

**NORTH ATTLEBOROUGH SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**NORTH ATTLEBOROUGH, MA**  
**March 12, 2018**  
**7:00 P.M. Special Meeting**

The North Attleborough School Committee met on Monday, March 12, 2018 at 7:00 pm in the James M. Rice Conference Room at the Woodcock Administration Building.

Committee members present included James McKenna, Neal Gouck, Ethan Hamilton, Gary Lake, Kevin O'Donnell, Adam Scanlon, and Carol Wagner.

Chairman McKenna called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Chairman McKenna stated the meeting was held specifically to address the FY19 Budget. He reported that he and Committee member Adam Scanlon attended an Information Session at Roosevelt Avenue School. Mr. McKenna explained Selectmen Mike Lennox and Keith LaPointe were there to explain what exactly the override will mean if it passes or does not pass. The Board of Selectmen met on March 8<sup>th</sup> and presented an overview of what will happen if the override passes. Mr. McKenna called on Superintendent Holcomb and Business Administrator David Flynn for an outline of what the school budget would look like based on the Selectmen's overview.

Superintendent Holcomb explained the dilemma of what the School Department faces. Mr. Holcomb stated the need of \$1.8M for level service funding. Based on the revenue streams of the town as it stands now and what they could give us, the school department will be looking at a \$1.2M gap for level service. The Budget subcommittee met and discussed having NESDEC evaluate our situation and propose different courses of action if we don't get the funding we need. The actions could include closing a school down, massive layoffs, as well as program cuts. Mr. Holcomb explained the process NESDEC has been taking with school visits and evaluations of facilities.

Business Administrator David Flynn explained if the override passes, the first thing would be to get to level services for this year. He explained that over the last 10 years we have never received a level service budget. Priority would be to restore services to children. Restoring social emotional supports would be a priority as well as curriculum needs. Technology would also be a priority based on the finalization of a technology grant that will increase our infrastructure. Mr. Flynn questioned the committee if they would want to address the fee structure either eliminate or reduce.

Adam Scanlon asked Mr. Flynn about monies brought in by fees. Mr. Flynn stated bus fees bring in \$330K per year, KG tuition is \$375K-\$400K per year and parking fee at the high school takes in \$44K-\$45K.

Gary Lake asked if the override does not pass, a school closing has been publicized as being an option moving forward. He asked how many families would be impacted by a school closing and would we be out of compliance with state mandates or employment contracts as far as increased class sizes go. Superintendent Holcomb explained the teacher contract language states a teacher receives \$500 per child over 25 children in their classroom. A school closure will increase average classes to 26 and 27 but in no case would they increase over 30. Restructuring and redistricting will effect the majority of families.

Carol Wagner suggested reducing the fees as opposed to eliminating fees.

Neal Gouck asked for clarification of the budget figures. Level service increase is \$1,870,578 above the current budget of \$36,110,674. Without an override, our proposed increase is \$716,504. With an override, the figure proposed by the Board of Selectment is \$2,677,996.

Kevin O'Donnell spoke about the cost effect of unemployment if layoffs happen in the event the override does not pass. Mr. Flynn quoted a potential \$30K unemployment benefit per person if they did not get another job right away.

Ethan Hamilton clarified the original budget request figure of \$9,522,608 and then went on to review the cuts made over the course of the last 10 years stating the these cuts result in the overall average teacher salaries increasing because less experienced teachers are the ones to go.

Adam Scanlon made a motion, contingent on the override passing, to eliminate the busing fee and reduce the FDK tuition fee to \$3000 per year. Motion failed due to no second.

Gary Lake asked for an explanation of what happened last year with not purchasing supplies as a way to balance the budget. Superintendent Holcomb explained the process of going after free cash in October. It was a process that took a lot of work on all bodies. Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee and RTM all had to agree with never before done changes that allowed for the free cash to be transferred to the School Department.

Chairman McKenna invited Chairman of the Board of Selectmen Michael Lennox and Patrick Reynolds to speak. Mr. Lennox clarified what happened with free cash in October. He went on to encourage townspeople to attend an information session to become educated about the their 4-point plan before voting.

Neal Gouck did some math and if the override happens, \$1.5M would be available to spend after level service funding and suggested that the board should consider coming up with a plan of how that money should be spent.

Ethan Hamilton explained that in the proposed \$9.5M budget, there were no fees. After doing some math, he found if the override passes and the school department gets \$2,677,996 that equals roughly 28% of the original proposed budget. He suggests that fees should then be reduced by roughly the same amount. FDK should be reduced by 25% to \$3000, busing reduced to \$200, parking to \$130 and eliminate the fees for school clubs. Discussion ensued.

Adam Scanlon made a motion contingent on the override passing, to reduce the busing fee by \$100, reduce FDK tuition by \$1000, reduce the parking fee by \$80 and eliminate fees for student leadership positions and clubs SCAR and SADD, seconded by Ethan Hamilton. Discussion ensued. Neal Gouck requested an amendment to the motion to include free tuition for FDK and went on to read several documents regarding the importance of FDK in child development. Readings attached. Chairman McKenna said the amendment falls out of the realm of the motion and called for a vote on the original motion.

So voted and passed 4-3-0

Neal Gouck made a motion to eliminate full day kindergarten fees, seconded by Kevin O'Donnell. Discussion ensued. Clarification of motion that was previously voted on was made. Discussion ensued. So voted, failed 2-5-0

**Public Comments:** Tom Flood, Shady Lane, general comments on improving schools will improve the value of your home and in turn increase tax base. Bill Smith, 116 Blackberry Road, encouraged the committee to get information out that is correct. They need to strategically think about initiatives moving forward.

Chairman McKenna requested a motion to adjourn, so moved by Adam Scanlon, seconded by Kevin O'Donnell, so voted and passed unanimously 7-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

*Submitted by: Administrative Assistant to Superintendent/Mary Chagnon*