

Board of Selectmen  
Mallory Hall  
Sherman, CT  
Budget Workshop  
6 March 2023

**In Attendance:** D.Lowe, First Selectman, J.Brusinski, Selectman, B.Ostrosky, Selectman, L.LaVia, Business Manager, E.Holub, Treasurer, L.Whitney, Acting Clerk

Sherman School Administrative Team: P. Cosentino, Mary Fernand, Ann Adriani, Karen Fildes

Board of Education representatives: Matt Vogt, Tim Loughlin  
4 members of the audience.

**7:00 PM~** D. Lowe called the meeting to order, and led the meeting in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

P.Cosentino began her presentation with an overview of the budget process, which included members of the school staff, the administrative team, and BOE members, to create the \$9,579,371.00 budget proposal for 2023-24. This reflects a 3.74% increase from the 2022-23 budget. P.Cosentino elaborated on the improved tracking system for enrolled high school students, and the decrease in spending on the administrative team.

B. Ostrosky inquired whether or not there would be a surplus left from the 2022-23 budget.

A.Adriani responded that a surplus of about \$200,000.00 is anticipated, but they are waiting on actual health insurance costs before that number can be confirmed.

P. Cosentino added that the school is being fiscally conservative, although some costs occur unexpectedly, such as the 2 special education needs that enrolled in Sherman after the previous budget had been set.

J.Brusinski questioned if the proposed budget had cut a staff member's position.

P. Cosentino responded that a position will be cut next year as Grade 6 will be reduced to only one section consisting of 22 students. She assured the BOS that the educational program would not suffer as the flexible scheduling the school will follow allows for increased instructional time. She stressed that the team is striving to be fair to the taxpayers, while acknowledging that there may be a future building project proposed.

T. Loughlin added that enrollment is trending upwards in the lower grades at the school.

D. Lowe asked for clarification on the curriculum work line item.

K.Fildes responded that there were increased state mandates for ELA, and the need for curriculum mapping across and between the grade levels. Teachers will be paid in the summer to work with John Antonetti, an educational consultant, to increase rigor and student engagement in the classroom.

B.Ostrosky asked for clarification on the student information and communication increase.

K.Fildes explained that the instructional software is combined in one line on the budget now.

B. Ostrosky asked about the paraprofessional needs.

P.Cosentino explained that the need for paraprofessionals is based on special education needs. The school is trying to keep their special education students in house rather than pay tuition to outsource them which has resulted in additional paraprofessionals.

There was a brief discussion on statewide awareness of students exhibiting an inability to self-regulate. This issue seems to have become more evident since the COVID pandemic.

B. Ostrosky asked for clarification on the fiscal services in the proposed budget.

T.Loughlin explained that they are planning a change in their payroll and accounting systems.

E.Holub asked for clarification on the ESSERIII funds.

A.Adriani explained that the ESSERIII funds are still available for the 2023-24 school year, but they expect the title grants to be decreased.

E.Holub asked for numbers for the Pre-k tuition per pupil.

A.Adriani responded that they expect about 26 students at \$250.00 per month.

B. Ostrosky asked for an explanation on the increase in the school lunch services.

T.Loughlin explained that there has been a change from Aramark to Chartwell Services resulting in the increase.

B. Ostrosky asked for clarification on the increase in counselor costs.

T.Loughlin informed the BOS that there had been a staff change resulting in the hiring of a new counselor with more experience.

B. Ostrosky asked who the BOS could follow up with if any other questions arise.

P. Cosentino said any future questions could be addressed with her.

E. Holub asked if any of the BOE's budget cuts were related to building maintenance.

P. Cosentino answered yes, about \$58,000.00.

T. Loughlin added that the budget still covers all of the regular maintenance, but that new systems are still needed.

7:58 PM - D. Lowe thanked the BOE members and the School Administrative Team for their presentation.

L. LaVia presented the proposed Town Budget of \$5,412,838.00 (an increase of 1.27%) and a discussion was held as the budget was examined line by line.

Cuts in the budget were unanimously agreed upon in the areas of: Planning and Zoning, Counsel and Court Costs, Memberships, Consultants, Economic Development, Public Works, and The Historic District Commission. These cuts amount to about \$70,000.00 savings in the proposed budget.

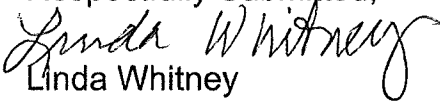
There was a brief discussion on the reserve for capital expenditure, and one on the need for clarity and a job description for the new position at Park and Rec.

D. Lowe wrapped up the discussion by thanking everyone for their diligence in the budget process.

**9:50 PM~** D. Lowe made a motion to adjourn.

B. Ostrosky seconded the motion. All voted in favor of adjournment.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Linda Whitney