

Meeting Minutes

Joint Little Compton Town Council - Little Compton School Committee Meeting

January 22, 2015

- **Town Council Attendees: Paul Golembeski, Ted Bodington, Bob Mushen, Charles Appleton and Town Clerk Carol Wordell**
- **School Committee & Administrators: Kathy Crowley, John McNamee, Polly Allen, Lori Craffey, Patrick McHugh, Peg Bugara, Tom Allder**

Meeting began at 6:30 p.m. when LC Town Council President Bob Mushen called the meeting to order.

Bob Mushen said that the state law requires the school committee and town council meet. The council presents its projected revenues for the next three years and the school committee presents its anticipated budget for next three years.

He added for the revenue forecast the town has looked ahead to FY 2016 and two more years, the budget for this year, and the budget received in the preceding year. We looked ahead three years. Important thing. These revenues are not simply numbers on a page, it's money that has been given to us either through revenue from tax money, fees from the town, or money given to us by others (federal and state).

Mr. Mushen referred to the 3 Year Forecast (FY 2016 - FY 2018) handout. (Please see attached document).

Property taxes -- what town expects to collect in 2015 is \$10,878, 998. Historically we have gotten 98%. We also get money from previous

years. It's not precise, but that's pretty close.

Let's look back and see what's happened with tax revenues. We have had a 1 or 2 percent increase over the past few years. That really is the outcome of the budget deliberations. What we're anticipating for FY 2016 is a little over \$11,000,000.

We budgeted for \$410,000 in fees and administrative revenues for this year. Last year we brought in \$354,000. The recovery doesn't come here as fast as elsewhere. It's going to increase 1 percent a year.

We're not certain that building permits are going to follow trends.

Town beach fees will be level. The town beach has always brought in more revenue than the town beach has asked for in funding.

The miscellaneous income (dividends, etc.) is level.

We had a single appropriation of \$62,500 from the general fund. We don't anticipate doing that again.

Outside of that, we have federal aid, which is Medicaid.

For school construction aid we have a sense of how much we'll get down to the dollar. Through 2017, we will get \$30,000 from the waste water bond. Primarily the new school bond, produce revenues in the way of state aid.

The formula for distribution of education for state aid - we think this is the trend of the projected formula from state.

Motor vehicle excise tax reimbursement from the state - level. We've taken the position, we're going to hold the line steady on that.

Municipal incentive at \$16,000 that was a proposal that was passed with the current budget. Not sure how it's going to be with 2016. The state in the past has said let's reward towns that do their pensions in

a manner that is fiscally responsible. We've got that this year, don't know if we'll get it in the future.

We receive aid from everyone's telephone bill in the form of a tax from the state that is given back to the town.

Seven or 8 percent tax of restaurant and lodging bills is fed back to us.

The revenues over the year \$12,486,000 - this excludes the revenue from the drug forfeiture fund. The drug forfeiture fund is slowly dwindling. It offsets police costs. Ambulance reimbursement fund (charging people not citizens of this town) for ambulance services. Those services are a source of income. That's not included in this revenue figure.

That's where we are for figures. How accurate are these? Usually when we look back, some we hit pretty well, some we're off a little bit. The other purpose of our meeting is to understand the numbers. This is done in January or it could be done in December. What does the school expect to spend this year? You may not be ready to say this is our budget, but if we can get an idea of what the school expects to present as its budget request, this would be helpful.

Polly Allen said Budget Director Mr. McNamee will present for us.

Mr. McNamee: The school department has to present its enrollment for FY 2016 and provide a preliminary indication of our expenditures for FY 2016. We have also included a list of requested expenditures from the town. We've had budget workshops the past two evenings - very preliminary, this budget has not been voted on by the school committee.

Our enrollment K-8 for 2016 K-8 is 253 and for PHS 121. Our projection for K-8. (See handout from Mr. McNamee. He concentrated on incoming K size classes for the next few years and the outgoing 8th grade class sizes for the same time period). These numbers are a good guess.

The State Aid we had for 2016, year six of the formula and 2017, year seven of the formula, we will level off. That formula started in 2010. We're looking at an increase of \$24 over last year. It will change a little bit depending on enrollment, it's also based on property values, median income, we're not going to see any fluctuations in state aid. This is subject to legislative approval. The \$401,954 is what we're looking at for state aid for 2016.

Bob Mushen: Is there a motion underway to change the way we do the state education funding formula?

McNamee: No, we're not seeing that. Our case, what we get is much lower than most districts.

The total expenditures of \$6,990,224 for 2016, that's a 3.7 percent increase. We know we can't exceed the 4 percent cap.

Any questions?

Bob Mushen - Thank you very much!

Any questions?

We are very grateful for you sitting with us and going through this. We will be speaking with departments of the town. We will be next Thursday looking at the school budget more closely. This will be helpful to us to understand for the budget process.

Motion to recess until 7 p.m. Meeting ended at 6:52 p.m.

Polly Allen made motion to adjourn school committee meeting at 6:53 p.m. It was seconded by Tom Alder. Motion was approved 4-0 with Allen, Alder, Bugara and Craffey voting. McHugh had left the meeting earlier.