

## **NEWINGTON BUDGET COMMITTEE**

### **MEETING MINUTES FEBRUARY 5, 2003**

Present: Budget Committee Members (BUDCOM)  
Alfred Smith (Chairman), Dennis Acton, Kay Akerley, Leslie Brock, Laura Coleman, Gail Pare, Terri Spinney, Richard Spinney, Wil Gilbert .  
Board of Selectmen Representative, Janice Stuart

Not Present: Budget Committee Member, Richard Sullivan

The Budget Committee Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to review the budget of the Newington School District.

Laura Coleman made a motion to accept the minutes of the meeting held on January 29, 2003; seconded by Jan Stuart. Chairman Smith requested that wording be added to the last page of the minutes: "Due to their position on the Board of Fire Engineers" should be added after "Those Abstained-Leslie Brock, Richard Sullivan". The motion was amended to include the additional wording. Motion carried with none opposed.

### **NEWINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Gail Pare made a motion to accept the Newington School District budget in the amount of \$1,528,449; motion seconded by Wil Gilbert.

Laura Coleman noted that one full time teacher has been decreased. She asked if the fifth grade teacher would be put in another position. Terri Spinney, representing the School District said that if she was kept on, it would not be in a teaching position.

Chairman Smith asked if Foreign Language was a new department. Terri Spinney indicated that it was. She explained that the children leaving Newington Elementary for Portsmouth Middle School were at a disadvantage because the Middle School has a Foreign Language Program. This program will be offered to sixth graders. Kay Akerley asked what foreign language would be taught. Terri Spinney stated that the school has not decided yet however, it could be either Spanish or French. The language instructor will be a teacher from the Portsmouth Middle School and will be paid a stipend of \$3,500, which is included in salaries.

Kay Akerley asked about the cost of providing a full time aide to a Special Needs, High School child. Terri Spinney pointed out that the cost is relatively low in comparison to providing the child with institutional schooling. Dennis Acton asked if some of the cost should be the responsibility of Health and Human Services. Chairman Smith stated that several years ago the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that it is the schools responsibility to provide anything the child requires to be a part of the system.

Chairman Smith asked if the preschool section is part of Special Education. Terri Spinney confirmed it was. The RSA indicates that the School is responsible for the child's needs from the age of three to twenty one or until they earn a High School diploma or until they are deemed to be unable to educate.

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Kay Akerley asked which grades use the Guidance Counselor. Terri Spinney stated that all grades have access to the Guidance Counselor. The Guidance Counselor is the person that makes sure everyone is getting all the educational services they are entitled to.

Kay Akerley asked what the NEASC membership, of \$900 was. James Katkin, School District Business Administrator explained that the National Education Association of Schools and Colleges is a part of the educational accreditation process. It is an organization that set educational standards. NEASC will come into the school and do an evaluation and make recommendations for improvement. Terri Spinney stated that it is important because it is a check and balance system done by an outside consultant.

Leslie Brock asked about the Library/Media Consultant. Terri Spinney explained that it was required for State accreditation. Gail Pare, Library Trustee and budget committee member stated that Becky Marks the Town Librarian is very excited to be able to work with the Library/Media Consultant in developing the children's library program.

Kay Akerley asked why the Computer Hardware and Software Support line increased from \$500 to \$6,500. Terri Spinney explained that because there has been a shortage of computers in the class rooms for hands on instructions, the School will be purchasing a Wireless Computer system with a cart. This system will allow the Wireless to be moved from class room to class room. The school also has a Grant to pay for the bulk of the Wireless system. Kay Akerley asked Wil Gilbert, budget committee member if he thought that this system was a good idea. Wil stated that it was a great idea and recommend to Terri Spinney that the School looks into the **802.11g** system for further range and greater speed.

Kay Akerley asked what the School receives for the membership dues in NHSBA. James Katkin stated that the New Hampshire School Board Association provides School Policies and Worker's Compensation.

Chairman Smith asked if there is any Step or Merit Program built into the principal's salary, so that the position does not become stagnant. James Katkin explained that the principal's salary is addressed separately however; increases to this salary usually parallel what the teachers get.

Dennis Acton asked if the custodian was a full time employee with benefits or is the position given to a contractor. Terri Spinney said that the custodian is an employee that receives benefits at 80%. This position does not require summer hours.

Chairman Smith asked what the long term plans for playground improvements are. Terri Spinney explained that there are provisions under Capital Improvements for the playground. Also, the School has been meeting regularly with the School Supporters, about making the playground their next big project. Currently all playground equipment is safe for the children to use.

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Terri Spinney pointed out that the teachers are now paying 20% contributions toward the health insurance. This is the third year of their contract.

Chairman Smith noted that the Long Term Debt for the addition on the school is now paid off, which dropped the operating budget down by about \$100,000.

Chairman Smith asked about pupil transportation. Is the Special Education Transportation because of the type of vehicle or because of the time of transportation? James Katkin stated it was because of both reasons.

Chairman Smith called for a vote to accept the School District Budget in the amount of \$1,528,449. Motion carried; none opposed.

### **WARRANT ARTICLE**

A Warrant Article for School Property Maintenance was presented to the Budget Committee. This Warrant Article is to raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,000, to be added to an existing non capital reserve fund. In the summer of 2003 the funds from this account will be used to replace the septic system at the School.

Wil Gilbert made a motion to accept the Warrant Article in the amount of \$30,000 for School Property Maintenance; seconded by Gail Pare.

Chairman Smith called for a vote. Motion passed, none opposed.

Kay Akerley made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Terri Spinney.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Gillespie  
Administrative Assistant