

NEW SHOREHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Block Island School

January 19, 2010

7:00 P.M.

The New Shoreham School Committee met in open session on Tuesday, January 19, 2010, in the media center of the Block Island School. Chair William Padien called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. The following members were present: Shea Butcher, Annie Hall, Sean McGarry, William Padien, and Richard Tretheway. Robert Hicks was also present.

Awarding of Bids

Bids were received for propane gas, school bus, and mowing. Mr. Hicks recommended that the School Committee award the bids for propane gas and mowing, but to table the school bus bid until a discussion can be held with the vendor. A motion (Padien, Hall) to award the propane gas bid to Hull Suburban Propane at the fixed price of \$3.00 per gallon pending any unforeseen shortages that would dictate a price spike statewide, award the mowing bid to Greenscape Mowing Service at \$250 per mowing, and table the school bus bid carried with a vote of 5-0.

2010-2011 Budget Work Session

Mr. Hicks highlighted some of the expenditure information used to

develop the budget. The current teachers' contract expires in August and a new contract is currently being negotiated. He included a two and a quarter percent increase in teacher salaries and a three percent increase in wages for those covered by the town contract. Health benefits were increased by five percent.

Mr. Hicks reported that utilities were budgeted following a trending analysis of recent years. The electricity budget is slightly lower because of the drop in the fuel surcharge from last year, but prices are starting to slowly increase.

Mr. Hicks increased the instructional materials and texts by three percent and allocated them on a per pupil basis using next year's proposed enrollment. The budget for grades K-7 was done for teachers and by subject matter for grade 8-12. Budgets for specials (art, library, etc.) were maintained. When the budget is approved the principals will work with faculty to allocate the money. Funds for curriculum and professional development are included through a combination of local and federal funds. Professional development funds were cut with the loss of state aide. In the proposed budget \$14,300 was included for professional and curriculum development and travel. Of this amount \$11,000 has been budgeted for the teachers.

Mr. Hicks used the configuration approved by the committee last month to budget for the administration, which includes

transportation, summer stays at the 1661 Inn, and a 10-month house rental for the superintendent, principals, special education director, and guidance counselor.

Mr. Hicks thanked the technology committee for its help in developing the technology budget, which includes updating the operating software on our Mac network and replacing the obsolete, undersized administrative server. The Mac operating software is two generations old and \$6000 has been included to upgrade all the Mac computers. The new administrative server will allow the First Class program to be used for the school web site. The technology budget also includes \$1500 for professional development and \$20,000 for equipment replacement, which is an increase of \$4000.

Mr. Hicks has budgeted for a one day per week psychologist to expand support and consultation, expand our mental health team, and bring most evaluations in-house. Having a one day per week psychologist would save approximately \$3000 per year. The ASD specialist (\$10,000), ESY services (\$35,000), and the reading system (\$10,000) were placed in federal funds.

An increase in the social worker from three to four days per week has been requested, which will expand the capacity of the school's mental health team. Mr. Hicks suggested using the ARRA funds for the social worker's additional day and moving the commensurate sum supporting ESY into the local budget.

The Athletic Director has proposed adding two sports (sailing and cross country), which would cost an additional \$9,368 to cover transportation, coaches, officials, and fees. Athletic Director Rob Closter stated that sailing would require a minimum of four participants, while cross country needs only one. Neither sailing nor cross country would affect the participation of our already established programs.

Mr. Hicks included \$40,000 for the facility and \$11,000 for grounds maintenance. In addition, he included \$5,000 to upgrade the security system. He stated that until the boiler issue is resolved, it is not clear which projects can be completed with this year's capital funds. His highest priorities are the boiler and the drainage problem on the Payne Road side of the building.

Federal funds include \$45,958 for CRP allocations and \$59,316 in ARRA allocations. It is anticipated that \$20,000 will be received from REAP to support technology.

The proposed general operating budget for 2010-11 has increased by \$32,931 or by 0.74 percent. The increase for local appropriations is \$113,298 or a 2.68 percent increase. Most of the budget has been level funded. Most increases are for wages, benefits, etc., but approximately half of it is revenue loss from federal funds, which have been taken out of the budget. The amount for new programs

(increase of one day for social worker and the addition of two sports teams) is \$24,000.

A request was received from William Young to include \$3000 for the Close-Up Program. Funds were removed from the current budget because no seniors were interested in attending this year. This program has typically been funded by the students/parents, School Committee, Block Island School Friends, and fund raising. Most committee members were in favor of putting these funds back in the budget.

Kristine Monje requested that the School Committee consider including funds in the budget for enrichment programs, including mainland experiences, for students who do not participate in athletic programs. Mr. Hicks stated that he would be happy to poll the students to see what activities would interest them. Committee members were in favor of including funds for these types of programs.

Mr. Hicks increased the amount for the annual audit to \$10,000 because this will be the first audit under the Uniform Chart of Accounts. It is anticipated that the cost will go up because the scope of the audit has increased.

Mr. Hicks included a line item for snow removal because the town clears the driveway and parking lot, but we the school is responsible

for clearing all means of egress. This year a bulldozer and a plow were used to remove the drifted snow. It was suggested that this line item could be lower because this kind of snow storm hits about once every ten years. Mr. Hicks cautioned the committee that if another storm were to hit the money would have to be found in the budget to remove the snow and the proposed budget does not have much flexibility.

School Committee members requested that, if possible, any additions or changes to the budget should be kept within the bottom line as presented this evening.

Executive Session

A motion (Hall, Padien) at 9:34 p.m. to go into executive session pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws 42-46-4, 5(a)(1) for a discussion of job performance and (2) contract negotiations carried with a vote of 5-0.

Open Session

A motion (Padien, Hall) at 10:13 p.m. to return to open session carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to seal the executive session minutes carried with a vote of 5-0.

Adjournment

A motion (Padien, Hall) at 10:14 p.m. to adjourn carried with a vote of 5-0.

Marsha L. Gutierrez, Clerk

Date approved: February 8, 2010