

## **Legislative Task Force Meeting Minutes 6.8.2023**

**7:00 PM      Call to order – Vice Chair David Milz**

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

**Present:** State Representative David Milz, State Representative Jodi Nelson, State Representative Erica Layon, State Senator Regina Birdsell, Councilor David Granese, School Board Member David Clapp, School Board Member Michael Thiele, Town Clerk Tina Guilford

### **Town Update – Councilor Granese**

Tuesday starts the Concerts at MacGregor Park, Pizzastock is in July, the Farmers Market will be every Wednesday downtown. I wish everyone happy Pride Month. There are no updates for exit 4A or Abbott Court at this time.

### **School Update – School Board Member David Clapp**

We have the Pinkerton Graduation tomorrow night and June 15<sup>th</sup> is the Middle School Promotion Day. We are working on the reorganization plan for the 5-6/7-8 model. June 20<sup>th</sup> is school closing discussion. We have also started curriculum update as well. As a legislative update, the NEXT Charter school memorandum of understanding brought to light that there are about 7 students at NEXT that come from out of district and those districts do not need to pay for those students by law. That needs to be looked into. Representative Layon stated that there are 2 types of Charter Schools, a standard charter school that gets funded directly from the state and a district sponsored charter school. Requests that an email be sent to her with the particulars so she can look into it. Special Education legislation was sponsored at the federal level but didn't go anywhere. Councilor Granese asks about the process for deciding to close and what is the plan for the building for the school that closes? School Board Member Clapp stated that they are looking at everything since we did not get any funding from the state for a new school. We did warrant articles to take retained funds and put them into the repairs needed. We made the decision to go with the 5-6/7-8 model and are now reviewing the reports so that we can make the best decision. The Town has shown some interest in Grinnell, South Range could possibly be sold for new homes, Derry Village sits on the site we have decided would be the best for a new school. As of right now the decision has not been made and it will not take effect until the 2024-2025 school year. Representative Milz stated that in 2017 he chaired a sub committee looking at closing a school and it was discussed that South Range could be turned over to the Town for Parks and Recreation. School Board Member Michael Thiele stated that looking at the reports of the repairs needed and how that will affect the budget and education going forward. All 7 schools need a lot of work. It has been delayed and needs to be addressed. Representative Layon questions the format of the Fiscal Advisory Committee and if there will be any changes. School Board Member Clapp stated that the Committee needs to start earlier, maybe late July or early August. Jane needs direction earlier in the process rather than just trying to cut after everything has been done. Representative Layon agrees and stated she will be happy to rejoin the Board.

### **Legislative Update – Representative Jodi Nelson**

Highlights from today's budget session. HB1 and HB2 passed with an overwhelmingly bipartisan effort. Rooms Tax will keep funding the 30% share as promised. From Current law in the biennium to \$61,750,304 to the new dollar number \$63,691,380. School Board Member Clapp

asked about the differences between the Senate version that had less money, but the House version gave Derry more. Representative Milz asks that we defer that question to the Senate update. Representative Layon noted that the budget also has 160million more for Health and Wellbeing. Including increases in Medicare reimbursement rates, Birth and Lactation, family resource centers, family stabilization services, NH human trafficking funds, TANF. There was also a compromise of a 7-year Medicare expansion. Braver Angels training is available through the state which is helpful for elected officials.

### **Senator Regina Birdsell**

When the budget came to the Senate, he was bound and determined to get rid of stabilization money. Senator Tim Lang put this formula together with Hold Harmless and Extraordinary Needs in order to give the funds to Towns instead of stabilization. If we had not agreed to a budget, there would have been no funding for the Granite Advantage and will bring more funds to compensate nurses so we will not be losing them to other states. We would have lost road and bridge money and water money. UNH has frozen tuition for the next 2 years and we have worked on funds for Keene State and Plymouth State College. There was a 12% raise for state employees. There were things that people liked, and things people did not like. When you have upset both sides, then you have a pretty good budget. School Board Member Clapp mentioned that Senator Bradley called it property tax relief. However, our increases are not covered by the incoming funds. It's not really tax relief, it's just increasing less. I feel the House did such a good job, and it's disappointing to see the cuts from the Senate. Senator Regina Birdsell stated that she also sees that, however, there is other money coming into the Town in other areas that is going back into the taxpayer pocket. Representative Erica Layon asks a question about the school funding for Adequacy Aid and how that relates to the lawsuits that have been filed by various school districts. Senator Regina Birdsell stated that because of the lawsuit, we need to show more stability for funding. The money is added into Adequacy rather than in these small funds so that in 10 years it will be predictable for funding. Representative Jodi Nelson urges Mr. Clapp to reach out to Senator Lang as this plan has predictability and sustainability over the next 10 years. Representative Erica Layon says that moving the money more into Adequacy in the long term is better for Derry, there will always be other towns more needy than Derry so it is better to put these funds in adequacy so that we will always have them going forward. Senator Regina Birdsell stated that Derry is getting the most hold harmless funds out of all the towns.

### **Summary**

The legislature passed a budget today. No one was happy, so it must have been a very good budget. Our next meeting should be on September 14 to discuss upcoming legislation.

**Meeting ADJORNED by Vice Chair Milz**

**Adjourn: 7:45PM**

**Minutes by: Cristina Guilford, Town Clerk**

