

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING JANUARY 19TH, 2017

1. The Weare Finance Committee met at the Town Offices on Thursday 19 January at 7pm. Members in attendance were Matt Whitlock, Keith Erf, Neal Kurk, Bill Anderson Greg McDowell, Stephen Wallace, Jeff Brown, and Travis Corcoran. Also present were SAU24 Superintendent Lorraine Taccit-Moore, SAU Business Administrator Kathleen Sargent, Weare School Board Chairman Marge Burke, John Stark School Board Chairman Zach Lawson, and Weare Town Administrator Naomi Bolton.
2. Business. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and take action on draft school warrant articles.

- a. Discussion.

1. School Budgets Superintendent Taccit-Moore led the discussion summarizing the proposed 2017-18 operating and default budgets for the Weare and John Stark school districts. The budgets had been presented at school board public hearings the previous week. Operating and default budgets for both districts show increases over the 2016-17 approved budgets. The primary drivers for the increase are health insurance, mandated retirement contributions, and contractual obligations. Committee members expressed concern that the proposed increases were going to have a considerable impact on Weare taxpayers. The negligible difference between proposed and default budgets offer the taxpayers little choice in their voting decision. Committee members questioned the development process of the default budget and why certain line items which may have been reduced in the proposed budgets were left intact in the default budget. It was the sense of the committee that voters should have clearer choices between the proposed and default budgets. The uncertainty of health insurance cost increases, the primary budget driver, was also a concern. Proposed and default budgets reflect the maximum possible increase issued by the health care insurer; the specific increase has not been provided per the Business Administrator. The Committee notes that the Town of Weare has been notified of its specific increase from its provider which facilitates budget development.
2. Stark Teacher Contract. Stark Chairman Lawson provided a summary of the proposed teacher's contract at Stark. The 3 year agreement would reduce percentages in step increases but increase the number of pay

scale steps from 12 to 20. Professional development requirements would be required at various step intervals. The Committee noted the contract would build in a recurring increased operating cost of \$381K per year by 2021 to be shared by Weare/Henniker taxpayers. The Committee further noted that turnover of Stark teachers is not currently a problem.

b. Action.

1. Weare Warrant Articles.

- A. Proposed Budget. The proposed budget is \$15.333M; the default is \$15.318M. The current year operating budget is \$14.9M. Both the proposed and default budgets would result in a \$0.73/K tax increase. (NOT RECOMMENDED 0-8)
- B. Special Education Expendible Trust. Article would remove \$50K from any current year surplus and add to the Special Education Trust Article would result in a \$0.06/K tax impact. (RECOMMENDED 5-3)

2. Stark Warrant Articles.

- A. Proposed Budget The proposed budget is \$13.534M; the default is 13.537M. The current year operating budget is \$13.180M. Proposed budget would result in a \$0.31/K tax increase. (NOT RECOMMENDED 2-6)
- B. Teacher Contract. The proposed 3 year contract would result in a first year tax impact of \$0.14/K for Weare and a built in \$381K recurring increase in the Stark operating budget by 2021. (NOT RECOMMENDED 0-8)
- C. Special Meeting Article would authorize a special meeting in the event the article does not pass. (NOT RECOMMENDED 0-8)

3 Administrative. Town deliberative session is Saturday 4 February at 9AM; Weare Schools deliberative session is Tuesday 7 Feb; Stark deliberative session is Thursday 9 Feb.

4 Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 1105pm. Next Finance Committee meeting is Wednesday 25 January at the town offices at 7pm.

Submitted
Bill Anderson, Secretary