr. Tursi stated that Rochester had increased the employee contribution for health insurance and they were compensated for this.
- Andy Crone would like to know what the difference would be from taking a 5% increased cost of insurance and what a 3% increase in salary would be. Bonnie had figured out they are still going to get an increase in their salary.
- Ann Walsh feels that these are the people that are responsible for educating our children and that is one of the most important jobs and they don't get paid very well.
- Steve Brown feels that this district pays close to or if not more than any other school district our size, and we are probably above that now.
- Andy Crone explained to the board the his wife works in a nearby district and is paid \$10,000.00 less with the same number of years' experience and they pay a great deal in health insurance.
- Ann Walsh replied that then we should cut everyone pay. Andy Crone responded back stated that he never said that he wanted to cut any ones pay.
- **Bonnie called a point of order.**
- Steve Brown feels that just throwing money at it thinking it will fix the problem, which it will not.
- Donna-Marie Currier asked how we ensure a decrease in the turnover rate if we do not compensate for experience and high quality, and they look at this district as we are just a stepping stone and the teachers are not going to stay.
- Bonnie Cyr feels that if health insurance is increased by 9% then this is something we need to look at in all of the schools. Bonnie Cyr feels a committee needs to be formed prior to budget season to be able to go through and study the budget and maybe come up with a 5 year plan. Andy Crone agrees and feels that we need to do a study to compare to surrounding town that are the same or close to size of this district with pay scales, health insurance cost, and pay increases.
- Relf Fogg feels that there are only 3 positions in the SAU that really impact our children.
- Mr. Tursi disagrees with Relf Fogg and feels that everyone in the SAU plays an important role in the children's education.
- Luella Snyder stated that we are paying more for single health insurance then most schools.
- Bonnie Cyr raised the question to why this subject has not been dealt with and was not brought up in March so this could have been discussed to have everything in order before budget season arrived. Ann Walsh responded that she know that this has been an issue for quite some time and believes that the change in administration over the last 2 years and this issue has been pushed aside and it needs to be dealt with.

- Douglas Shute would like to make a motion to change all of the 100% paid singles health insurance policy to be changed to 95% across the board, seconded by Luella Snyder—all who were in favor: Douglas Shute, Steve Brown, Andy Crone, Luella Snyder, Relf Fogg, Bob Ouellette, and Bonnie Cyr.  
Ann Walsh voted no, Donna-Marie Currier abstained. The motion passed.
- Douglas Shute made the motion to form a sub-committee. Donna-Marie asked why a sub-committee was being formed after what was voted on, the reason she abstained from the vote was that she felt a sub-committee was going to be formed to address this issue and any other issues with the budget so we make a decision as an informed board. Relf stated that these are still preliminary discussions on a proposed budget. This has been asked to be put on the agenda for the joint board.
- Ann Walsh feels that the sub-committee won't have enough time at this point to do all of this work before the budget needs to be finalized. Andy Crone agrees with Ann Walsh and feels there should be a committee formed for the next budget season. Steve Brown feels there is going to be a need for a committee for a number of years with the Obama Care coming into effect. Andrew stated that it is already changing monthly.
- Mr. Tursi stated that what he is accustomed to having a financial sub-committee and they meet throughout the year in trying to review and resolve issues before presenting the budget to the full board. He does agree that at this point in time to form a committee is too late in the game.
- Douglas Shute asked Andrew if we were paying for disability after people retired, Andrew stated that once they retire they are no longer on the eligible for disability or the health insurance.
- Douglas asked what the percentage was for FICA, Andrew stated that it is at 7.65%. Douglas asked what the percentage was for retirement. Andrew replied that the SAU is at 10.77% rate and one individual that gets 14.16% rate.
- Luella Snyder asked why the Conferences/Courses line was raised. Douglas feels we need to raise it to help improve the professional development. Andrew stated that he raised it due to being over in last year's budget.
- Luella asked Andrew if the number on the Maintenance line was calculated or is it a true budget number. Andrew stated that it is a calculated number and on page 15 is a list of the current agreements for 2014 and increased some of them by 5% for 2015.
- Bonnie asked if the \$3,000.00 for support person in dealing with Power School would be in the maintenance agreements. That would be under Back Bay in technical services.
- Andrew stated that the lease for the SAU expires at the end of 2014. Douglas asked when we would be negotiating that again. Andrew stated sometime in January Steve Brown feels that the rental fee is too high and we should look into another place to have the SAU. Bonnie asked if it included snow removal and maintenance of the grounds, Andrew replied that it is included. Bonnie calculated the square footage for a commercial space and feels that it seems to be good price for everything included.

- Bonnie would like for Andrew to find out how many students take advantage of the Gaffney Library to get there GED's.
- Andrew took the 3 year average and increased this line by 5%. Steve asked Andrew for our electricity what we were paying for a Kilowatt hour what company we using and how long is our contract with them. Andrew stated that we were using PSH and another company with the contract expires this December. Steve feels we should start looking at different venders for lower rates. Douglas stated that PSNH rates have dropped.
- Andrew informed the board the he has a locked in price for propane at a \$1.60 until June of 2014. Steve asked if will be locked in for this year's budget. Andrew stated that it won't be locked in until next fall for this budget, and the fuel oil rate has not been locked in yet, but will not exceed \$3.59 a gallon.
- Douglas asked if they were still going with the 3% increased salaries. Andrew stated that he was confident that the health insurance would go down, so that would be help offset this.
- Ann Walsh asked if they were finalizing the budget tonight. Andrew replied that he was not finalizing the budget tonight, but will take these numbers along with decrease the health insurance by 5% and he has to still get the locked in rates for the health and dental insurance. Ann Walsh asked if Andrew could put together a summary of what the raises would look like at 1%, 1 ½ %, and 2%, and have it put on the agenda for the next meeting.
- Steve asked if our health insurance was through LCG. Andrew stated that it is through School Care and thier rates are lower than LCG.

The next Joint Budget meeting is scheduled for Wednesday @ 6:00, October 30, 2013 at the Milton SAU office.

Douglas would like everyone to know if they want to put something on the agenda and can't get ahold of him please give Mr. Tursi a call.

Bob Ouellette made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:33 PM. Seconded by Bonnie Cyr – all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,  
Brandy Banks, Secretary

Minutes are a draft until approved.

Approved on: \_\_\_\_\_