



Lamoine Budget Committee

606 Douglas Hwy
Lamoine, ME 04605

Draft

(207) 667-2242
town@lamoine-me.gov

Minutes – April 24, 2023

Chair Merle Bragdon called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

Present were: Budget Committee members Mark Harris, Merle Bragdon, Jeff Cosulich, Gregg Tehennepe, Greg Hiltz; Secretary Stu Marckoon, School Committee members Brett Jones, Gordon Donaldson, Robert Pulver; Superintendent of Schools Rob Liebow, School Department Business Manager Daniel Higgins, and Director of Special Education Adam Rabasca. Budget Committee member Tiffany McMullen had informed the committee she was unable to attend.

Prior to the start of the meeting there was a brief discussion on the role of the Budget Committee members as it relates to recommendations on the school budget.

Education Budget 2023/24 – Superintendent Rob Liebow gave an overview of the budget, explaining cost changes and centers. He said the K-8 school population is currently 126 students and the high school population is 52 students. He explained the high school tuition funding formula, saying Lamoine pays an average of about \$13,000 per student at whichever high school they attend, though the number varies from school to school. He said it costs about \$19,272 per student in grades K-8 to be educated at the Lamoine Consolidated School. He said the state average is \$17,999, but Lamoine is on the smaller side for schools.

Mr. Liebow said federal COVID-19 Relief funds are all either spent or allocated to be spent. He said that money cannot be used to reduce the regular education budget. He explained the school fund balance has been drawn down by annual usage, and a transfer for the current fiscal year of \$814,000 to a maintenance reserve from which the portable classroom purchases were made. He said the proposed budget is designed to boost up some designated fund, namely special education and general education by \$50,000 each.

Mr. Liebow said the State of Maine EPS funding is down by \$32,000, as Lamoine is a minimum receiver. He said this budget would use \$350,000 from the education fund balance, and the local tax share is up \$145,475 or 5.29% while the total budget is down by about \$181,000 or 5.07%. He said that's because the fund balance is reduced from the current year's use of \$645,000.

Mr. Liebow said the cost increases in the budget include health insurance, secondary tuition, teacher and ed tech contracts, special education, adding a social worker, teacher tuition, the business and superintendent's offices, the principal's office, transportation and food service along with the two designated funds. He said reductions include grades 9-12 ed techs and the capital reserve funds.

(An emergency fire department call came in and Stu departed the meeting to respond)

Mark asked about proposed article 10 (essential programs and services). Mr. Liebow explained the town has to raise that much to leverage state funds.

Greg Hiltz asked if state subsidy is based on special education, as the town is a minimum receiver. Mr. Liebow explained how the program works.

Merle asked about recorded votes and a brief explanation occurred. It was noted there were two articles # 21.

Gregg Tehennepe asked about the student number trends. Brett Jones said it's fairly flat in the last 5-years. A brief discussion followed regarding demographics.

It was moved and 2nd to recommend passage of the school articles (draft warrant articles 5 through 21, both of them). **Vote in favor was 5-0.**

The committee will resume work at a date to be determined on non-education articles on the draft town meeting warrant.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stu Marckoon, Secretary.