

HAMPTON BUDGET COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
October 20, 2009

Budget Committee Members Present

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman  
Michael Plouffe, Vice-Chairman  
Jerry Znoj, Selectman Representative  
Norman Silberdick, School Board Representative  
Gary Kubik, Precinct Representative  
Pat Collins  
Victor DeMarco  
Dick Hansen  
Brian Lapham  
Eileen Latimer  
Jack Lessard  
Michael Pierce  
Larry Stuker  
Peter Traynor

Excused

Richard Reniere

Chairman Woolsey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Chairman Woolsey introduced the members of the Committee.

Chairman Woolsey welcomed Jim Gaylord, Superintendent of Schools. Mr. Gaylord said he had answers to a number of questions which had been presented to him.

Mr. Gaylord said there is stimulus money for the next two years for Special Education. The amount is \$275,850. Money is being used for a variety of reading programs. There are target teachers, after school help, etc. Teachers are being trained in these programs.

Mr. Gaylord said the money is being spent wisely. All of the budgets have been watched very closely and money has been returned at the end of the year. Chairman Woolsey said the monies left over at the end of the year are taken up by the School District Treasurer to reduce the tax rate.

Mr. Gaylord said the School Board is presently reviewing financial needs. Everyone has been told to come in with a zero increase budget. The budgets are being prepared.

Mr. Gaylord passed out a Summary of Enrollment.

Regarding Special Education students, Mr. Gaylord said this is controlled by Federal and State law.

Regarding planning periods for teachers, Mr. Gaylord said by contract they have one planning period per day. At the Academy there have been more, and this is currently being reviewed.

Courses being taught at the Academy are the core courses of math, science, language arts and social studies as well as others in Unified Arts. The Academy uses a team approach.

Vertical teaming is being put in place where the teachers help in the transition into high school. Common assessments will be used to put students in the correct place in high school.

Mr. Gaylord said there is also an expanded program for students at risk. Jan Petrou is also running an adult program. There is a credit recovery program where a student must pass what he missed before, but he does not have to repeat the entire course.

Mr. Pierce asked what suggestions Mr. Gaylord had for help from the Budget Committee. Mr. Gaylord said that the Committee needs to support the budgets if they are decent budgets. Look at the bottom line and then allow the schools to carry out their program. Mr. Gaylord said the schools have never presented an exaggerated budget. The Committee should look at the budget critically and then make recommendations.

Mr. Pierce asked if Mr. Gaylord had any personal feelings of what he would like to have the District put in place. Mr. Gaylord replied he would like to see the NECAP test kept in place. It is based on the standards put out by the State. New programs are helping to bring scores up.

Ms. Latimer asked what years the \$275,000 stimulus money would affect. Mr. Gaylord said this year and next. Stimulus money can be used to supplement. You cannot take something out of the budget and use stimulus money. This money is being used for buying equipment and training trainers. Ms. Latimer asked if stimulus money is being used for the Read180 program. Mr. Gaylord said no, it was coming out of the budget, but it is being enhanced because there is more training.

Mr. Silberdick said it had been a pleasure to work with Mr. Gaylord in presenting the budgets.

Mr. Lapham asked if teachers were reviewed when children fall behind. Mr. Gaylord said all new teachers have a full evaluation each year and other teachers are reviewed on a regular basis.

Mr. Stuker asked if there was a strategic plan for the school district and how the budget should be tied to it. Mr. Gaylord said plans are being created.

Mr. Stuker asked what is preventing students from having the highest scores in the state and is there a budgetary solution. Mr. Gaylord said there is no budgetary solution. It is important to remember that there is a 25%+ transient population. Children vary year by year and they all need to work to the best of their ability.

Mr. Hansen commended Mr. Gaylord on his service.

Mr. DeMarco said the school budgets are always very well prepared. He asked if they were going back to the Junior High School concept. Mr. Gaylord said that has not been decided.

Mr. Lessard commended Mr. Gaylord and said the Hampton schools have put out some outstanding students.

Mr. Znoj asked about classes with students with different abilities. Mr. Gaylord said the teachers are prepared to handle this. Mr. Gaylord noted that 50% of the jobs this year's kindergartners will assume have not yet been created. The important thing is to teach children to think.

Mr. Plouffe said it had been a pleasure working with Mr. Gaylord.

Chairman Woolsey said another important component is parental involvement. The schools cannot be the only educational resource. This needs to be discussed publicly. It is not fair to blame lack of achievement solely on teachers. It is both teachers and parents.

Chairman Woolsey thanked Mr. Gaylord for his service.

Chairman Woolsey welcomed Fred Welch, Town Manager.

Mr. Welch said the tax rate for 2009 will be \$16.28 down from \$16.33 for 2008.

Mr. Welch discussed the articles that have been suggested to the Selectmen.

1. Operating Budget
2. Generator for the Town Hall (State has awarded 50%)
3. Fire Station (20 yr bond)
4. Mosquito Control
5. Social Service Articles
6. Road Improvements

7. Salt Shed
8. Public Works Capital Reserve
9. Church St. Pump Station (20 yr bond)

Chairman Woolsey said it was a concern to her that any warrant article for a fire station should include both stations and have a 30-year bond. She asked Mr. Znoj to take this back to the Selectmen.

Mr. Pierce said the Board of Selectmen and Precinct Commissioners must get together on this. Ms. Latimer said both sites are needed and should be dealt with at one time. Mr. Traynor said it is about time that the citizens realize that the Town and Precinct are one entity and both need a fire station.

**Moved** by Gary Kubik, seconded by Ms. Latimer, that the Budget Committee request the Board of Selectmen to consider the construction of both fire stations with a 30-year bond and the Town and Precinct will work towards this end.

**Vote:** 10 yes, 1 no (Lapham), 2 abstentions (Silberdick, Znoj). Motion passed.

Chairman Woolsey said this is intended as a catalyst to send a message from the Budget Committee as a duly elected board saying the members are seriously concerned and want to see to the needs of the whole town.

Chairman Woolsey thanked Mr. Welch.

### **Approval of Minutes of September 15, 2009**

**Moved** by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. Lessard, to approve the Minutes of September 15, 2009.

**Vote:** 11 yes, 0 no, 2 abstentions (Kubik, Silberdick). Motion passed.

Arthur Gopalan came forward. He said from a taxpayer's viewpoint, the Board of Selectmen have done a great job in setting the budget. He encouraged the Budget Committee to move along the same lines and to work with the Board of Selectmen on the fire stations. Mr. Gopalan said the Town has brought down their portion of the budget, however, the combined school budget went up by 9 cents. He said he would like the Committee to keep in mind that more money will not solve the problems in the schools. Mr. Gopalan said in previous years there have been too many warrant articles. He said he is hoping this year it will be much less.

Hampton Budget Committee  
October 20, 2009  
Page 5

Chairman Woolsey said the Budget Committee has no control over the number of warrant articles submitted. The Committee reviews only money articles.

Mr. Silberdick said he believes there is \$1 million to \$1.5 million of fluff in the school budget. More care should be put into core subjects. Mr. Silberdick said there needs to be a change in how this is administered.

The next meeting will be Thursday, October 29, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at which time General Government will be addressed.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Mr. Lessard **moved**, seconded by Mr. Stuker, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Rice  
Secretary

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Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman