

Tri-board Meeting

Minutes of April 22, 2010

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chairman Vispoli called the Triboard meeting to order for 7:03 P.M. Present from the Board of Selectmen: Chairman Vispoli-Y, Selectman Lyman-Y, Selectman Major-Y, and Selectman Stabile-Y. Also present: Town Manager Buzz Stapczynski, Assistant Town Manager Steve Bucuzzo, and Finance Director Anthony J. Torrisi.

School Committee Chair Dennis Forgue reconvened the School Committee from Regular Session to the Triboard Meeting at 7:04 P.M. Present from the School Committee: Chairman Forgue-Y, Annie Gilbert-Y, David Birnbach-Y, Richard Collins-Y, and Paula Colby-Clements-Y. Also present: Superintendent Dr. Claudia Bach, and Interim Business Manager Bernie Tuttle.

Finance Committee Chair Joanne Marden opened the meeting for the Finance Committee with members Richard Howe, Cynthia Milne, Jon Stumpf, Peggy Kruse, Mary O'Donoghue, Paul Fortier, and Steve Stapinski in attendance.

II. School Department FY-2011 Budget

Chairman Forgue informed the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee that the School Committee unanimously voted a new school budget number of \$61,888,421. They arrived at this decision after discussing concerns and vetting through various options.

Steps taken to realize the number decided upon include eliminating seven positions at AHS by raising class size to 35 students in most areas. They understand this will create a hardship and cause a strain at the high school as the classrooms are not very large, but this solution comes without any involvement of the AEA. In addition, elementary class size will be increased to the School Committee Policy mid-point level allowing for a reduction in of five elementary FTE's.

The 5% tuition increase for out-of-district tuition will be removed from the budget with the understanding by all three Boards that if the 5% increase becomes a reality the necessary dollars will be covered. Special Ed out of district costs will be tracked monthly and followed closely.

The School Committee also suggested reducing one high school guidance counselor but will look elsewhere within the budget for these monies rather than reduce another position.

The agreement for the coverage of out-of-district Special Education tuition (should the 5% be realized) will be put in writing and signed off on by all three Boards before Town Meeting.

Chairman Vispoli thanked the School Committee for making these difficult decisions, and for their collaboration with the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee in closing the budget gap.

Chairman Forgue stated that should there be any movement by the AEA to step up and offer a solution, changes, or options that would have less of a negative impact on students and staff; the School Committee would be willing to meet with them.

Selectman Major said the real benefit is going to Town Meeting with a balanced budget. Both sides have to be extremely careful to look for internal transfers. It is important that we hold back on offering cash reserves to cover expenses as much as possible.

Finance Chair Joanne Marden said a lot of work has gone into balancing the budget. She recognized Bernie Tuttle and Tony Torrisi who have worked collaboratively on the numbers, as well as the members of Team 470 and the sub-committee of the Triboard. The work done so far balances everything out and the Finance Committee has approved the decisions in concept.

Selectman Stabile motioned to recommend approval of the School Department Budget for FY-2011 in the proposed amount of \$61,888,421. The motion was seconded by Selectman Lyman, voted 4-0 to approve.

Joanne Marden said the Finance Committee agrees to the transfer of \$196,000 from unemployment from General Government to the School Department, a reduction in the CIP in the amount of \$300,000 from the General Fund to the School Department, with the remainder of revenue coming from a multitude of small changes to reach the desired budget number.

Richard Howe motioned to recommend approval for Town Meeting the appropriation to the School Committee in the amount of \$61,888,421. The motion was seconded by Mary O'Donoghue and unanimously approved.

IV. Adjournment

On a motion by School Committee member Annie Gilbert with a second by Paula Colby-Clements it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

On a motion by Finance Committee member Steve Stapinski with a second by Jon Stumpf it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

The Selectman Major moved into Regular Session.

The Triboard meeting adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo
Recorder