

LONDONDERRY BUDGET COMMITTEE

Minutes for October 26, 2023

The Budget Committee meeting is at 7:00 PM on October 26, 2023, in the Moose Hill Council Chambers, 268B Mammoth Road, Londonderry, NH 03053 following a tour of the Department of Public Works.

Present for tour of DPW from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm: Patrick Cassidy –Chair, Joe Gagnon-Vice Chair, Maureen Hardy- Secretary, Ryan Cronin-Member at Large, Sarah Meier-Member at Large, Kate Burbidge-Member at Large, Town Council liaison-Ron Dunn.

Present for meeting: Patrick Cassidy –Chair, Joe Gagnon-Vice Chair, Maureen Hardy- Secretary, Ryan Cronin-Member at Large, Sarah Meier-Member at Large, Kate Burbidge-Member at Large, Jason Goldman-Member at large, Town Council liaison-Ron Dunn.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by P. Cassidy

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / MOMENT OF SILENCE

P. Cassidy led the Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence for the victims of the violent attack made on the innocent in Maine on October 25th.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment but we were joined by Erin Matlin, the Leach Library Director who introduced herself and observed the meeting. E. Matlin is open to a tour by the BC at a future date.

3. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

- a. August 17, 2023 Minutes were presented. Motion to accept minutes by K. Burbidge, Second by S. Meier. The minutes passed with a 7/0 vote.
- b. August 23 2023 and August 24 2023 Minutes were presented (School tours). Motion to accept minutes by K. Burbidge, Second by S. Meier. The minutes passed with a 7/0 vote.
- c. September 21, 2023 Minutes were presented. Motion to accept minutes by K. Burbidge, Second by S. Meier. The minutes passed with a 7/0 vote.

4. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- a. Presentation followed by Q & A by Robert Slater (School Board Chair) concerning upcoming Kindergarten expansion.
 - i. Roughly 1.5 years ago, the Kindergarten committee was formed to investigate the possibility of full day Kindergarten for Londonderry. There are currently only 4 or 5 municipalities in the State that do not offer full day Kindergarten. It is estimated that with half day Kindergarten, the children receive 1.75 hours a day of Education. It is the opinion of the School board that Full day Kindergarten should provide more instructional time for the Kindergarteners and theoretically this will improve scholastic performance by the second or third grade level.
 - ii. The District office project has been put to the side to advance Full Day Kindergarten by the School board
 - iii. The School board put together a 5 member Building Committee this year who worked alongside the Trident Project management and Lavallee Brensinger Architects to determine what is best. The Recommendation from the Building committee was to drop Phase 1 and Phase 2 updates to Moose Hill and instead combine and perform all updates to Moose Hill at once at an estimated cost of \$34,200,000.00. A concern was that the costs will continue to rise if the work is done in phases and will ultimately cost more than doing it all at once. Four classrooms, office space, service rooms, a security entry and multipurpose room are to be added so that Full day Kindergarten can be implemented. The intention is to keep the Building Committee active up until the vote in March and beyond if passed.
 - iiii. The School Board voted in favor of this new plan as recommended by the Building Committee.
- iv. Q & A:
 - i. 1. K. Burbidge: What is the timeline if approved by the voters for Full Day Kindergarten?
 - ii. B. Slater: Full Day Kindergarten would start Fall 2026
 - 2. R. Cronin: Enrollment is short this year, well below expectations, are you working to get an accurate projection of enrollment for the future?
B. Slater: We have hired a firm to do estimates of future enrollment.
 - 3. R. Cronin: Will Staffing need to increase?
B. Slater, Yes, operational costs will be provided at a later date.

4. J. Goldman: What was the range of the costs:

B. Slater, it was a compendium of numerous costs on a spreadsheet. J. Goldman would like to see the spreadsheet, which was agreed by B. Slater

5. P. Cassidy: Future question: What is the bond rate?

6. K. Burbidge: Are risks such as cost overruns and procurement delays accounted for?

B. Slater: We are carrying an estimate of 8% cost increase per year. The Architectural firm, Lavallee Brensinger is also weighing in on risks.

b. Discussion and voting on Community Services Grant Requests.

i. i. The Town Council has allotted \$50,000.00 of the FY24 budget to Community Service grants. The Budget committee is tasked with evaluating the applications and deciding how the money should be distributed amongst the applicants. This year, we received 11 grant requests from non-profit organizations totaling \$54,281.00. The Chair proposed three options for the committee to consider in awarding the grants as follows:

Option 1: We request that the town council approve a \$4281.00 increase to the Grant program. If the council approves this, then each applicant would receive 100% of there requested amount.

Option 2: We approve each applicant to receive 92.28% of their requested amount. This would work out to exactly \$50,000 divided among the applicants based on there requested amount. We can also approve this option in advance and then it would only take effect if necessary, based on the town council's decision.

Option 3: We individually evaluate each application and make our recommendations.

ii. The Budget Committee discussed the options and it was suggested that perhaps we ask the TC for option 1 and then fall back to Option 2 if denied (J Gagnon). Concern was expressed by J. Goldman that one of the applicants had sent a letter instead of filling out the official form. P. Cassidy preferred to give the benefit of the doubt regarding communication of the process to the organization from the Town. S. Meier expressed concern that Option 1 of asking for more money is a slippery slope that she is not at all comfortable with. M. Hardy agreed with S. Meier. M. Hardy expressed concern that Option 2 could adversely effect the organizations who asked for small amounts of money

more than the organizations that asked for larger amounts (\$1000.00 vs. \$10,000.00). J. Goldman expressed that he had a similar concern. J. Goldman planned on asking for more information from two organizations if Option 3 was chosen. The following votes were taken:

iii. Motion to disregard Option 1 and Stick to the original \$50,000.00 as gifted by the Town Council by J. Gagnon, seconded by R. Cronin. Passed 7/0

iv. Motion to recommend Option 2 to the Town Council and award 92.28% of each organizations requested amount to each of the 11 the organization. The vote was 4 in favor (S. Meier, R. Cronin, J. Gagnon, P. Cassidy) and 3 against (M. Hardy, J. Goldman, K. Burbidge). The motion passed. The Budget Committee will recommend that each applicant receive 92.28% of their requested amount and all 11 applicants will receive grant funds.

v. The Chair, P. Cassidy made a formal statement that this decision does not set a precedent for future deliberations by the Budget Committee on Community Grant rewards.

- c. Review of Budget Season Schedule: P. Cassidy has passed out a schedule to the members of the Budget Committee. It is a living document and changes are being made regularly until the dates and times are fixed. P. Cassidy will find out when the Budget books will be available to the Budget Committee so that we can review them and make notes etc. We can choose .pdf or paper copies. There will be no liaison reports during Budget season.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by R. Cronin, second by K. Burbidge, all in favor, Meeting was adjourned at 7:57 PM.

Member	For	Against	Abstained	Absent
Patrick Cassidy	X			
Joseph Gagnon	X			
Maureen Hardy	X			
Ryan Cronin	X			
Jason Goldman	X			
Sarah Meier	X			
Kate Burbidge	X			

6. MEETING SCHEDULE-Fourth Thursday of every month, unless noted.
 - a. Saturday November 4, 2023 at 9:00 am in the Moose Hill Conference room for the Town initial Budget Bidet Presentation.
 - b. **For Further meetings, see Budget Season Calendar**