



CITY OF DOVER

JOINT FISCAL COMMITTEE - MINUTES

Meeting Type: **Regular Meeting**
Meeting Location: **Media Access Center, McConnell Center**
Meeting Date: **Wednesday, May 2, 2012**
Meeting Time: **6:00 PM**

Council Present: Mayor Trefethen, Deputy Mayor Carrier, Councilor Cheney, Councilor Crago, Councilor Garrison, Councilor Hooper, Councilor Weeden, and Councilor Weston, Councilor Spuler arrived late.

School Board Present: Chairperson Rocky D'Andrea, Kenneth Appel, Secretary Betsey Andrews Parker, Kathy Baker, Paul Butler, Doris Grady,

Also Present: City Manager Joyal, General Legal Counsel Krans, Finance Director Lynch, City Clerk Lavertu, Superintendent Briggs Badger, and Business Administrator Limanni.

Absent: School Board Vice Chairperson Amanda Russell

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 15, 2012

Councilor Hooper moved for approval of the minutes; seconded by Councilor Weston.
Vote: U/A.

3. BUDGET DISCUSSION

Mayor Trefethen said he understood that the School Board had a deadline for handing out layoff notices, but he believed that no definitive direction will be given from the Council during this meeting.

Chairperson D'Andrea referred to the negative comments that he has heard, and said the School Board putting forward a non-taxcap compliant budget was not aimed at the City Council in anyway. He said their proposed budget had what the School Board felt the School Department needed to run their programs. He said in comparison to other communities Dover Schools are much underfunded. He said they understood the City Council had the entire budget to worry about, but felt their piece was getting smaller and smaller. He wanted to make it clear that they didn't hold any ill will against the City Council or City Manager. He spoke about all the changes the new Board is trying to implement. He asked the Council to accept their proposed budget and said down the line it will pay for itself.

Mayor Trefethen asked Councilor Crago to make the details of his email public.

Councilor Crago suggested a compromise. He said the teachers could have a wage freeze, similar to what the City employees have done in the past few years. He said then the Council would meet the School Board half way by reprogramming funds from the City side to the School side in an effort to cover the deficit.

Superintendent Briggs Badger said she spoke with the president of the Dover Teachers Union and the union will be discussing this issue during an executive meeting. She said it would probably have to be put to a vote of the whole union.

Councilor Weeden said this is not saying they believe teachers are overpaid. He said both sides are willing to make concessions to make up the \$870,000 deficit.

Chairperson D'Andrea said School administration has taken a pay freeze for the last four years. He asked what would happen if the teachers said no, or they will give a little.



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Councilor Cheney said they haven't really discussed this as a Council. She said she has asked for data to show savings over the years. She said she understood that they were competitive with surrounding communities.

Chairperson D'Andrea said they were not competitive. They were in the 23rd percentile.

Superintendent Briggs Badger said the School is in a financial bind this year. She asked to talk about using impact fees. She said they need to know now and not in June.

Councilor Weeden read Councilor Spuler's comments to the Committee. He said it is his belief that the Council will not vote in a taxcap override, and felt they had to come up with some sort of compromise.

Mayor Trefethen asked where \$400,000 to \$500,000 was going to come from in the City's budget and what will be impacted.

Councilor Weeden said they may not be able to completely cover the \$870,000 gap.

Councilor Garrison said he would not support a compromise at this point. He said the Council hasn't discussed the whole budget. He felt the taxcap is shortsighted. He said he is certain the Council will not vote to override, and told the School Board to RIF teachers to meet the budget. Ms. Grady started a discussion on the Capital Reserve Funds and not being able to put money into these accounts.

Mayor Trefethen paraphrased what was being said: they agree that School Board's proposed budget calls for right level of services and programs, and the only issue is the total dollar amount. He said the question is how they fund it without going over the taxcap. It's not a question of the School Board spending too much money, but how do we fund it.

Councilor Crago said he isn't qualified to tell the School Board or City Manager where to cut funds in order to meet the taxcap. He wants to meet the expectations of his citizens in Ward 3. Deputy Mayor Carrier referred to an email he received regarding whether or not he will override the taxcap. He said he hasn't made a decision yet because he hasn't received all the information yet. He said it was necessary to move the City forward and it may mean overriding the taxcap.

Mr. Appel said they might assume that the teachers are less than likely to freeze pay. He spoke about what the \$870,000 cut will do to the schools.

Superintendent Briggs Badger started a discussion on using the impact fees, and gave an overview of her handout.

Mr. Limanni explained how they can use the impact fees to pay for the feasibility study. He said the Department of Education approved the use of the funds.

Mayor Trefethen said the impact fees then wouldn't be used for future construction projects; Garrison Elementary School.

Superintendent Briggs Badger said the footprint is not changing at the Garrison Elementary School and not eligible for impact fees.

City Manager Joyal said it is legal for the School to use the impact fees, but the City Council will have to approve it. He said it does not comply with the City's financial policy; using the impact fees to pay an annual recurring cost.

Mayor Trefethen wanted them to remember that there will be ramifications for next year's budget. He asked the Councilors for a consensus vote if they would be willing to allow the School to spend the impact fees.

Several Councilors weren't ready to vote at this time.

Ms. Andrews Parker asked if the School Board should be looking at cutting another \$500,000.



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Mayor Trefethen said they have made no promises.

Superintendent's Briggs Badger said she needs to know because she needs to RIF additional teachers by next week.

Mayor Trefethen asked for a show of hands from the Council for a consensus vote on using the \$566,000 in impact fees towards the School Department's budget.

Consensus Vote: 7/2; Councilors Garrison and Spuler.

Mayor Trefethen said the vote isn't binding and said the School Board needed to deal with their conscience.

4. OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

Councilor Cheney asked about a refund coming to the School in the form of insurance premiums.

Mr. Limanni said it will not be in the form of a check, but a reduction in premiums.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Deputy Mayor Carrier moved to adjourn; seconded by Councilor Weston.

Vote: U/A.

Superintendent Briggs Badger's handout has been archived with the minutes.