

## APPROVED JANUARY 5, 2010

Chairman Charles Kimball called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM on December 20, 2010. Budget Committee members present were Charles Kimball, Mike Nygren, Andy Kohlhofer, Pat Martel, Laurie Allore, Selectman Greta St. Germain, Principals Dawn Lewis and John Safina, Financial Administrator Bonnie Sandstrom, School Superintendent Bill Lander, School Board member Deborah Genthner, School Board member Eric Abney, School Board Chairman Jeff Rowell, and recording secretary Jeanne Nygren.

A motion to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2010 meeting was made by Kohlhofer. This was seconded by Nygren. The vote was unanimous 6-0.

A motion to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2010 meeting was made by Kohlhofer. This was seconded by St. Germain. The vote was 5-1. Allore abstained as she was not present at this meeting.

4194-General Government Buildings-A motion to recommend the additional \$5000.00 for the Town updating of the website was made by Martel. This was seconded by Kimball. The vote was 6-0. A motion to recommend \$89,483.00 for the total appropriation in government buildings was made by Kohlhofer. This was seconded by Allore. The vote was unanimous 6-0.

4445-Social Service Agencies-A motion to recommend on line 4445-014 Child Advocacy Center in the amount of \$1250.00 was made by Kohlhofer. This was seconded by Martel. The vote was unanimous 6-0. A motion to reduce line 4445-002 Seacoast Hospice to zero was made by Kimball. This was seconded by Nygren. The vote was unanimous 6-0. A motion to recommend bottom line in this budget of \$24,638.00 was made by Kohlhofer. This was seconded by Nygren. The vote was unanimous 6-0.

There was a discussion regarding the Police Department secretary salary line and this will reflect only the 2% raise and not the two weeks vacation coverage which will come out of the Animal Control budget as it always has in the past. Nygren said there can be a line adjustment at the end of the year if needed.

A motion to recommend the Budget Committee original amounts on the following budgets Planning/Zoning (4191), Parks/Recreation (4520), Library (4550), Emergency Management (4290), Cemeteries (4195), Insurance (4196), Advertising and Reg. Assoc.(4197) Town Report (4199), Ambulance Service (4215), Interest/Principal (4711/4712), Interest on TAN (4723), Elections (4140), Town Clerk executive (4130) Tax Collector (4150) Solid Waste/Disposal (4324) Animal Control (4414), Dir. Assistance (4442), Patriotic Purposes (4583), Conservation Commission (4610), Highway (4312), Building Inspector (4240), Police Department (4210) was made by Kohlhofer. This was seconded by Martel. The vote was unanimous 6-0.

The Budget Committee now turned to the School Budget. Martel has a question on the salary of the psychologist's position if this is a contracted position and that the health insurance that is listed looks like the full premium amount is listed and she feels this should be prorated. Sandstrom said she has a separate contract that is negotiated and it all depends upon the plan they are enrolled into and what is listed is not the full premium price.

A motion to reduce 5112-10 Regular Education salary for a total \$220,847.00 and the bottom line figure of \$5,667,617.00 was made by Kohlhofer. This was seconded by St. Germain. The vote was 6-1. The nay vote was made by Rowell who is representing Ida Keane tonight.

The Budget Committee then proceeded to go through the Regular Education again and made some additional suggested cuts in salary, FICA, retirement, unemployment, worker's compensation, dental insurance, life insurance, new equipment/furniture, textbooks, professional dues, public high school tuition, workbooks, supplies and periodicals. These amount tabulations will be placed onto a spreadsheet and calculated for a total to be recommended and motioned at the next Budget Committee meeting on January 5, 2011.

Rowell discussed the case manager's positions that the Budget Committee recommended to eliminate and asked the Committee to revisit this and he asked the question if the Committee knew what these positions entailed. Kohlhofer felt that the Special Education directors would be capable of doing these positions. Lander said this could open a potential legal issue that might come up and they may have to place students out of the district which would be more costly. Kohlhofer feels this is a bottom line budget that they could take money from other lines in their budget. Rowell then asked the Chairman for permission to have Sandstrom to be able to answer any question and provide information if necessary.

Kohlhofer feels the needs are being over projected by the school and there was a lengthy discussion on the projections of the budgets versus spending versus what is left over at the end of the year. Nygren also felt that the figures at the end of the year should be carried onto the next year's budget when the school begins the next fiscal year.

St. Germain addressed the Board and the School Board members attending in the audience, stating that as a Selectmen she is personally concerned with the direction the town is going if taxes continue to be increased on our residents. The Town budget for the past two years has undergone major cuts and changes, Town employees have not received raises in the past several years and this year alone we have reduced two full time positions to part time. St. Germain went on to say that currently there are 111 homes on the real estate market in Fremont with countless foreclosures, The Town has taken property for taxes and that is not the most desirable position for any Town to be in.

Additionally she is concerned with what Fremont has to offer for attracting new residents to our Town, whereas our infrastructure is deteriorating and our School is listed as a SINI (School in need of improvement). She stated that many residents have shared their disappointment in how the school is managed and that the landslide vote for SB2 speaks volumes in how the tax base feels concerning the school. St. Germain stated that we can no longer increase the School budget with enrollment down; we are simply driving residents out. She went on to say that when money is raised and appropriated by taxation and we accept that money we become public servants to all residents, not just a selected group, therefore we must be considered not only the children but the parents who cannot afford the consistent increase in taxes. St. Germain confirmed that student achievement is her number one objective and the objective of the Budget Committee members, but there must be more accountability.

Kohlhofer felt that with the passing of SB2 voting at the election is the Town's people voice to the School Board to reduce school spending. The committee can only look at the numbers that are presented to them and he suggested that maybe a different kind of curriculum could bring a

better level of education at Ellis. The Budget Committee is responding to the needs of the Town and tries to find ways to give quality education in the spending of their tax dollars.

The committee felt it was prudent not to recommend 3% increases to non-contractual employees and started to go through what line items this applies to. Martel will prepare the spreadsheet for next meeting to go through with the Committee. The Committee went through the following budget line and made their suggested cuts: Speech (2150), Occupational Therapy (2160), Improvement of Instruction (2210), Computer (2225), School Board (2310), Superintendent (2320), Out of District Coordinator (2330), and School Principal (2400)

A reduction to one principal St. Germain wanted addressed and she felt that a person certified in the field of special education can be done by a guidance counselor. Lander would not recommend this and he feels that the staffing of the school is the school boards responsibility.

Martel will incorporate these suggested cuts for next week on the spreadsheet and the committee will decide whether to confirm these cuts with motions and make their recommendations.

The Budget Committee thanked the School Board members and Administrators for coming to the meeting tonight.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Kohlhofer. This was seconded by St. Germain. The vote was unanimous 7-0. The meeting ended at 10:10 PM.

The next Budget Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 5, 2010 at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Nygren  
Recording Secretary