

**Dresden Finance Committee  
Tracy Hall, Norwich, VT**

**Monday September 19, 2005**

Present: Bill Bender, Henry Scheier, Irv Thomae, Athos Rassias, Dick Podolec, Karen Kayen, Deb Hall, John Hochreiter and John Chamberlin. We were also joined by Wayne Gersen and John Aubin.

Chairman Athos Rassias called the meeting to order at 4:06 PM with the intent to review the Dresden Budget Guidelines. Athos handed out extra copies for those who did not print out the e-mail from Superintendent Gersen.

Irv noted that in statement number one he would suggest language that would “encourage innovation that is fiscally prudent.” Henry added that he would suggest an additional message of efficiency; he particularly noted that the Finance Committee has continually suggested that it is interested in seeing things done more efficiently in the system.

There was discussion that followed regarding the general sense that the principals did in fact bring forward a very responsible budget suggestion. There was also discussion that suggested teachers have been stifled over the past number of years in an attitude that only promoted cost cutting as opposed to innovation. There were a number of pro and con comments regarding the validity and/or appropriateness of such a sense. Henry talked about the need to improve school program not just maintain what we have.

Wayne spoke to the need to analyze the services and curriculum delivered in that we need to look forward to the possibility of the need for new skills necessary for children of the next generation. The guidelines therefore do not reference existing programs.

Irv, prompted discussion regarding the need to match the number of teachers to the number of students. This led into suggestions of innovative ways in which the schools could deliver new or different programs, the German language program was noted, also the limiting of classes to certain numbers of students or delivery over the internet. Deb asked that everyone look at “best practices”. Bill brought up a New York Times OpEd article commenting on the delivery of educational services in S.E. Asia. Irv stated that the administration should challenge the staff to find better ways to deliver services.

There was discussion initiated by Irv and Henry to the effect that Per Pupil Costs had on particularly the Norwich voter.

Athos brought us back to the Guidelines. There were general questions on the status of the sub committees relative to guideline number three and it was noted that there needs to be a longer range view of these increases.

There was a note from Dick in that he would like the administration and the committee to watch and check the concept of program inflation. We tend to add and not subtract

programs from our offerings. Wayne did follow considerable discussion with a statement that he would like to convene a community wide forum to see what the community really wanted for educational offerings.

The focus of following discussion continued to center on the focus of adding something concrete to the guidelines such as an allowable percent of increase. The discussion also continued to come back to the need to control per pupil costs. Wayne brought in the concept of cost of living.

Results, Wayne will e-mail suggested revised guidelines. We as a committee will immediately respond to Athos with our agreement or thoughts on change.

The committee also suggested that we send Mado an expression of our thanks for all of her service over her terms of service. It was unanimous in agreement that the chair do so as quickly as possible.

The committee also elected chairman and vice chair after discussion that those positions remain for at least a couple years to sustain continuity. Irv nominated the current slate of Athos as Chair and Cheryl as Vice Chair. The motion was seconded by Deb and Henry suggested that one vote be cast in support of that motion. Seconded by Karen and voted unanimously.

John Aubin also handed out additional documents:  
Budget Guidelines for Hanover and Norwich  
Budget Calendar  
Per Pupil Cost Data