

Town of Sandisfield

Select Board
February 1, 2022

Minutes for Select Board Work Session with the Finance Committee held on Tuesday, February 1, 2022 at 7:00p.m. at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Sandisfield Road, Sandisfield, MA

Members present: George Riley, Alex Bowman, Steve Seddon, Kevin Flynn, Roger Brown, Larry Dwyer, Myles Reynolds,

Called to order at 7:00PM

Agenda:

1. Discuss the proposed FRRSD FY23 Budget

Roger Brown lists the goals of the meeting as understanding what has been proposed, any questions, and strategizing on how to move forward. This is the last time they will be able to influence the School Committee's proposed budget.

Steve Seddon summarizes some points made during a previous School Committee meeting. The Sandisfield School Committee was in support of school choice tuition being used to offset the payroll for the teachers. There were a few capital improvements that were mislabeled into the operating budget that will need to be reassessed.

The RDA has a split based on the trailing three years of enrollment. Alex Bowman notes that while the budget hasn't been growing significantly, it has been growing and the ratio of Sandisfield students to Otis students has been increasing. Sandisfield's assessment has increased to close to \$200,000 in the last three years, but nothing has really changed in the town to support that growth. While the deadline for this suggestion has passed, Alex would like to have changed the RDA to five years. Steve notes that Jennifer Hibbins had made this amendment request, but it was not voted on.

Alex does not believe carrying the maximum Excess & Deficiency budget at 5% is appropriate. The School Committee can always ask the town for more money should a situation arise where the budget isn't sufficient. The E&D budget can be spent without a vote taking place, but 5% is the maximum amount allowed by the state, and Alex suggests lowering it and transferring some of these funds into operations.

Roger reiterates he would like more transparency when it comes to budget creation and spending. He notes that there is no record establishing budget projections, nor

explanations. Roger would also like explanations on large projects like teacher salary increases and the parking lot paving. The last point he makes is regarding the acknowledgement of the vocational education budget change which needed to be put on the warrant for the Special Town Meeting. He questions whether the town was informed of the change and notes that should the town accept this Article, it will need to be built into the FY23 budget, and it is unclear how this will be done.

Alex brings up that “enrollment” should include all students, not just those enrolled at FRRSD. He references that there has been a large decrease in student enrollment in Otis and overall. It should be of the School Committee’s concern why this may be the case.

2. Discuss FY23 municipal budget

Roger suggests creating strict deadlines for these budgets in order for the Finance Committee to make recommendations within a reasonable amount of time.

3. Topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of the meeting

Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm.

George Riley

Alex Bowman

Steve Seddon