

TOWN OF SANDWICH  
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FEB 26 2014

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MINUTES  
OF THE  
FINANCE COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2014  
7:00 P.M.  
TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM  
130 MAIN STREET, SANDWICH, MA

Present: Paul Sylvia, Ellen Yaffe, Gene Parini, Tom Hickey, Richard Reilly, Linell Grundman, Matthew Terry and Anne Dessertine

Absent: Mike Dwyer

Also Present: Town Manager George Dunham, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Richard Canfield, Director of Finance and Business Operations Michelle Austin, Members of the School Committee, Sandwich High School Principal Ellin Booras, Selectman Chairperson Jim Pierce, Selectman Frank Pannorfi, Jim Kinsella from the Enterprise Newspaper and SCT.

**ITEM #1**  
**CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

**ITEM #2**  
**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes of Tuesday, February 4, 2014-

**\*MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. PARINI TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 4, 2014 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. REILLY VOTE – UNANIMOUS Ms. Yaffe and Mr. Hickey Abstaining**

**ITEM #3**  
**SCHOOL DEPARTMENT FY'15 BUDGET**

Dr. Canfield thanked Ms. Austin and the School Committee members for all their help with the budget and noted that a public hearing on the budget was held on January 22 and the School Committee has voted the budget. Gave an overview of the budget including a background and goals. Noted that the phrase at the bottom of the Phase 2 cover sheet was from a parent... 'We are all – Beneficiaries of the Past, Caretakers of the Present, and Grantors of the Future'. The School Committee recommended budget for 2014-2015 is a 4.36% increase to \$1,034,150.00 – 2.50% Operating \$593,400.00 and 1.86% STEM \$440,750.00

Dr. Canfield, noting some cost saving changes, mentioned that the cafeteria is now outsourced and the Community School has been phased out.

The Sandwich STEM Academy (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders) has created its own insignia a 'Squire'. You are a Squire before you become a Blue Knight (9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders).

It was noted that twenty-one 9-12 year old students are currently participating in an exchange program with China.

Dr. Canfield invited everyone to attend their meetings or look at them on line and noted that at tomorrow night's School Committee meeting he will be talking more about Phase 2.

Dr. Canfield, Ms. Austin and members of the School Committee responded to questions previously submitted from the Finance Committee. Referencing a question about grants, Mr. Parini asked if there are other grants beside the CIC (Community Innovation Challenge) Grant that were applied for? Dr. Canfield – yes and will get a copy of the grant documents to the Finance Committee. The grants are very specific as to what they can support i.e. Title I is for struggling students, Title II is for teacher training.

There are no state requirements for class sizes. It is research based that 18 – 20 students in primary grades is a good number. Curriculum is literacy based, students have to learn to read and read to learn. On the topic of School Choice, we are getting a lot of inquiries about children coming to Sandwich. It was not previously mentioned but

we would love to have a full day kindergarten. We should consider moving to full day kindergarten at no expense to the parents. Parents currently have to pay for the second half of the day if they wish their child to have a full day of kindergarten.

All 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers must hold a specialist license. Many of these teachers will be going to teach in the Academy and those who are not will be transferring to other grades. Our focus is not on creating jobs...it is to teach children.

Question was raised about the effect a 4.36% school budget increase will have on the 2015 tax rate. Dr. Canfield deferred the response to the Town Manager. Mr. Dunham noted that the difference between the 4.36% budget and a 2.50% budget is 1.86%...in dollars and cents is about \$12.4 per thousand. For an average home valued at \$343,000 it would cost the tax payer approximately \$42.54.

Will the School Dept. be able to implement STEM with a 2.5% to 3% school budget increase? Dr. Canfield noted that it would no longer be a level service budget. STEM will open as promised next year. Reductions are not going to come in the 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades. Superintendents are to protect the students and core subjects. Wants nothing to do with anything less than that. Question was raised...what if you were forced to go with anything less than 4.36% as requested. We would have to make cuts and I would blow the trust I have worked so hard to get.

Mr. Parini noted that the community has supported the School Dept. especially at the last Town Meeting. Would there be a savings if the children moved out of the Wing School? If you get a bump up next year...will we see a bump down the next year? Dr. Canfield...cannot commit to that.

Dr. Canfield offered that they are grateful that the window sills are fixed and the pool is back on line and there will be community access of the pool because we made that commitment. When we began planning STEM, the pool and the window sills were not out there.

Mr. Terry suggested that the hope is that if we keep kids here through the STEM Academy that will help the budget in not spending money for (school choice) tuition.

Ms. Dessertine asked how the School Dept. shows the results of how to keep the children here. Dr. Canfield...our strongest ambassadors are our kids. Mrs. Booras, the Principal at the high school can address anything about the students and their accomplishments.

Ms. Dessertine – please explain the investment...this is what we thought would happen and this is what did happen. Dr. Canfield – we do a lot of things such as tracking including where the students are accepted for college and where they are going.

Dr. Booras noted...you give me those 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders and they won't want to leave the school.

Dr. Canfield – we stay in touch with our graduates.

Question about the School Dept. budget not being complete – 2-Year View (Phase 1 Bump-Up Budget Completion of Phase 1 STEM Academy – Level Service -5 Schools and using 4-buildings

Ms. Yaffe noted, on the topic of Phase 2 – Drop Down Budget...completion of Phase 2 – Enhanced services through efficiencies in PreK-12 using 3-buildings, there is nothing in the budget that makes her believe that the million dollars...give me a million dollars and trust me? Students/staffing questions...nothing in this about that. The budget is missing a lot of analysis. I want to support the program but I am missing a lot of the information that would help me do that. Dr. Canfield noted that all this information is in the Sandwich Public Schools Program and Staff Use Report 2014-2015. Ms. Yaffe noted that this is a 63 page report...looking for a summary. Dr. Canfield mentioned that he does not have an Assistant Superintendent...unlike other schools on Cape Cod. There is no Director of Technology because we have a good relationship with the Town Manager...we share a lot of things. Ms. Yaffe – very concerned about resources of the town and how much is going to schools. The requested 4.36% does not support the town government. A 3% increase is a healthy increase and going forward Ms. Yaffe hopes the Board of Selectmen will speak to this. Dr. Canfield suggested that Ms. Yaffe call him or e-mail him about what she thinks could be reduced from the budget. We don't get to control the State items. One-time expenses...there could be potential savings in this budget. Ms. Austin noted that she can't tell where we will have need for any savings. Mr. Reilly asked what our range is in the State. Dr. Canfield noted that we made the National Honor Role in AP (Advanced Placement) classes. Dr. Booras offered information about the AP National Honor Role; MCAS and

mentioned that many of our students are accepted at excellent colleges but are unable to attend for financial reasons. Many students attend our state colleges.

Mr. Sylvia noted that the Sandwich High School is providing a lot of very fine students who work in his restaurant. Mr. Terry – where are we in the projections if it comes to an override in order to help educate the voters...i.e. this is the plan, this is where we are in the plan...these are the anticipated things we expected and here is what you expect going forward.

Ms. Yaffe noted that she will come up with very specific questions that she will give to Mr. Sylvia for Dr. Canfield.

Mr. Sylvia thanked the School Committee and Dr. Canfield for coming in.

Ms. Sundermeyer asked Mr. Sylvia to explain to the residents the role of the Finance Committee. Mr. Sylvia noted that, basically, the Finance Committee reviews the articles which have financial implications and makes recommendations to the tax payers.

Sandwich High School Principal Dr. Ellen Booras was invited to speak regarding the high school students in particular their achievements both scholastic and athletic and noted that the senior students' records reflect the names of the colleges they were accepted to as well as the name of the college they ultimately attend.

Discussion about the \$440,000.00 and concern about a possible override.

Mr. Hickey noted that if it can somehow be put through as a one-time expense.

Mr. Dunham noted that there always have to be give and take. Thinks the school department is headed in the right direction. We will try to figure out how to make a one year bump out of this. It is too soon yet to know these answers but it is worth a shot...believes the Selectmen support the high school process.

Mr. Parini noted that he feels it is a very difficult year for Sandwich. We are talking about road bonds etc. also.

#### **ITEM #4** **TOWN MANAGER REPORT**

Updated the Committee on FY'15 General Government budget.

A budget workshop for next Tuesday, February 18 at 6 pm upstairs at Town Hall (on the stage) was discussed and confirmed.

Confirmed that the DPW, Police and Fire Departments will be in on February 25<sup>th</sup> – the new Fire Chief Bill Carrico started on Monday, February 10.

Mr. Sylvia asked that if the Committee members have any questions for the DPW, Police and Fire Departments please get them to Mr. Sylvia ahead of time.

#### **ITEM #5** **COMMITTEE**

##### Sub-Committee Reports-

Mr. Parini - during a recent Selectmen's meeting they discussed large items from the Long Range Plan (LRP). Among the top five items discussed were the safety building and road bond.

##### Future Meeting Schedule-

As discussed under Town Manager's Report.

##### Other-

None

ITEM #6  
ADJOURN

9:05 p.m.

**\*MOTION TO ADJOURN WAS MADE BY MR. PARINI. SECONDED BY MS. GRUNDMAN VOTE – UNANIMOUS.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane M. Hanelt, Secretary

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting Documents:

Town of Sandwich Public Schools

-A Community Effort-

Phase 2 Planning

Mass Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education

Long Term Trends in October Enrollments

Finance Committee Questions regarding the FY'15 School Budget and Responses

Sandwich Public School Fiscal Year 2015 Budget – Fourth Draft

Projected Revenues and Expenses – FY'15 (GHD Draft 2/11/2014)

FY'15 Budget Totals (GHD Draft 2/11/2014)