

**TOWN OF CHESTERFIELD  
BUDGET COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 3, 2010**

Present: Gary Winn, Chairman; Steve Laskowski, Mike Wiggin, Spofford Fire Precinct Representative; Deb Hogancamp, CF&R Representative; Bayard Tracy, John Zannotti, Warren Porter, Becky Auger, School Board Representative; Bob Brockmann, Selectboard Representative; and Elliot Rowsey.

Absent: Bill Bucknell, John Koopman and Fred Szmít

Guests: Judy Idelkope, School Board Chair; Darlene Dunn, Assistant Principal; Sharyn D'Eon, Principal.

Steve moved to discuss each section by section and take one vote at the end. The motion was seconded by Bayard and passed by majority. John voted no.

**1100 Regular Instruction** – 2009-2010 Budget \$3,631,725 requesting \$3,633,690 next year. This includes the same number of teachers.

**1200 Special Instruction** – 2009-2010 Budget \$2,492,539 requesting \$2,087,474 next year. There was a brief discussion about the drawbacks to an Evergreen contract such as; step increases continue without a contract and no way to increase co-pays without a decrease in benefits.

**1400 Co-Curricular** – 2009-2010 Budget \$30,084 requesting \$30,087 next year.

**1430 Summer School** – 2009-2010 Budget \$18,145 requesting \$17,408 next year.

**2110 Attendance** – 2009-2010 Budget \$1 requesting \$1.

**2120 Guidance Services** – 2009-2010 Budget \$50,651 requesting \$81,689 next year. The reason for the 3.62% increase in a budget for only 1 person is a 14% increase in retirement contributions and 20% increase to health benefits.

**2130 Health Services** – 2009-2010 Budget \$50,651 requesting \$56,442 next year. The School Nurse is an RN, but does not have a Bachelor's Degree. She is compensated at 90% of the teacher's salary.

**2140 Psychology Services** – 2009-2010 Budget \$107,308 requesting \$100,341 next year.

**2150 Speech Services** – 2009-2010 Budget \$90,098 requesting \$95,613 next year.

**2160 OT/PT Services** – 2009-2010 Budget \$65,600 requesting \$77,246 next year.

**2210 Staff Development** – 2009-2010 Budget \$55,087 requesting \$52,426. Continuum Salaries is a \$1,200 stipend for re-writing the curriculum 2 weeks over the summer.

**2220 Library Services** – 2009-2010 Budget \$100,344 requesting \$88,983 next year.

**2290 Consultation** – 2009-2010 Budget \$3,600 requesting \$3,000 next year.

**2310 School Board Services** – 2009-2010 Budget \$31,475 requesting \$35,350 next year.

**2410 School Administration** – 2009-2010 Budget \$311,032 requesting \$301,013 next year. Judy asked for 3 years with the assistant principal position before elimination with declining enrollment. The 2010-2011 budget is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year.

Bayard asked about the number of non-teaching positions such as; Co-curricular, OT/PT and Media Generalist. Judy stated that the quality of the media generalist is one of the most important indicators of a child's success. The amount of requirements by the State make the media generalist more expensive than the Town librarian.

**SAU#29 Services** – 2009-2010 Budget \$426,106 requesting \$427,012 next year.

**2600 School Maintenance** – 2009-2010 Budget \$323,365 requesting \$346,275. The water item is for the coolers that have been removed. Water coolers were placed in between the portable classrooms to prevent students from walking through another classroom to get water. Fuel oil is budgeted at \$3 per gallon. There were 2 new boilers installed in the last 3 years. The budget is for 15,000 gallons. Fuel oil was less than \$1.99 per gallon last year.

**2700 Transportation** – 2009-2010 Budget \$434,685 requesting \$467,975. This depends on the # of OOD students that are currently transported to Massachusetts, Crotched Mountain, Vermont and preschool identified special education. One student at Kindall Farm includes an aide on the bus.

**2830 Staff Services** – 2009-2010 Budget \$2,000 requesting \$2,000 next year.

**2840 Information Tech** – 2009-2010 Budget \$46,866 requesting \$57,968 next year.

**5220 Transfers**- 2009-2010 Budget \$375,000 requesting \$375,000 next year. Bob was concerned about \$80,000 from the taxpayers for School Lunch. The price of food has increased significantly and the cost of lunch has not gone up. The lunch program is mandated by the State. Each student is required to have a milk. A student has to get a note from the Dr annually to refuse milk. The qualifications for reduced lunch are extremely generous. People do not want to be identified as needing assistance. Participation in the lunch program is currently 52%. It has remained steady at 50% for a long time. The Board is looking into outsourcing or reconfiguring the current staff within current contract agreements. There are a couple thousand dollars that are past due.

2009-2010 Total Budget \$8,674,536 requesting \$8,336,993 next year. Deb moved to recommend \$8,336,993. The motion was seconded by Bob. John stated that he could not support the Keene tuitions rising 6.6% for Regular Instruction and 10.7% for Special Instruction. He would be voting no because of those items and not because he feels the School Board did not do a good job. Judy stated that the cost to tuition is based on the previous year's budget. This year the decreasing population divided by the costs from the previous year makes the cost go up. For the past 10 years increasing costs and increasing population have left the cost protected. Town's not protected by the AREA agreement are paying \$660 more per regular instruction

student. The tuition line would be \$100,000 more if Chesterfield paid what Winchester is paying. Chesterfield is fortunate to have the middle school, because Towns that use Keene Middle School saw a 25% increase to tuition. The motion passed by majority. Steve and John voted no. Warren abstained.

**Article 3:** To see if the District will vote to appropriate and authorize the School Board to transfer up to \$100,000 of its unencumbered funds, if any remain on hand at the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 2010 to be deposited in the Capital Reserve Fund established by voters on March 5, 1994, for the purpose of major renovation/reconstruction of the school buildings and related costs, or to take any other action in relation thereto. Deb moved to recommend Article 3. The motion was seconded by Bob. Judy stated that the School usually tries to contribute \$30,000 per year. Last year there was no surplus. There are 2 major projects pending: Repaving the parking lot and Removal of the underground oil tanks.

Bob stated that if the \$8,000,000 operating budget remains constant and the energy problem remains unfixed the budget will go up 9% without a lot of effort in the next 3 years. Bob recommended putting away \$300,000 from the surplus. Some of the improvements should not be put off. There is currently a balance of \$78,128 in the Capital Reserve Fund. John stated that the balance of the fund plus \$100,000 was not a major shortfall. Bob stated that the energy audit for the Town Hall was \$125,000. He is expecting the same for the School. If the portables need to be demolished the cost will be significantly higher than minor fixes. Mike stated that it was very important to take care of the existing building. The energy audit is needed to create the plan for the projected capital improvements. John stated that currently there is no spending plan. Fixed income residents are still struggling to pay taxes. The surplus needs to go back to the taxpayers. Bob stated that returning the surplus now means that the increase is that much more next year.

Judy stated that last year was the first year that no unencumbered funds were available. The School needs to budget for worst case scenario. If the School had \$100,000 left over from an \$8,000,000 budget they were doing a good job. Gary stated that if the Committee does not recommend the article the School can only exceed 10% of what the Committee approves. John moved to recommend \$75,000. The motion was seconded by Warren. Steve asked if the Board could meet the needs of the Town, Taxpayers, School & Students? Judy stated Yes. Judy stated that the Board could expend \$150,000 to pay for the paving this spring and only return \$350,000 of the surplus. Sharyn stated there was a schedule to replace 2 boilers and a boiler blew at the other end of the building. The unexpected boiler replacement was funded by the Capital Reserve. Judy indicated concern that the population might increase unexpectedly. 5 years ago, SWRP predicted the population would be over 500 students. Deb moved the question. The motion was seconded by Steve and passed unanimously. The motion to recommend \$75,000 for Article 3 failed by majority vote. John, Warren and Gary voted yes.

Mike moved to recommend \$200,000. The motion was seconded by Deb. The general rule is to keep 5 to 10% of expenditures in the general fund. It was pointed out that those people who can't afford to pay taxes, don't. However, the School still gets all their money. The cost for non-payment of taxes is absorbed by the Town. The motion failed. Mike, Deb, Bayard, Becky and Bob voted Yes. Bob, Steve, Gary, John & Warren voted No. A split decision is negative. Elliot moved to call the question. The motion was seconded by Deb and passed unanimously. The Committee moved to recommend \$100,000. The motion passed unanimously.

Bob moved to approve January 12<sup>th</sup> and February 2<sup>nd</sup> minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by John and passed unanimously.

Gary will be here Monday evening to sign off on the warrant for the School and the Spofford Fire Precinct. Gary thanked Becky for her representation of the School Board. The meeting adjourned at 9:04 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy LaFontaine  
Secretary