Concord School District Joint City Council/School Board Committee

School Board Committee: Joint City Council/School Board

Date: February 15, 2013

Committee members present: Barbara Higgins, Chair, Nick Metalious, Oliver Spencer,

Tom Croteau

Other Board members present: Kass Ardinger, Tara Reardon

City representatives present: Mayor Jim Bouley, Tom Aspell, Brian Lebrun,

Councilors Dan St. Hilaire, Allen Bennett, Fred Keach

Administrators: Chris Rath, Jack Dunn

Committee Chairperson Barbara Higgins called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m. The purpose of the meeting was for the School Board to review its budget proposal for FY2014.

Business Administrator Jack Dunn reviewed the major areas of expenditure, noting the percent of the budget each of the categories represents. Salaries and benefits for the school district represent 77% of the budget. City officials noted that, in general, their salaries and benefits for the city as a whole represent a smaller percentage, although for police and fire, salaries and benefits represent closer to 90% of their budgets.

Mr. Dunn reviewed the recent history of settlement agreements with three of the district's bargaining units – teachers, teaching assistants and administrative assistants – and noted that the district will be negotiating with five units this spring.

There was a brief discussion of outsourcing services. Currently the city outsources solid waste management. The school district indicated that it is not looking to outsource transportation at this time, so the arrangement for the COMF will remain as is.

Mr. Dunn noted that the district is projecting health insurance savings next year as a result of the negotiated settlements. The savings of almost \$400,000 is projected to offset the significant increase in employer retirement contributions of \$914,000 in the general fund. The total impact of the retirement increase is approximately \$975,000; some of those costs will be paid through grant programs. The committee also saw the history of rates for medical insurance.

Mr. Dunn reviewed the debt schedule, noting that the district administration is proposing that the School Board use bond premium funds from the elementary schools consolidation project to offset the increase in debt this year. Mr. Dunn noted that the high school bond should be paid off in 2018. Tom Aspell noted that to be eligible for

impact fees, the school district needs to demonstrate that the bonds being offset by impact fees are related to increased capacity in the school district.

Mr. Dunn reviewed the major sources of revenue. There was a brief discussion of the Governor's budget proposal and its implications for education, as well as a brief discussion of the potential impact of sequestration at the federal level.

Finally, the members of the committee discussed the recent snow storm and the challenges involved in getting sidewalks plowed. The city is committed to plowing the safe routes to school areas; the school district will remind children and families of the routes to use.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Higgins, *Chair* Chris Rath, *Recorder*