



TOWN OF BOW

Budget Committee

10 Grandview Road, Bow, New Hampshire 03304

Phone (603) 228-1187 | Fax (603) 224-6680 | Website www.bownh.gov

Bow Budget Committee Minutes - School Budget Unapproved Minutes January 16, 2023

Mark Zerba	P	Brock Ehlers	P
Jennifer Strong-Rain	P	Andrew Mattiace	P
Ben Kiniry	P	Jeffrey Knight	P
Christopher Nicolopoulos (Selectman)	P	Robert Blanchette	P
Melynie Klunk, School Board	P	Martin Osterloh, School Board	P
Lori Krueger, Principal BES	P	Business Director Duane Ford	P

* P = Present; A = Absent

I. Tour of Bow Elementary School (BES)

Principal Krueger led members on a tour of areas in BES that will be impacted by the proposed BES addition/renovation project, answering questions, and pointing out areas where changes are proposed. The tour ended at 6:45 PM upon which the Committee meeting was called to order.

II. BES Addition/Renovation Discussion

Class size and potential class sizes were discussed along with staffing and if additional staffing would be needed with the additional classrooms. Principal Krueger stated that there are currently enough staff to operate the school well even with the addition. Some of the staff would be moved from very small classrooms/closets and put in the expanded rooms. Some areas have multiple uses and are used by several staff. The renovations would allow the staff to come out of those rooms. Principal Krueger also noted that the only access to the playground is on the second floor and students had to walk through classrooms to get outside to it.

DEW Construction presented an “Opinion of Cost Estimate” based on a “List” provided by the Building Committee/District which included a number of improvements and upgrades. The major components include an eight-room classroom addition, several secure building entrances, and a building wide fully integrated sprinkler system. The Building Committee will be meeting with Bonnet, Page and Stone during the week. DEW has included a summary document listing 22 items at an estimate of \$11,793,276. This does not include the bond costs, design costs, clerk of the works, or builder’s insurance. With those costs factored in, the total comes to approximately \$12 million.

The current state of the economy, interest rates, inflation, supply chain delays and increasing material costs, as well as the unknown of whether the economy will improve, or inflation and interest rates increase were discussed and debated with varying opinions on each. It should be noted that the BES Renovation/Addition Committee has many skilled and experienced people in the construction field(s) who have seen the mistakes made when working in an environment such as the pandemic has wrought. They have been able to advise and help avoid some of the pitfalls. Selectman Nicolopoulos

opined that now was a terrible time to present this project and advocated for “saving up for it” by deposits to Capital Reserve Funds (CRF). Other thoughts were that the future cost of the project would be prohibitive. Building security and sprinklers were a serious need. Funding just the engineering and design costs and not the project was discussed. Much back-and-forth discussion continued including bond rates and amount of interest on a \$12 million bond. At this point a straw vote was taken to see where the committee was as a whole.

Selectman Nicolopolous was in favor of using CRF funds and making contributions of approximately \$1 million/year in order to save for the project. Jennifer Strong-Rain, as Chair of the BES Addition/Renovation Committee, felt the need and time was now to present the project to the taxpayers. Ben Kiniry’s thought was to contribute to the CRF until the Memorial School Bond ended in 26/27 and bonding the remaining amount. Chair Zerba favored a companion warrant article be drafted to give taxpayers the option to either approve the whole project or vote to contribute a large sum of money each year for a number of years. The amount of contribution was discussed. The Chair felt that \$1.2 million would be too much to ask. Andrew Mattiace supports doing engineering now and saving for a few years to see if the economy improves. Robert Blanchette supports presenting the article for the complete project on the Warrant now. Jeffrey Knight recused himself. Results of the straw vote taken at the time, 2-5-1.

The Committee discussed finding a temporary solution which would address emergency issues while also adding to the CRF to reduce the bond amount needed down the road. There was some disagreement about whether to present one warrant article or two. One for the BES project *and* a companion article/option to contribute to a CRF *or* just one or the other of those options.

The BES Addition/Renovation Committee will work to get updated conceptual drawings representing the project being proposed. Additional information on enrollment will be provided. Selectman Nicolopoulos remarked that the building is being well maintained and looks to be in good shape. Principal Krueger praised her maintenance staff for their hard work and dedication.

III. Adjournment

The Committee will meet again on Monday, January 23rd. There being no further discussion, the Chair called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion:

Jeff Knight moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM. Bob Blanchette seconded. Sending no further discussion, the Chair called for a vote.

Motion carried 8-0-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Gilman, Recording Secretary