

MINUTES
WORKSHOP
DOVER CITY COUNCIL
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
TUESDAY
MAY 18, 1999
7:00 P.M.

All City Councilors present except Councilor Landry.

1. DISCUSSION RE: SCHOOL BUDGET

Mayor Boc introduced Marc Vaillancourt, Chairman of the School Board. Chairman Vaillancourt started off by stating on Tuesday, May 25th at 7 AM at the Gourmet Table at Dover High School, the City Council, Mayor, City Manager and Press will be welcome to meet the three candidates for the Superintendent of School's position. Mr. Vaillancourt gave an overview and stated the goals and how they effect the budget. He stated they were going to focus on literacy as the top academic priority for the next five years. For 99-2000 they will continue their commitment to the integration of technology as a tool for learning in all subject areas. In 99-2000, the schools will review the revision and alignment on the basis of systematic discipline for all ages to facilitate and monitor curriculum. He stated, that reflecting on the schools and community over the last several years, the PTA, PTO, Booster Clubs and many other organizations have purchased several items that were unexpected expenses, such as the Garrison School Stage Curtains, \$2,500., Staff development. \$5,000, Photocopier, \$3,500.

He went on to list all the booster clubs at the various schools and what they have raised money for such as \$42,000 for football, etc. in a three year period in contributions. In the budget, one goal for curriculum is language arts; they have also been revising the curriculum. There has been middle management restructuring, as this is the latest concept. But a basic restructuring only starts to address problems. (See the hand out from the School Board in the meeting folder of 5/18/99) explaining their School budget. He went on to state in order to keep classes at manageable levels, they have to be changed and new positions added. Their efforts to address alternative schools are still ongoing. Pupil transportation is looking at a significant increase and the introduction of Kindergarten has increased the transportation budget substantially.

Mr. Vaillancourt introduced Dr. Daley who is speaking for the last time in front of the City Council. He stated Stephania Pearce, the business administrator will present the figures but he will give for a quick overview of the budget. He stated there is a 10% increase in the budget due to contractual obligations. Those included equal \$900,000 in staff salary and office personal and also the new teaching positions. There are a total of 118 more students than last year, kindergarten will be increased by 39 students, the elementary schools will be increased by 36 students and there will be 6 more students at the Middle School, he commented the 8th grade is very large and the high school will increase by 41 new students. There is an increase in the cost of benefits, this will also need to be factored in, employees share costs but it is still a huge part of the budget.

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There are computer costs and transportation costs, special-Ed and utility cost increases, they are not adding a whole lot of new programs.

The Portsmouth Christian Academy may have an enrollment of around 30 students. Dr. Daley does not have the hard numbers yet and won't have until October. Johnson commented on enrollment. Rawding had a question to Dr. Daley regarding the 41 new students at DHS, and how many of them are from out of town. Dr. Daley answered that would be the 9th graders. Dr. Daley has offset the tuition to account for them. Rawding wants to know how many of the 459 tuition students there are from each town; Barrington has 314, 139 from Nottingham and 6 from other communities. Rawding is not convinced that all these students really are cost effective to the city of Dover with the additional staff, salary and all their benefits. Dr Daley does not agree with Rawding and he went on to justify importing the students. Rawding continues to point out he is not holding his breath for Barrington to build a new school, he would like the School Board to look at the projections of enrollment in 2-4 years from now. Nottingham will have a two-year agreement and Barrington's agreement is still up in the air. Wilson stated Rawding had covered the material that he wanted to. He added he does feel the growth in the City is as great as he has heard stated. Johnson would welcome financial numbers, 1200 is the capacity of the new middle school. Rawding asked if we send any students outside of Dover. Dr. Daley answered certainly we send several handicapped students to other towns that are more able to accommodate them. Perry has two questions, in the wake of violence across the country, he commented our whole system is focused on efficiencies and school buildings and larger school systems and larger school populations, does this seem to be part of the problem? These are not immediate budget issues but they do need to be addressed. Has the School Committee talked about this? Dr. Daley stated yes they have, and that he prides himself on running a clean and mean administrative district. But there is a need for more adult figures in all the schools.

Perry asked if in terms of tuition students and the Claremont situation is our tuition level going to be effected by it? The money because of Claremont is figured on Dover students, resident students only, as the Dr. understands it. Tuition is being recalculated. Berry commented on the Claremont issue and tuition students, then he asked about a MIS director? Rawding wants to be more specific on Claremont and how outside students will effect Dover. Is it neutral, a bonus or a drag? The numbers are only based on Dover and his second concern is if the School Board looked at students in internship programs instead of adding staffing.

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Dr. Daley stated we do not pay our interns unless they actually substitute with the additional staff members. Rawding asked where is the intern program here? Dr. Daley stated the purpose of the intern program is to educate potential teachers not to monitor the corridors. The Mayor asks about the district's policy on class sizes. Grade one has 20 or fewer as of October 1. And no more than 25 to 1 beyond grade 2 and 3, the upper limit is 30. They still aim for 20 though. Dr. Daley introduced

Stephania, who will try to explain the Claremont funding.

She proceeded to distribute packets for everyone. She started off by trying to clear up the questions on Claremont and tuition stating tuition is driven by the number of students and that we do not transport our tuition students. Claremont has, see attachment # one in folder of May 18th meeting .

Reese had a question regarding the high truancy rate, and how is truancy being penalized in Dover, Stephania stated yes, Dover does suffer from this.

Rawding publicly thanked Stephania for all her work. There is some confusion with the Claremont Issue with regards to kindergarten. Stephania went on to explain.

Also there is a question with the number of computers with regards to the Claremont issue.

Horne Street School has 427 students and 63 computers

Garrison School has 11.1% of the computers

Woodman Park School has 10.5%

Dover Middle School has 14%.

Dover High School has 13.6% of the computers

There are a total of 558 computers in all the schools. Berry asked how many computer technicians are there? She answered; there are two aids. Stephania went on explain all the numbers in the school budget and continued to answer all the Council's questions. Wilson asked when were reading, writing and arithmetic last upgraded? Someone stated that language had last been updated in the late 1980's.

2. Other Business

There was a discussion regarding the financial resolution that had been tabled at the May 12th meeting because of a question of where the funding was coming from and Stephania stated her great need to have this software package. It was decided they would address it at the June 1st meeting which is also the School Budget Public Hearing.

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3. Adjournment

Perry moved seconded by Reese to adjourn at 9:45 PM.

Judy Gaouette
City Clerk