

Rye Budget Committee meeting minutes

September 3, 2020

Attendees: Chair Jaci Grote, Vice-Chair Peggy Balboni, Phil Winslow, Doug Abrams, Shawn Crapo, Jeff Ross, Ralph Hickson, Scott Marion and Becky Bergeron.

Jaci Grote opens the meeting at 6:01 pm.

Jaci Grote reads COVID 19 attestation to hold the Zoom meeting.

Chair Jaci Grote opens with pledge of allegiance.

To begin the meeting, Jaci Grote asks if anyone has questions about the budget? We will look at town revenue and expenses.

Town Budget and Revenue

Question: State Revenue from rooms and meal taxes, are they the same or less?

Becky asked Jaci to confirm that as they have no information so far.

Question: what about the transportation Grants?

Jaci will check on this as well with the State.

Do we see any change in property taxes?

We are slightly behind but not bad at all; the shortfall can be managed.

Car Registrations are up. We have currently 245 more cars registered than this time last year. Car purchases are high due to low financing.

Building permits are also up. We have 51 more permits than in 2019.

Peggy asks about Rye Rec – Are there any plans on an aftercare program? Scott Marion says yes. We are working it out but there will be a after care plan beginning in October.

Looking at the YTD revenue it looks like parking is not reconciled? Becky has not had a chance to add those numbers but will get the Committee the current and most accurate information.

Jaci Grote: It looks like the expenses have been managed extremely well this year. She asks Phil for the status of the warrant articles. If they are not encumbered by 12/31, we lose the funding for that project in 2021. Most of the warrant articles have not been started but contracts in hand are needed to encumber the funds for expending in 2021.

School Budget – end of 2020 report

Scott Marion says the Town will get a sizable amount of money back from the School Budget based on a lower number of high school students who attended Portsmouth High vs the budgeted student count.

There were some increases/decreases in salaries between Middle school and Elementary but that was moving 5th grade teachers to the Middle School. It is basically a wash.

Scott Marion – We should see a savings in Transportation of 15 to 20 % based on a rebate of gas for transportation not used.

Special Education salaries were up in Middle and down in Elementary due to teachers moving from one school to the other.

VLAC is paid by the state so we have no cost affects for that program.

Peggy asks about the Math workbooks that were not purchased for Junior High School. Scott says they decided not to use the pilot program while remote learning.

Scott Marion explains that we pay for psychological services that are now supported by SAU.

This year professional Growth has gone up due to two principals that decided to utilize this benefit this year.

We have approximately 10 % increase in the students in the school district. We have 20 new students in the Elementary grades and 15 for Middle School grades. This is due to summer rentals that are staying for the foreseeable future, people who own summer homes in Rye that are staying and parents choosing in school education vs remote private school classes. We have 10% of the school population attending classes

remotely but we are keeping the children connected should they want to jump into the in-school programs.

For this year's budget we project high school costs will be \$18k per students.

We have asked parents to sign a social contract that has specifics about social distancing and asking them to keep this in mind when traveling and socializing. Should we need to go to 100% remote, teachers will stay in their classrooms.

Question: How will actuals perform vs this year's school budget?

Scott thinks we are going to spend less but not sure by how much.

Shawn asks about doing a stress test on the WIFI and broad band prior to school starting.

Scott says they are already doing this on Friday to test. They have upgraded the internet and cable to have a better signal.

Should the school decide to go remote, teachers will come into the school that way there is no issues with internet.

Question: Have you seen an increase in High School kids?

Scott says no.

Jaci asks if they can have a motion to approve the minutes of 4/30/20. Phil makes a motion to accept with amending the date in the minutes from 4/28 to 4/30/20. Peggy seconds. Roll unanimous to accept.

Jaci asks for a motion to accept the minutes of 5/28/20 with a correction of the spelling of Scott Marion's name. Motion to approve by Scott Marion and second by Peggy Balboni. Roll call unanimous to accept.

Jaci Grote commended Mae Bradshaw for her dedication and commitment to the Budget Committee these past several years. This position will be posted, and we will interview new candidates and discuss their qualifications at the next meeting.

Shawn makes a mention of the all-day sessions. How will we work these out and can we handle these in smaller session? There is the possibility of the gym by Scott.

Jaci asks everyone to think about and send her an email with questions or concerns so we can decide.

Motion to Adjourn the meeting at 6:50 pm by Scott Marion.

Second by Shawn Crapo.

Roll unanimous to accept.