

**PETERSHAM CENTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE
PETERSHAM, MASSACHUSETTS
PUBLIC HEARING ON FY15 BUDGET
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9 6:30P.M.
LIBRARY, MEDIA CENTER
MINUTES**

- I. CALL TO ORDER-** Russell Fontaine, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

Members Present: Russell Fontaine, Lynn Peredina, and Janice Coughlan.

Members Absent: None.

Others: Superintendent Tari Thomas, Principal Christopher Dodge, Director of Finance Daniel Haynes, and Alyssa Roberts

- II. HEARING FOR VISITORS-** Wendie Leblanc would like to say on behalf of the staff that they wanted to congratulate Mr. Dodge on his new position and are hopeful they will find a good fit for their new Principal. Tari Thomas announced for those that were not aware that Principal Dodge will be the new Principal at Dexter Park in Orange starting July 1, 2015.

- III. OLD BUSINESS**

- IV. NEW BUSINESS**

Presentation of Budget Information- (vote required)- Tari Thomas presented her slide show to the committee. Tari explained that their slogan at Petersham is “Where Children Come First” and she can certainly attest to that. Tari explained that she had a roundtable with the teachers yesterday to talk about any questions, concerns, or wonderings the staff might have. Tari stated that a theme that ran through all of their questions is what can we do best for the kids. Tari stated that Principal Dodge has outlined 3 big rocks in this budget which are well matched professional development, extra curricular enrichment, and technology integration. Tari and Dan opened this discussion up for questions.

Chuck Berube said there have been a lot of adjustments of things moving from one account to another and there is especially a large increase in paraprofessionals is this because of school choice funds. Tari explained that if you look in the special ed line you will see about the same amount of decrease that you are seeing as an increase in the paraprofessional line. Dan explained that to better report our numbers we have realigned these numbers. Chuck asked in the Superintendent Salary Line Item 5 shows a 35% increase is that because now we constitute a larger percentage because of the cost share. Dan stated that what he has included in there is some other cost share monies because one of the secretary staff has retired and now we can better use cost sharing instead of replacing this position. Dan explained that we have decided to fill that void in the office to shared staff so

that is a portion of that. Chuck stated line item 10 there is an increase is that in connection with the changes of these duties as well. Tari stated that is relative to contract negotiations.

Janice asked under administration in school building leadership there is a \$9,000 increase and with the secretary leaving there should have been a \$17,000 decrease. Dan explained that the secretary line was previously in a special education line. Dan stated that the administrative change is for cost sharing a person in the Town of Orange. Dan explained that there is raises in the School Building Leadership salary at 3% increase. Dan also stated that they have budgeted a salary increase with the Principals Secretary.

Nancy Allen asked about the tech and media salaries line number 19. Tari stated that they did keep Gary Bunker in the consolidation in previous years to provide oversight at Petersham Center School but given Principal Dodge and Kate Arsenault's great work they decided that service was no longer necessary. Nancy then asked about food services showing a change. Dan stated that we had a deficit in the school lunch program and moved this into the School Choice. Dan explained once school lunch is buoyant enough to support this salary we hope to have a portion of this salary back into the appropriation budget. Nancy asked about the heating and how we are calculating and anticipating a higher percentage on the oil, or electricity. Dan stated that just recently he locked in an oil price of 2.34 a gallon for 50,000 gallons. Dan told Nancy he would recalculate the oil usage in comparison to FY15. Dan explained that the reason this was increase is that they were using a lot more oil in FY15 in comparison to FY14. Nancy stated that if the per gallon price has gone down it would be nice to see that change come out with a decrease in the appropriation budget. Dan explained yes, most definitely. Ross France stated that years ago the idea was to have a reserve in school choice around \$30,000 and what are these reserves looking like for FY16. Dan stated that we had \$78,000 to start the year and they actually saw a \$7,000 decrease in our income. Dan stated at the recommendation of the Finance Committee he did go with their recommendation to use more choice money. Dan explained that this is the only budget that is actually using more choice than we are expected to be receiving. Dan went on to explain that the school absorbs the cost of health insurance here which is a big cost. Ross would like to know the final school choice projection when he sees the final budget. Ross also had one final request which is if there were no school choice students what would be the loss in the amount of revenue that goes to reduce the tax rate. He explained that last year there was a calculation of somewhere around \$99,000 which would have to be added to the school appropriation budget and he would like to know what that number is this year. Ross stated that was done by looking at the expenses and without school choice certain things would be reduced. Tari stated that she did not calculate that but wanting to let Ross know that she is convening a subcommittee like an audhawk group that will have a facilitator that is going to look at the many different options for the future so we will be looking for folks such as educators, community members, and school committee members to be a part of that group. Kevin Shortis asked about the health insurance costs and how much do employees

pay. Dan explained the split is 25% 75%. Russ wanted to thank them for all their hard work in putting the budget together and this is much appreciated

Lynn Peredina moved to approve the proposed FY16 budget for Petersham and read the general fund codes line below in the total amount of \$1,624,982.

Russell Fontaine seconded. VOTED: 2 in favor. Abstained: Janice Coughlan.

	Object	General Fund	School Choice	Total
<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>Budget</u>
		<u>Budget</u>	<u>Budget</u>	
ADMINISTRATION	1000	19,440	-	19,440
SCHOOL BUILDING LEADERSHIP	2000	132,758	-	132,758
INSTRUCTION	2000	486,896	257,062	743,958
OTHER SCHOOL SERVICES	3000	2,302	44,740	47,042
TRANSPORTATION	3000	103,778	-	103,778
OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE	4000	176,390	30,820	207,210
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	5000	191,018	15,000	206,018
SPECIAL EDUCATION	9000	114,500	50,278	164,778
TOTALS		\$ 1,227,082	\$ 397,900	\$ 1,624,982

- a. ADJOURNMENT- Russell Fontaine moved to adjourn at 7:10pm. Janice Coughlan seconded. VOTED: Unanimous.***

The listing of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair, which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.