

Lincoln Budget Board

Minutes of October 16, 2008

Members present:

Ken Booth; Carl Brunetti; Sheila Chisholm; Robert Ericson; Cheryl Ethier; Hagop S. Jawharjian; Claudette Lussier; Linda Noble; Joe Renning

Members absent:

Roberta Gosselin; Gregory Leonard

Also in attendance was Mary Varr and Tim McMahon.

The meeting was called to order at 7:40PM by Chairman, Ken Booth.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The minutes of the September 18, 2008 meeting were reviewed. Carl Brunetti made a motion to approve the minutes; Seconded by Linda Noble. It was noted that Joe Renning's name is "Joe" and not Joseph. The minutes were corrected to reflect this. Noting no additional corrections, the motion passed.

Chairman Booth distributed copies of e-mail correspondences between himself and Superintendent Georgia Fortunato relating to the School Committee's adopted capital budget.

Chairman Booth reported that he made informal requests to both the municipal and school departments rather than the formal request for information under the Open Meetings Act. He anticipates that he will receive the information some time next week, which he will then forward to members electronically.

Cheryl Ethier asked if we could request the data in the EXCEL format?

Financial Town Meeting Issues

Town Moderator, Robert Ericson, reminded members that he continues to compile the suggestions and recommendations to improve the Financial Town Meeting. He will submit his report for discussion and consideration after the November election.

School Committee Adopted Capital Budget Update

Linda Noble asked Chairman Booth to request a legal opinion from the Town Solicitor regarding the School Committee's manipulation of the capital items specified in the resolutions as approved by the voters at the Financial Town Meeting? She questioned the purpose of listing the specific items, if the School Committee has the ultimate authority to ignore the list and reallocate the funds to other projects at their discretion?

Chairman Booth will contact the Town Solicitor and he will also look into how restrictive, or non-restrictive, the ordinance language was structured by the Town Council.

Joe Renning questioned why the Budget Board bothers to scrutinize any budget requests? Voters at the FTM approved specific projects, yet the School Committee has unilaterally redefined those projects?

Linda Noble questioned whether or not the feasibility study has been completed? Bob Ericson commented that the architectural firm (Ai3) for the new Middle School construction had already provided a feasibility study as part of their services.

Mary Varr, School Committee Member, was asked how the School Committee had incorporated the additional \$517,000? She replied that those dollars have been set aside as a reserve. The dollars have not

been allocated for anything specific.

Chairman Booth will request a meeting with the Town Council, School Committee and Town Administration to discuss the allocation of those additional dollars.

Chairman Booth also asked Mary Varr whether or not the School Committee had calculated the impact of the contractual agreements? She said that those numbers were presented to them.

He also asked whether or not the contracts would be available on the School Department website? He will also request that the Municipal contracts be posted on the Town's website.

Bob Ericson asked for the School Committee's rationale for awarding a 6% raise to the Superintendent when all other staff members received less? Mary Varr stated that there was plenty of discussion before they reached an agreement. Questions/Requests for Information from Municipal and School Departments

Chairman Booth will forward a list requesting the following information from the Municipal and/or School:

1. An advisory opinion from the Town Solicitor regarding the school capital resolutions and advice on how to rephrase it, if necessary, to express the original intent, which was to list specific projects. If there were additional dollars at the completion of all projects, those dollars could then be designated to complete other capital projects.

2. Update on the Feasibility Study of the old Middle School.

3. Rationale for the reallocation of the Technology money for other uses.

- 4. When and how will the Town Council address the \$517,000 in additional funds voted on the floor of the FTM.**
- 5. Funding of the dam repair projects.**
- 6. 5-year summary and budget as adopted by the School Committee on 7/1/08.**
- 7. Complete listing of all School and Municipal Personnel including purchased services contractors, benefits and any additional compensation. (see memo from Ken Booth to Georgia Fortunato dated 10/14/2008)**
- 8. Certified payroll for the last pay period in September 2008.**
- 9. Budget vs. Actual for year ending 6/30/08.**

Task Assignments

As soon as information is received, duties will be assigned.

Other

Mary Varr was asked whether or not damages to the old Middle School are covered by our insurer? She said that The Trust has assured the School Department that all expenses are covered 100%.

Claudette Lussier asked whether or not the minutes from the ratification meeting (5/15/2008) were available? She will notify Candice Larson to forward them to all members in advance of the next meeting.

Public Comment

Tim McMahon, candidate for Town Council, expressed his interest in hearing the Budget Board's perspective on the FTM? Chairman Booth remarked that the FTM is unique in that during the meeting, the town's business is actually conducted in the open, rather than behind

closed doors.

Joe Renning made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:10PM;

Seconded by Bob Ericson. Motion passed.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 13, 2008.

cjl