

**Town of Sudbury
FY13 Budget Hearings Schedule
Finance Committee Deliberations
Minutes of Meeting
Tuesday, February 28, 2012
7:30 p.m.**

The Town of Sudbury's Finance Committee Deliberations Meeting, held in the Flynn Building, was called to order at 7:33 p.m. by Chairman James Rao. Present for this meeting were Joan Carlton, Jamie Gossels, Bill Kneeland, Doug Kohen, Mark Minassian, Jim Rao, Robert Stein and Chuck Woodard. Bob Jacobson arrived at 7:38 p.m.

The first item on the agenda was the Sudbury Public Schools' School Committee request for FinCom to authorize a transfer of \$43,087 from the SPS Employee Benefits Reserve line to the SPS operating budget. (Amount to be deposited into the SPED Out-of-District Line Account #22596322-900000). This amount will be used to fund increased FY12 out-of-district tuition costs. Maureen Valente asked that FinCom wait until Wednesday night (2-29-12) for confirmation from Maryanne Bilodeau. Maryanne returned later to inform the committee that there were no outstanding issues for the SPS Employees Benefits Reserve and the FinCom could vote on this transfer request tonight.

VOTED: Motion was made by Bill to approve the aforementioned transfer of \$43,087, seconded by Jamie. On vote, motion was carried to approve (eight in support and zero opposed).

Also requested from the SPS's School Committee was the Finance Committee and the Selectmen authorize an increase in the FY12 limit of the Bus Revolving Fund from \$400,000 to \$450,000. This increase will be used to pay more of the transportation contract price for this year to help offset increased FY12 special education out-of-district tuition costs.

VOTED: Motion was made by Bill to approve an increase in the Bus Revolving Fund from \$400,000 to \$450,000, seconded by Jamie. On vote, motion was carried to approve (eight in support and zero opposed).

Bill Place, DRW Director, and Jody Kablack, Director of Planning and Commission, gave a presentation on Article 6 with Alignment shifted away from Hosmer House. This Article is on a warrant for the Selectmen to vote on and affects Concord and Hudson Roads. There was a large map showing the changes proposed to the new road alignments. The intersection in place today has lights that are not functioning correctly and imminent accidents could happen. Benefits of this new project will be safety for pedestrians and automobiles.

The Board of Selectmen has yet to decide where and how the funding will come from. There was a discussion regarding the sign in the project. There will be new digital lights at each intersection with no masked arms. Bob Jacobson asked if an architectural design would be

shown to the FinCom to show the design of road alignment. The answer was in the affirmative. There will be eight lights in all; four more than we now have. In November 2011, First Parish Church voted to allow us to use this plan. (First Parish owns some of the property in discussion). It was noted that it is not easy to make plans involving all landowners but the church demands have been reasonable.

Jim asked if there were any more questions and there were none. He then asked if there were any public questions, and this, too, was in the negative. As the mode of financing has yet to be determined, the committee determined there was nothing for them to vote on at this time and they will report at town meeting should new information be provided.

Jim Kelly, Building Inspector, and Mike Melnick (Building Commissioner) then gave information regarding roof repairs. Slides were shown of the Nixon School. On January 12, MSBA sent an inspector to look at the roof. The roof issues must be addressed by the end of May/June. There is the possibility the Commonwealth could reimburse one third of the costs but this is not known at this time. Maureen Valente spoke and stated these roofing issues should be addressed now as the roofs shown on the slides are in terrible shape and this could be a more costly project the longer we wait.

Fairbank School (1948) has a very flat roof not allowing for roof drainage. The sky lights in the roof are patched, and there are internal roof grooves inside the school. The overhang drains freeze in winter and ice forms; consequently, there is no drainage.

There are also improvements needed to the Natatorium and its roof. It was built in 1987 and it is now leaking. Bob Jacobson stated that we should approve both the roof and Natatorium at Atkinson Pool together. Improvements will amount to a savings of \$15,000 in energy costs. The total costs for all roofing would be \$1.4 million. Chuck Woodard asked if this would be bonded, and Maureen stated the Board has not met yet to take up this issue.

The Energy Commission is looking to fund \$250,000 with an Energy Grant. Jim asked if there were any other questions, and there were not. He then asked if there were any public questions. Dan DePompei asked the difference between the longevity of a school roof versus a house roof. School roofs last between 20-25 years. If you shingle a house, it could last between 20-50 years depending on the quality of the shingle. Similar to the earlier discussion, as the mode of financing has yet to be determined, the committee determined there was nothing for them to vote on at this time and they will report at town meeting should new information be provided.

Jim then moved to the next agenda item and asked to continue the discussion on budget deliberations. An updated revenue forecast was distributed. Given that there are still changes expected in State Aid from the assumptions presented in the Governor's budget, it was agreed that a more conservative assumption regarding State Aid was prudent to use. This slightly lower State Aid assumption, as compared to what was presented at the budget hearings, still supports the 2.5% growth in the Non Override scenario. Jeff Beeler from the SPS School Committee stated this budget looked good and he was comfortable with it.

Maureen Valente then took the floor regarding healthcare benefits. A handout was provided showing different savings assumptions for the Town and SPS as we transition to the Group Insurance Commission (“GIC”) health insurance plant. Of the two scenarios presented, Maureen felt that Scenario #2 with \$1.1 million of savings was the more realistic scenario as compared to the \$0.7 million from Scenario #1 which was discussed during the budget hearings. As this was the first time Maureen was sharing this data with SPS, she asked that they review with personnel at SPS before confirming which scenario to use for the FY13 budget. Jim asked what they meet come up with a recommendation for tomorrow night’s meeting. At this point, Jim said he wanted to discuss budget hearing and have an open a discussion concerning budgets as representative from the LS School Committee were attending this evening. Chuck commented that is difficult to discuss budget scenarios without contract negotiations being completed. Joan asked for the number of out-of-district students for tuition in special education in Lincoln vs. Sudbury. Again, it was noted that the numbers were not available, and they change year to year. Some years there may be more Lincoln student’s out-of-district where other years, there may be more Sudbury student out-of-district. Scott Carpenter noted there is an anticipated out-of-district increase in SPED expenditures regardless.

Nancy Marshall stated that the High School clearly understands that work must be done in conjunction with the liaisons in order to develop alternatives going to the Town Meeting. Doug asked a question about the Extraordinary Relief Fund, and Judy Belliveau, LS Finance Director, told the committee there was a \$611,000 maximum threshold. Chuck asked what we pay versus what the State pays. Judy Belliveau made mention of the operating budget being eaten up by SPED costs (\$600,000). Jamie clarified that L/S will be starting on a clean slate next year. Bob J. suggested that there should be a regional body where SPED parents present their concerns and issues. Scott is going to give the committee a summary of aggregate data. SPS School Committee Chair Jeff Beeler said that giving specific data could be a breach of confidentiality. The bottom line is that the total amount of revenue for schools is not being met by Proposition 2-1/2. The only real solution is an override. The legislature must address the SPED problem throughout the state. Radha Gargeya of the LS School Committee spoke about the state Extraordinary Relief Fund. Bob J. added that the bottom line is that this is a legislative issue as stated above. Susan Iuliano, SPS School Committee member, stated that we cannot continue to try to put a band-aid on the small problems and lose sight of the investments made in the classroom to enhance our special education programs.

Jim asked if there were any comments. There were none. He asked if there were any public comments, and Mr. DePompei asked if LS had the highest percentage of SPED out-of-district costs. The answer was no as the data presented during the budget hearings was only a subset of school districts.

Maureen Valente made mention of the fact that there may be several inches of snow the next day (BOS and FinCom meeting), and for us to be aware of this.

There was no further discussion. At the meeting February 29, 2012, Jim stated that the committee needed to address the articles on the Town Warrant after meeting with the Board of Selectmen. He also stated that he’d like to discuss a plan to address longer-term issues, such as

OPEB and capital, with the Board of Selectmen and ask them for some leadership and guidance on how to address separately from the annual budget discussions.

VOTED: Motion was made by Bob to approve the Minutes of the January 23, 2012 Meeting and seconded by Bill (with edits as provided). On vote, motion was carried to approve the January 23, 2012 Minutes and carried in support (eight in support and zero opposed).

VOTED: Motion was made by Bill to approve the Minutes of the February 6, 2012 Meeting and seconded by Joan (with edits as provided). On vote, motion was carried to approve the February 6, 2012 Minutes and carried in support (eight in support and zero opposed).

VOTED: Motion was made by Jamie to approve the Minutes of the February 13, 2012 Meeting and seconded by Bill (with edits as provided). On vote, motion was carried to approve the February 13, 2012 Minutes and carried in support (eight in support and zero opposed).

VOTED: Motion was made by Bill to approve the Minutes of the February 16, 2012 Meeting and seconded by Jamie (with edits as provided). On vote, motion was carried to approve the February 16, 2012 Minutes and carried in support (eight in support and zero opposed).

There being no further business, the Committee adjourned at 10:40 p.m.