

Isle La Motte Town School District  
Special Meeting  
Saturday April 18, 2015/10:00 AM  
Isle La Motte Elementary School

Members present: Louise Koss-Chair & Barbara Callahan

Others present: Michele Murray-Isle La Motte Town Clerk, Paul Hinman, Deb Howard, Real Duteau, Albert Bertram, Cathy Tudhope, Paul Zera, Jane Zera, Pat Treckman, Sarah Peacock, Betty Lockerby, Toby Peacock, Art Larvey, Barb Larvey, Shelly Walters, Robert Pettegrow, Elaine Pettegrow, Diane Brennan, Tom Brennan, Elizabeth Lee

Louise Koss had discussion: new purposed budget increases

1. Tuition rate for NCCS was not announced until after last budget was proposed. Increase in new proposed budget of \$1,500 for each student-7 students attending there next year. Total increase \$10,500.
2. Previous lunch program; was a separate corporation, the budget merely showed payment to that company. A few years ago it merged with school accounting-information was not reflected in the budget to the taxpayers. This in now corrected in the proposed budget and provides an increase of \$32,500. There is also an increase in revenues that offset all but \$8,000 of this increase.
3. A mathematical error in teaching time per week for music and art. The time was reduced from 0.2 to 0.1, this reduction was not approved by the Board and was returned to its former teaching times; increase of \$11,336.

Louise Koss had discussion: new proposed budget decreases

There are some decreases in tuition students for next year, and changes in special education expenditures in the proposed budget that are no longer needed.

The Board looked at all expenditures, line by line to determine cost savings. The total amount of decreases-\$117,316.23

Louise Koss had discussion: Staffing

Current staff in three (3) areas; core course teachers (3 full time K-6) Pre K and enhancement course teachers (art, music, physical education), and principal services.

Louise Koss had discussion: Core Course Teachers

The State and GISU agreed to adopt a set of standards called "Common Core" which was recommended as part of the Federal Education Standards.

Louise Koss had discussion: Pre-K and Enhancement Courses

The only option was to reduce the number of days children attend from 4-3 days, however the Board felt this would be a step in the opposite direction. The Board also agrees this would also apply to the enhancement courses for they are only taught for such a limited time each week. In all of these areas the Board felt the cost savings of \$28,875 was not enough to offset education impact.

Louise Koss had discussion: Principal Services

New State Quality Standards (adopted 2014) calls for a school to have 1.0 principal for every 10.0 full time teachers. The total teaching time for all of the teachers (full and part time) is the equivalent of five (5) full time teachers; therefore it is required to have a 0.5 principal. The issue of returning this to a split principal and teacher position was discussed; the Board could find no benefit either in cost or in educational value by making such a change under the New Quality Standard guidelines.

Louise Koss had discussion: The overall result of proposed budget

For fiscal year 2015-2016 this totals \$1,166,367, a decrease of \$62,980.23 or 5.12% from the original proposed budget.

Louise Koss had discussion: The Tax Rate

The new proposed budget, along with State Base Education Payment Rates, the Equalized Pupils, and the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) provide for an estimate non-resident education tax rate of \$1.59 and an estimated homestead education tax rate of \$1.6918. This is a drop in in the homestead tax rate of about \$0.12 from the original budget.

Other conversation; Paul Hinman

Most other schools staffing costs are approx. 80% of the budgets and number of students in the State of Vermont is dropping.

Louise will provide the percentage rate of the budget for staffing, and have available for the day of the vote on April 28, 2015. The Board will continue to look at staffing and restructuring, utilizing the use of the building, options to look at tutoring all students out, tutoring a portion of students, continue studies with North Hero and Grand Isle along with other schools. Look at all information on all options.

Other conversation; Deb Howard

Deb Howard requests the Board look into the Common Core standards.

Louise Koss had discussion; information that the Board has on Common Core standards comes from discussion with the principal and the teachers. Louise Koss agreed to look into this further and will sit down and have a discussion with Deb Howard.

Other conversation; Cathy Tudhope

The Board should not run the budget to close to the bone. State mandates things that are not funded. What is the possibility of looking in the direction of State aid for help?

Barbara Callahan had discussion; anything we do has to be well thought through. South Hero and North Hero have also had significant drops in student population.

Other discussion; Elaine Pettegrow

The State if cutting back/getting rid of all small school grants.

Other conversation; Betty Lockerby

Busing; if the children are tutored out then a bus will need to be purchased.

If a child gets hurt, where will the tutored children be brought to for emergency services?

Barbara Callahan had discussion; Emergency services have strict guidelines, if Grand Isle is part of Chittenden County, these children will be brought to Burlington.

Other conversation; Cathy Tudhope

If all children are tutioned out to one town, how much control would Isle La Motte have in that school? Callahan had discussion; joint schools determine who is on the board, each school may have three school board members from each school.

Louise Koss had discussion;

If the school is based as a Union district; based on number of students attending equals the number of board members.

Sarah Peacock had discussion;

Base tax rate is set by the State, if there is no school at all here, there will still be a base tax rate for the tax payers.

Shelly Walters had discussion;

How is it determined who is qualified for free snacks and meals?

Louise Koss had discussion; the whole school qualifies due to percentages, with a small number of students it is easy to qualify.

Elaine Pettegrow had discussion;

Can elementary children be tuition out by a vote by the voters? Lousie Koss; yes.

Students move in, will the budget go over?

Louise Koss had discussion; in most instances when new students move in, the cost would be covered by a possible loan (to borrow in anticipation of taxes) and would be carried over into next year's budget without penalties from the State unless it was excessive.

Barbara Callahan had discussion; the budget is always in flux.

Pat Treckmen;

What line items were changed other than special education and tuition costs and are professional education contractual obligations?

Louise Koss had discussion; anywhere from \$100-\$800 reductions were made on multiple line items, all line items were gone over line by line.

Barb Larvey had discussion; all teachers have to take courses to continue to hold licenses, some have costs while others may be free.

Louise Koss had discussion; this board is not required to pay the expense of professional/continued education.

Betty Lockery had discussion;

Why are the Superintendent and the Principal not here today?

Louise Koss had discussion; the superintendent was asked not to come because it is not the supervisory union's budget or the superintendent's budget, this budget is this Boards budget to discuss. The principal was asked not to come for all of the information was provided.

Pat Treckmen had discussion;

Can the budget be found on the website or have printed copies available?

Louise Koss had discussion; the budget and up to date minutes will be loaded onto the GISU website under Isle La Motte School, gisu.org-link to Isle La Motte and also the Town of Isle La Motte website.

Paul Hinman had discussion;

Can the teacher's contracts be posted on the website?

Louise Koss had discussion; the teachers do not have contracts currently. Will check to see if this is allowed.

Deb Howard had discussion; master agreement for the teachers could be put on the website.

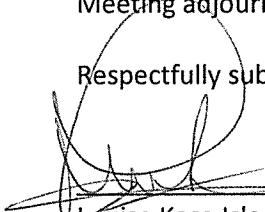
Louise Koss had discussion; this school does not have a master agreement.

Paul Hinman had discussion; the teachers' pay union dues, indirectly the teachers are union members.

Louise Koss had discussion; the teachers do not have a Union Master Contract, this is not a union school, we try to follow a master contract but are not required to do so. Each teacher has a contract to teach elementary at a certain level.

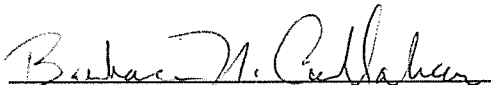
Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted: Michele Murray Isle La Motte Town Clerk



Louise Koss-Isle La Motte School District Chair

5/5/15  
Date



Barbara Callahan-Isle La Motte School District

5/2/15  
Date