

Operations Committee Meeting

AGENDA/MINUTES

Monday, January 30, 2017

5:00 – 6:00 P.M.

Elm Street School

Members Present: **Aaron Ouellette**, Steve Holbrook, Mary Martin, Norm Davis

Members Absent: Annette Hemond

Other BODs Present: Ed Rabasco, Jack Wiseman

Administrators Present: John Hawley, Tina Meserve, Stacie Field

Staff Members Present:

Item 1: Bus Bay Proposal (SP. D.2.a) Tina Meserve

Tina and Mary offered a review of the recent meeting held on January 23rd with Tina, Brad Plante, Steve Robinson, Walter Gallagher, Sharon Chamming, Stacie Field, Mary Martin, Jack Wiseman, and Norm Davis. Discussion included the ownership of the bay and a request by the Town for the RSU to become renters of the bay with a long-term agreement for rights to the bay. The district would pay the cost of the bond and also approximately \$5,000 for general operational costs until 2024 when the bond is paid off. After 2024, the RSU would pay only the general operational costs for 10 additional years. Details related to this discussion will go to the Town Selectmen and School Board for further discussion and consideration.

Item 2: CIP Projects Proposal (SP. D.1.a) John Hawley

John reviewed the CIP proposal list for the FY 18 budget. Some of the items listed could be removed to help minimize the \$475,040 request. Most of the items, however, are needed. There was discussion about the heating system at Minot and if replacing it now would negatively influence the major construction application being completed this spring. It is recommended that major projects be put off until after the review period to give the reviewers a true picture of the condition of the facility. Some of the committee felt the budget was too high and John explained that some of the items are ones that have been cut in previous years and that we cannot keep putting them off. The lighting projects, for example, have come up before and should be considered while there are still rebates being offered from Efficiency Maine. The proposed costs for those lighting projects will have a three to four-year payback, if done next year. Tina had concerns that the “emergency” fund is currently at \$46,000 and the proposed CIP does not have any contingency money built in. The whole budget would likely be expended on these projects. Aaron suggested putting some of the projects off until later in the year when we know we are relatively safe from unforeseen emergency expenditures. The group agreed to recommend a \$300,000 CIP and could cut the projects that John stated could be taken off the list this year if further cuts are needed to get a budget passed.

Item 3: Middle School Project Timeline (SP. D.1.a) John Hawley

John explained a proposed timeline change in the referendum process. He will recommend that the District move from a June vote to a November vote so that the district has time to garner support from the community. We still need to educate the community about the needs for the addition, the educational benefits and the local tax impact. The November date will also mean the school budget is not competing with the middle school construction budget. It was the consensus of the committee that moving the voting date for the addition was a good idea.

Item 4: Tech Update for Public Meetings (SP. A.1.a) Tina Meserve

There have been many public complaints about the inability to hear and sometimes view the school board meetings on television. After meeting with Mary and Linda Chaisson, Tina reported that the AV equipment is old and needs to be replaced with new. It would be about \$25,000 to upgrade our equipment. This type of equipment becomes outdated quickly and needs to be updated every 5 years. This is a lot of money to broadcast one meeting a month. Many years ago, Poland Town Office did the broadcast of Town and Poland Committee meetings. but they were replaced by students to offer the educational experience. It was suggested that we discuss the possibility of utilizing Poland's Town office for our meetings since they have state-of-the art equipment. If Poland is not interested in sharing its resources with the RSU, our backup plan will be to see if the towns of Mechanic Falls or Minot would like to work together to purchase equipment for this purpose. This would reduce the tax impact on our districts and show meaningful cooperation between the town(s) and RSU. We currently receive the media feed via their cable providers. John said that as part of the franchise agreement that Time Warner has with the towns, they could request to change the feed from the Lewiston/Auburn public television to Poland. Norm made the recommendation that we ask the gentleman who currently broadcasts the Poland public meetings to help, as he has offered his assistance in the past. Aaron said he knew him and would give him a call.

Adjourned: 6:00 pm