

OFFICIAL

March 9, 2009

**LINCOLN SCHOOL COMMITTEE
LINCOLN, RHODE ISLAND
MINUTES**

DATE: February 2, 2009

**PLACE: Lincoln Administration Building
1624 Lonsdale Avenue
Lincoln, RI 02865**

6:00 p.m. Open Meeting

School Committee Members Present: Betty Robson, Chair; Kristine Donabedian, Vice Chair; Mary Varr, Clerk; Richard Battistoni, Tracey Cavanaugh, Mary Anne Roll, Julie Zito

Others Present: Georgia Fortunato, Superintendent; Eric Banville, Linda Cliff, Margaret Knowlton, Monique Latessa, Bruce Macksoud, Jeanine Magliocco, Kevin McNamara, Angelo Mencucci, Lori Miller, William Skitt, Melinda Smith, Maryann Struble, Joyce Ruppell;

I. Consideration and Vote on Approval for Proposed Budget 2009 – 2010

Mary Varr reported the budget subcommittee met and has proposed a freeze on administrative salaries for the next year, cutting capital back to represent the 30% reimbursement, utilities be level funded, tuition be level funded. Other areas they had questions on were some of the line items for resources, self contained, health services, library and operation of plant. Donabedian noted they also recommended that all items frozen be reduced by the frozen amounts. The Chair commented on the fact that Superintendent Fortunato has been involved in many budget cycles and her recommendations are very important. Superintendent Fortunato stated they reviewed the recommendations. She noted they have been fiscally responsible and believes they have met all students' needs.

Option 1 would result in a reduction of \$241,109. The Chair explained the charge was to come up with reductions that did not impact programs currently in place. Fortunato noted field trips are a minimal amount from the high school and middle school. Field trips that are essential will be encouraged to extend the classroom environment. She reported they are partnering with the Hearthside for historical trips that give students background and pride in their community. First Student will provide six field trips per school free of charge. She noted parent groups have been very generous in helping with field

trips, such as the philharmonic and ballet. Roll commented that in the past field trips had been 50/50 and expressed concern for what the message is to the parent groups and with possible inequities. The Superintendent clarified the reform facilitator position is a PBGR 1.0 position to work on exhibition and portfolio. Lori Miller explained that she budgeted 10% for special education. Miller noted that \$517,000 will go into the fund balance next year. The Superintendent reported she has been working with HR and looking to reduce advertising; Eric Banville has contacted other communities and is using on-line advertising.

Option 2 would result in a savings of \$401,384. Curriculum textbooks would be a reduction of \$40,000, high school staffing would result in \$52,000, the two high school secretaries and the two middle school secretaries would be reduced from the budget, special ed and the Charter Schools would be \$169,000. Roll suggested reducing secretaries by three and using one as a floater. Robson expressed concern for the curriculum texts. Melinda Smith reported they are in curriculum revision in social studies and need to purchase middle school texts and need to purchase texts to support the elementary level. They don't know what resources will be needed in health. They have looked at CD's but there is still a cost associated with that or even on line. Roll stated they need to find a way to provide texts. Zito commented on the requirement to provide texts to private schools and the inequity of asking their own students to share text books. Superintendent Fortunato continued with reductions on

curriculum development stipends which would be for summer help, conferences, elementary textbooks, work books, library books, general supplies and after school supplies. The total would be \$136,700. Miller explained there was approximately \$20,000 over the summer.

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Option 4 would level fund utilities. The Superintendent thought that would be dangerous; gas is creeping up again and it is too early in the budget season to level fund. She felt the energy consultant has been accurate. Miller noted the high school opens at six a.m. and closes in the evening and at two in the summer. She would prefer cutting somewhere else. Varr stated they looked at some of the line items with utilities where the budgeted amount wasn't spent and that was why they recommended it. Angelo Mencucci explained the field lighting is on a town meter, but exterior lights on buildings and parking lots are on the school side.

Superintendent Fortunato stated the final option would be eliminating raises for administration for 2009-2010 for a savings of \$51,441. Battistoni thought part of the reason for asking for reductions was to add capital to the budget. Miller noted capital wasn't in the budget because the budget board didn't include it last year and they are following that.

Lori Miller explained they started with the 08-09 adopted budget of 48.3 million dollars. The Superintendent submitted a budget increase of 1.43 million dollars. The budget drops to \$49,498,000 which is reflective of Option 1 cuts. The budget of 49.1 million dollars includes the capital of \$399,000 which is net of the 30%. She noted some things, such as the trucks aren't reimbursable, but she used the 30% so that would need adjusting. The \$399,000, plus \$401,384 equals \$796,000, which is an increase of 2.48, with capital. Miller also reported the \$187,000 from the Collaborative was added to the capital reserve, \$150,000 was sent to the town in June and \$145,000 in reimbursables added for a total of \$582,000. The capital could be funded with all the contributions. As of July 1st there will be a cumulative \$517,000 surplus and again they could fund capital with the surplus. That is exclusive of the \$200,000 that that will be put in at the end of this year. Roll commented on the stimulus being construction for one year and special education for two years. She stated she was struggling with making decisions tonight with incomplete information about their revenue and they need to recommend a budget that meets the requirements and allow the process to continue. Robson stated they may be looking at redistricting or closing a school. Zito asked if they should ask the administrator for an extension. Varr stated she stood with the recommendation from the subcommittee; what they proposed was spread out so that it was shared. She stated they didn't get to the \$800,000. Batistoni noted they looked at redistricting but they didn't

think it was the time to talk about it. It was a recommendation for a bottom line.

The Superintendent stated Option 1 was her choice with a reduction of \$241,109 without capital.

Motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation including Option 1 for \$49,498,195 by Roll. Seconded by Zito. Voted 4-3 with Zito, Roll, Cavanaugh, Robson voting AYE; Battistoni, Donabedian, Varr voting NAY on a roll call vote. Motion carried. Varr noted she was not comfortable with the capital not being in the budget. Town Administrator Almond commented he has been working with the Superintendent Fortunato and Lori Miller and reviewed his figures.

II. Adjourn Meeting

Motion to adjourn at 7:07 by Zito. Seconded by Roll. All in favor. Motion carried.

MARY VARR, CLERK

DATE