

DOVER WARRANT COMMITTEE
Minutes of the January 25, 2023 Meeting

Members in attendance: Melissa Herman, Cam Hudson, Gordon Kinder, Sara Cadena Kinney, Janet McCormick, Steve Migausky, Peter Smith

Members absent: Andy Ursitti

Others in attendance: Beth McCoy, Superintendent of Schools; Dawn Fattore, Schools Business Administrator; Sara Gutierrez-Dunn, Dover School Committee; Jerry Chen

Location: on-line, via Zoom

Ms. Herman called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Dover Schools

Ms. Fattore presented a summary of the Dover School budget, including both Chickering and Out-of-District (OOD) placements. The operating budget request is 4.85% above FY23. Utility costs are up significantly, especially heating oil, which is on a variable price contract this year. She noted that we are coming to the end of ESSER grants, but the technology and other infrastructure purchased thereby is still with us. Contract negotiations are underway with all bargaining units; a \$324,000 cushion has been added under "Other Educational Expenses" rather than the Salary line. OOD placements are down due to enhanced in-district services and students aging out, however tuition is increasing steeply which will undercut the savings. State reimbursement for OOD transportation has increased, but the school is concerned that the Circuit Breaker may not be funded at the usual 75% level. Ms. Herman has a copy of the budget detail if anyone is interested.

Capital Budget requests for FY24 will include another wing's flooring, and replacement of the fire control panel. Mr. Hudson asked if the schools have a plan for carbon reductions. Ms. Fattore said that Dover, Sherborn, and six other towns have begun studying the issue, but other than switching to electric buses and vans when they become available, there do not appear to be many available avenues.

Liaison Reports

Ms. McCormick: a student group has requested that Lunar New Year and Diwali be made school holidays.

Mr. Smith: The Ambulance budget includes another increase to the weekday on-call stipend. DPW will be hiring a full-time administrator to replace a retiring 25-hour/week administrator.

Ms. Herman: The Selectmen are discussing the Library's request to increase part-time hours to a level qualifying for benefits. Mr. Migausky added that we still do not have a solid cost estimate.

Mr. Hudson: Capital Budget requests are up sharply, with new vehicles for Fire and DPW. He has asked why the school is not considering converting to non-fossil fueled HVAC systems.

Mr. Migausky is still trying to get a meeting with the Conservation Commission.

Mr. Smith will update the Municipal Finance Notes and circulate.

Other Business

After suggesting a minor edit, Mr. Kinder moved that the minutes of January 11 be approved, seconded by Mr. Smith. The motion passed 6-0-1.

Jerry Chen is interested in filling the vacancy on the Committee and sat in on the meeting. He will provide a resumé.

Mr. Hudson will continue to follow up with two other candidates.

Mr. Hudson has attended meetings with the Selectmen, the Town Administrator, and the Moderator about the conduct of Town Meeting and the lead-up to it. All agreed that the various boards and committees owe it to the Warrant Committee to finalize and submit complete materials in a timely manner.

There being no further business a motion was made to adjourn, seconded by unanimous proclamation. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Peter Smith, Secretary