

Approved
Candia Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
Public Hearing for School Budget
January 8th, 2009

Attendees: Chairman Carla Penfield, Kristine Pouliot, Kim Byrd, Allyn Chivers, Judith Szot, School Rep. Karen Smith, Selectmen's Rep. Tom Giffen.

Absent: Ann Tierno, Stephen Higgins (Resigned).

Chairman Penfield called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

- Chairman Penfield explained how the Budget Committee arrived at the 2009 recommended budget.
 1. Economic Crisis on the Federal and State level. Also, job losses.
 2. Impact on our revenues. The decline in car, boat, & dog registrations, sale of recyclables.
 3. Controversial budget however, the BC feels this budget will not effect the education of the children.
- The question was asked what tax impact we would have if the budget was level funded? Unable to know for sure. Too many things that come into play with formulating the tax rate.
- The question was asked where the Budget Committee cut. Carla explained to look at the bottom line of each department on the report provided.
- The BC wanted the SAU to look at the number of enrolled students and the size of the classrooms. Possibly combining some of the classrooms.
- Do not replace the teacher retiring and eliminate 1 position.
- Minds in Motion should be reviewed based on the number of students involved and the cost. The Board is not recommending the program be eliminated only. They have suggested a reduction in the program.
- Several parents spoke passionately in defense of the Minds in Motion program.
- School Board Chairman Ed Caito addressed a letter to the Budget Committee Board Members (see attached).

- Field Trips: The BC feels that field trips could be paid by the parents, rather than the taxpayers to reduce the budget.
- Superintendent Dr. Littlefield addressed everyone in regards to the reduction in workbooks. The Superintendent explained that he supported last year to reduce the use of workbooks by \$4,000.00. But only with the intention of more individual instruction and supplemental materials in the classroom.
- Superintendent also expressed to the Board his feeling that the Budget Committee's suggested bottom line figure is unworkable and irresponsible.
- Chairman Penfield explained again how the BC arrived at the budget. She explained that the BC does not have to address every line item. They look at the whole budget. Went through it department-by-department, line-by-line, and decided individually it could be a level funded budget. Then for the benefit of the School Board they went back line-by-line again to make some suggestions as to how they made the determination.
- Allyn Chivers explained to the parents and teachers that at this point we did not have all the information necessary and it was not in the original budget that was submitted to them and the BC has the ability following this meeting to make adjustments if there was additional information provided. Basically, at this point the process is not complete.

Following the Public School Hearing the Budget Committee regular meeting began at 8:40 pm.

- Chairman Penfield asked each Committee Member to contribute their feelings from the School Public Hearing Meeting.
- Kristine Pouliot feels that the fact is we are struggling economically and taxes are going up. However, she would like to go with the recommended budget from the school board.
- Judith Szot is having difficulty deciding as well. But she feels that the classrooms sizes are too small in some grades. She is concerned about the teaching process. Other towns are asking teachers to open their negotiations. Everyone's revenue is going down and she is concerned as to how residents are going to pay their taxes.
- Kim Byrd feels we have put many hours in this school budget and realizes how passionate everyone at the meeting is but is not willing to go back and accept what the School Board recommended.
- School Rep Karen Smith expressed how the teachers and volunteers know what is really going on in the school. There are some amazing things to see. She feels the BC should adjust the budget in according to the School Boards recommendation.
- Selectmen Tom Giffen understands everyone's frustration. However, He would like to refer back to the original goal that Dr. Littlefield was talking about, supporting the work that was done originally by the SAU. He feels the same way Kristine Pouliot does. He feels as a responsible citizen it is his job to help fund a proper education.

- Allyn Chivers is torn. She believes that the board can still reduce the school boards budget without too severely impacting the students. She can be convinced that they may have gone too far but is not willing to go back to the school board's budget. This is only for 1 year.
- Carla Penfield commented on how she feels that level funding this budget is not going to hurt learning, the number of staff and the number of students. A huge number of people that are supporting the school. She is torn as well. However, she feels that the number of students per room which is smaller than the required number. She feels the School should reconsider this. Other schools are laying off and are asking teachers to renegotiate their contracts.
- Kristine Pouliot mentioned the fact that all schools are not the same. Some have large classrooms and in comparison to what our students have. She is concerned about the children and the quality of their surroundings.
- Judith Szot had her children go through this school and was very involved. She understands the concerns with the children but is very concerned as well with the economy and the people that are on fixed income.
- Kim Byrd can be persuaded to put some increase back in but cannot go back to the School Boards Budget.
- Carla Penfield is concerned if there was a problem with the school budget we do not have enough money in our fund balance to sustain a problem.
- Even with a level funded budget the taxpayers will still see an increase.
- Vote was taken on Kristine Pouliot's motion to go with the recommended budget. 3 in favor, 4 opposed.
- Lynn Chivers is willing to negotiate. She suggested the \$8,823.00 for the "other information resources". She feels convinced that the Minds in Motion program should be put back in at \$32,000.00.
- Carla Penfield mentioned there were 2 things tonight that she did not hear any more information regarding the potential Special Ed Student and why the School Board did not write a Warrant Article for Special Ed. She would have supported the Warrant Article. If the School Budget would have done this then the Budget could have been level funded.
- School Board Rep Karen Smith said the Special Ed Student was unanticipated and they were unable to use a warrant article.
- Lynn Chivers recommended adding in an additional \$40,000.00 to the budget. Kim Byrd seconded. 4 in favor, 3 opposed.

Motion to adjourn at 9:27 pm. All were in favor

Recorded by Mary Phillips

