

**Town of Sudbury ~ Finance Committee
Minutes of Meetings
Thursday, October 30, 2003
Fairbanks Senior Center - 7:30pm**

Present: Co-Chairs Tracy Billig & Bob Jacobson, Larry Rowe, Sheila Stewart, Bill Kneeland, John Nikula, Michael Grosberg, and Shauna Simmonds. Also present: Robin Porcella, Recording Secretary & Maureen Valente, Town Manager

Opening remarks from Co-chairs:

The meeting was opened at 7:40pm

Item 1: Approve Minutes

Bob Jacobson requested that the spelling of his last name be corrected through out the May 26 meeting minutes.

Bob Jacobson requested that the reason for the cancellation of the Oct. 22 meeting be corrected. The meeting was not cancelled due to lack of a quorum.

VOTED: On motion, to approve the minutes from the May 26 & October 22, 2003 minutes with the understanding that the above changes are made. Motion made by Larry Rowe and seconded by Michael Grosberg. On motion, vote carries 8 in favor and 0 opposed.

Item 2: Review and Finalize FY05 Budget Hearing Schedule

Bob Jacobson informed the committee members that all the hearings would be held at 7:30pm in the lower town hall. The deliberations and final votes will be held at the Fairbanks Senior Center.

The meeting scheduled on January 6th with the LSRHS School District will need to be rescheduled since the Board of Selectmen are using the Town Hall. LSRHS is required to hold a public hearing.

It was requested that the local cable company be notified in order to get the hearings broadcasted.

Item 3: Discussion of Chapter 70 meeting and handout

This discussion was postponed until the November meeting.

Item 4: Update on teachers' contract comparison project

Shauna Simmonds informed the committee that they have received all contracts and salary grids that they had requested from the different schools. The analysis consists of 11 surrounding schools + the Sudbury schools. She informed the committee that she will present them with a handout at next months meetings.

She informed the committee that the group did attempt to look at extra pay teachers might receive, but it got to difficult. They are looking at the cost spent on per student. Bob Jacobson suggested that the group stay away from stating exact figures spent.

Maureen Valente suggested that the group request a copy of the Schedule 19 that is filed by Mary Will and Pauline Paste. This report is filed annually by the school departments. Without this document, she stated it would be like trying to compare apples to oranges.

Some points made in regards to the analysis: LSRHS & SPS have 17 steps in their salary grid whereas most schools have 10 to 12. Most teachers at SPS are either new or have worked in the systems for years. The salary grid for SPS starts at lower than most schools at the start, but are almost average when the teacher maxes out.

Item 5: Update on PTERC activities

John Nikula stated that at Monday nights meeting, was the first time that all 23 members of PTERC attended the same meeting.

He stated that a gentleman at Monday nights meeting brought up a good point. The gentleman suggested that the PTERC Committee was not following the charter, because the committee is suppose to be coming up with new ways as to how to reduce taxes for the citizens of Sudbury.

John stated that re-evaluations are coming up this year. He said older houses would be more affected than the newer houses. Tax bills should expect to go up.

Bob Jacobson asked in John's opinion if the PTERC Committee would have any action that they will need to present to the FinCom. John stated he did not believe so.

Item 6: Update from liaisons

Michael Grosberg - nothing new to report

Larry Rowe - SPS met on October 10th. It was a productive meeting. They are on board as to what the FinCom is working on.

Bill Kneeland - LSRHS school committee met on October 12.

Bob Jacobson - the new high school is on schedule and under budget. It should be completed on time.

Item 7: Review of FY03 actuals to budget

Larry Rowe asked what lines the pension and insurance costs show in. Maureen Valente informed him that for the Town they are it's own cost center and that LSRHS can use it for something else, since they have a bottom line budget.

The committee asked if there were figures in regards to what happen this year within the school department in regards to FTES and the budget that was approved. Where as there as many cuts as expected, and how many FTEs were actually cut to what was expected.

Tracy Billig asked that the committee members talk to their neighbors and friends to find out how they see & feel the budget cuts are effecting the schools and services.

Other business:

Bob Jacobson informed that committee that the Financial Summit was going to be held next Thursday at Town Hall. He plans on making the following points on behalf of the FinCom: Highly improbable to obtain an override budget without cuts to cost centers. Will be stressing "civil" for the budget hearings; there will be disagreements but everyone needs to work together. There should be creditability in the budgets with explanations of service cuts. Michael Grosberg suggested that the civil manner discussion be explained at the budget hearings. Larry Rowe suggested using another word besides creditability. He thought it sounded a bit insulting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30pm