

SANBORN REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

February 17, 2016

6:00 PM

A Public Hearing was held by the Sanborn Regional School Board on Wednesday, February 17, 2016. The meeting was held at the Sanborn Regional High School Library, Kingston, NH. The public hearing was called to order at 6:06 PM by School Board Chair Jon LeBlanc. Mr. LeBlanc opened the Public Hearing by reading the Warrant Article. The purpose of the Public Hearing was to get community input and an opportunity for the community to ask questions.

ARTICLE 11. Default Budget

Submitted by petition of 25 or more registered voters: Shall we adopt the provisions of RSA 40:14b to delegate the determination of the default budget to the municipal budget committee which has been adopted under RSA 32:14?

Ms. Cheryl Gannon asked if there was any more specific information available in the RSA or if this is practiced in other communities in NH. Dr. Blake responded that it is done in some communities, not a lot. Based on the information that Dr. Blake has received no one group should be in charge of preparing the budget and the default budget. Dr. Blake said that once the BC presents the budget, the BC has no responsibility in how those funds are used. Dr. Blake said that it is dangerous to put the responsibility of the default budget into the hands of the BC. If the Default Budget is not enough to cover the expenses, it is not the BC's responsibility. The responsibility lies with the SB in covering the expenses. At the end of the day, it is the SB that is left to manage the funds and how to spend them. Mr. Ramey asked why they would change procedures now? Why make the BC responsible for preparing the default budget? Mr. Ramey asked if it was public opinion that the SB and Administration is inflating the default budget? Dr. Blake said yes, that there is a general distrust in the community that the SB is not doing its job and they are hiding things. Dr. Blake said that he thinks it is imperative that the SB have a say in the process. Ms. Bennett said she thinks it's bigger than that. She said she thinks it's a NH frame of mind. She said the problem lies in the

way that NH funds public education through property taxes. She said it's set up to be confrontational. Ms. Bennett said that people are elected to the SB and the BC and are not required to have any background/experience in budgeting. She said she feels that the preparation of the default budget should be left to the people that the District hires who have the experience and knowledge in preparing and distributing a budget. There was discussion about interpretation and intent. An example of interpretation would be onetime expenses. Ms. Gannon asked if contractual obligations are part of the default budget? Yes.

The current policy puts the responsibility of preparing the default budget with the Superintendent and Administration, and the SB approves it. The intent of the warrant article would change that. The Administration would put forth the default budget, but the BC would have the authority to make changes to the default budget that goes to the public vote. The BC would have final say in the default budget figure that is presented to the voters. Dr. Blake stated that there is an inherent problem with the Deliberative Session. The Deliberative Session takes away the public's ability to vote on the budget as prepared by the District administration. Ms. Ellen Hume Howard of Kingston said that this article would be changing the role of the BC and why it was formed.

At 6:35 PM the regular School Board Meeting resumed. The Public Hearing remained open. At 7:10 PM, Ms. Ross made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Ms. Bennett seconded the motion. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail M. LeBlanc
School Board Secretary