5/9/19

Attendees: Mary Traver, Lynette B. Varnon, Andrew Varnon, Crystal Zimmer, Jodi Falk, Steve Nimberkow, Matt Holloway, Karen Rider

I. Meeting started 6:30 introductions for new participants
II. Approval of minutes- motion Matt, so moved Crystal, 2nd-Andrew
III. Budgetary- Presentation by Stephen
   a. There are 2 sides of budget- City side and school side-
      i. The City side handles insurance and benefits
      ii. The City side will see about a $50,000 increase this year
      iii. The 1.1 million in extra Chapter 70 funding in going exclusively to the city side.
      iv. Question about if city can raise taxes to help fund school-
         1. There is what is called a “Levy Limit” meaning the City CAN raise taxes up to 2.5% every year. If they do not raise it a full 2.5%, the difference is Banked
         2. They have not hit the levy limit over the passed few years therefore can raise the taxes by more than 2.5% - pulling from the levy
         3. Members speculated that the levy was being saved to pay for projects the Mayor approved in future years instead of going to the school.
IV. What is being affected by 1.3 million reduction-
   a. We will not be able to get an extra desperately needed School Psychologist
   b. We will not be able to get the additional BCBA necessary to use the Behavioral grant we got.
   c. There will be an increase in some teacher workloads
   d. 1:1 paras being laid off- mandated Paras included- Causing student to leave the district
   e. May cut mandated services which would cause students to leave the district
   f. In our district, the Sp.Ed. does a full day of teaching with the workload of a full-time teacher and manage the IEP process for 20 kids. This is not a typical workload for Sp. Ed. Teachers.
   g. Inclusion suffers as class sizes raise and staffing and services decrease.
   h. Loss of Arts, Music, Language, and Sports Funding and Opportunities, especially to lower income who rely on these free opportunities in school.
V. What advocacy can we do?
   a. The school committee asked to put forward the full budget to city council, outside of the mayors cut school budget proposal.
   b. GO to the vote on the 22nd where they will decide what the bottom line will be
   c. Ask the City Council to fully fund the school committee budget
   d. Ask that the City Council will need to make Moderate cuts, increase the tax rate, pull in additional revenue from revolving funds etc.
   e. Go to the City council meetings and subcommittee
   f. Write to the state government to increase funding to schools
   g. Write a letter to the recorder and city council
   h. Recruit people to go to the meetings and speak up
i. What should we say?
   i. Talking points- focus on specific topics
   ii. Contextualize- Bring in your stories, and what will happen
   iii. Band scholarship concert- 3 seniors of what band has meant to them. Get students to speak about their experiences and what the losses will mean to them.

VI. Crystal read drafted letter to the City council- Discussion about talking points- making pleas personal and contextual.

VII. Parent Concerns

VIII. Mary motion to adjourn- Crystal So Moved- Karen 2nd