

Unofficial

**BUDGET COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING
HOOKSETT MEMORIAL SCHOOL
MEDIA CENTER
JANUARY 14, 2010**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pieroni called the meeting to order 7:00 pm

ATTENDANCE

J. Pieroni, J. Danforth, JR Ouellette, David Pearl, Mark Miville, K. Hughes, J. Hyde, N. Comai, and D. Argo.

PROOF OF POSTING

L. Moynihan provided proof of posting.

PUBLIC HEARING

Chairman Pieroni opened the Public Hearing at 7:04 pm

Chairman Pieroni presented the School District Budget for \$25,884,176 which was reduced from the School Board proposal of \$26,007,202. The major reduction by the Budget Committee were in High School tuition. J. Pieroni stated that he will make a motion after the hearing to reduce insurance rather than tuition.

The default budget was presented at \$27,435,528.

Warrant Articles

Article 2 was read into the record

Shall the District vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Hooksett School Board and the Hooksett Education Association, which calls for the following increase in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Estimated Increase</i>
2010 -2011	\$0
2011-2012	\$0*
2012-2013	\$0*

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of zero dollars (\$0) for the 2010-2011 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels paid in accordance with the most recent collective bargaining agreement. Note: Pursuant to RSA 273-A:12, if approved, the terms of this collective bargaining agreement, including the pay plan, but excluding cost of living increases, will continue in force and effect until a new agreement is executed. (Recommended by the School Board)

**The negotiated agreement may be re-opened by either party but any cost items over those set forth above must be approved by the voters*

Article 3 was read into the record.

Shall the District vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the Warrant, or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purpose set forth therein, totaling twenty-seven million, two hundred thirty-nine thousand, four hundred ninety-seven dollars (\$27,239,497). Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be twenty-seven million, four hundred thirty-five thousand, five hundred twenty-eight dollars (\$27,435,528), which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Hooksett School District, or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. (This article does not include appropriations in any other warrant articles). (Recommended by the School Board)

The total appropriation includes the appropriation of Federal and Food Service Funds

J. Pieroni suggested that the reduction to the budget be moved from the High School Line to the Insurance line.

Ray Miclette, 9 Evelyn Street: It appears that the estimate tax impact of the Budget Committee's budget is lower than the School Board's budget. The tax impact is .50/1000 and .58/1000 for the School Board. Both of those number are below the default budget which would be .68/1000.

The Budget committee's increase is 2% and the School Board is 2.5%

Article 5 on the Warrant is the Evergreen Clause. I think most of the voters are clueless as to what this clause means to municipalities with collective bargaining agreements. Provided we sign a contract with the teacher's union and voters approve Article 5, until a new contract is in place, we will be required to provide step increases.

D. Argo: Only the steps would be given not any increase.

Ray Miclette: What are the steps?

Phil Littlefield: The steps are experience levels similar to those for firefighters or police officers.

Ray Miclette: Article #5 is asking the town if they want the Board to support the NHSBA to repeal.

P. Littlefield: Prior to this being past, when a contract expired and no successor deemed, there was no movement in step. Evergreen says if no contract is signed, the teachers continue to move up the steps. The legislature passed a law which takes away local control and it takes bargaining ability away from towns. If the people you are negotiating with, there is a tendency for the negotiating team to be experienced and at maximum, there is no incentive to settle, so if that incentive is gone and the contract doesn't pass, it costs. So it is a bargaining chip which the School Board feels they need to negotiate. Some believe it doesn't give the voter an honest representation of the cost of that contract and takes power away in the negotiation.

Ray Miclette: With that said, to me, would explain in Article 2 why the teachers union are agreeing to zero (0) increase for three (3) years.

P. Littlefield: Year one essentially, salaries are frozen. The actual take home will be less. In year 2 and 3 of the contract, there is a wage re-opener if requested by either party. Any increase in year 2 and 3 will have to be approved by the voters.

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J. Pieroni: The voters are voting on no increase for three (3) years now. They will have to come back to the voters to change the contract and add steps and cost of living.

P. Littlefield: When this agreement expires, we will have a salary schedule. At the end of the contract, Evergreen will kick in and the people will move to the next step.

Ray Miclette: This is the confusion I have. If this will allow teachers forever into perpetuity to get step, this needs to be addressed.

Becky Berk, School Board member: The discussion at the School Board was the only way we can come forward with a teachers contract is with Evergreen and it is required to be in any contracted agreement. We added Article 5 to get input from voters on whether you like it or should we advocate to repeal it.

Ray Miclette: If I showed Article 5 to 15 people, no one would understand. It would not be what they feel, it would be a shot in the dark and they probably would vote no because when people don't understand they vote no. I don't think that the School Board needs to get voter input. As a School Board you should be fighting to repeal this because it isn't good for the taxpayer. This contract, I understand you need to put something in place but voters need to understand what they are signing on for. This is a trojan horse. This will come forward in 2013 and then we will have to pay. People don't understand this.

D. Argo: I agree with your view on Evergreen. It was a legislative act that brought that about. I don't want to take that out on the teachers.

Ray Miclette: I don't think the teachers don't need to be compensated. I'm reluctant to put something in place that doesn't allow us to manage that. If the town votes no, then we aren't under Evergreen. My issue is they don't understand what they are voting for. I want to hear that there is some way to educate the voters. No one is going to make the connection between Article 5 and Article 2.

P. Littlefield: In Article 2, we felt obligated to warn the voter. We cited the Evergreen in Article 2 and we will explain it at the Deliberative Session and we will have the law available.

R Miclette: Telling 40 people at the Deliberative Session will not educate the voters.

J. Pieroni: I have a problem with Article 5. I think the School Board should do what they feel is right. It is their duty.

Ray: I agree, we put the School Board in place to make those decisions.

Maura Ouellette: I think that most people don't understand Evergreen Clause. I don't know if everyone here understands and the Police Commission didn't understand and put \$50,000 in for the Evergreen. Then they got legal advice and removed the \$50,000. This must be a School Board decision. I'd rather see a poll for people's opinion regarding the High Schools. If we don't approve this contract, we buy another year to repeal the Evergreen and the teachers weren't getting anything anyway.

J. Pieroni: What is the implication if the contract doesn't pass?

P. Littlefield: We are required to go back to the table and renegotiate. There is a provision to call for a special meeting.

Ray Miclette: Can you offer step and then state that you can never invoke Evergreen.

M. Ouellette: If the legislature sees that towns and cities are not passing contracts because of Evergreen and we want to keep people working rather than give raises, we lose that control. This is more of a detriment. We need to say this isn't about whether the teachers deserve a raise but it is about losing control.

The message must get to every legislature and we run the risk of taking it out on our teachers a legislature that is out of control.

Ray Miclette: If I can buy one more year without a contract and if enough towns do this, we may send the message to the legislature collectively. I can only lobby so much and I don't have the deep pockets that NEA has. I appreciate the work of the Administration and the School Board.

D. Argo: A shop with no contract has no morale. No contract will negatively affect the school. When the economy turns, teachers will walk. Don't vote this contract down, go after the legislatures.

J. Pieroni: The only impact in this contract and the only reason for this contract is the Evergreen Clause.

Close public hearing 9:06 pm

MINUTES

November 19, 2009

J. Danforth motioned to accept the minutes of Nov. 19, 2009. Seconded by K. Hughes.

Vote unanimously in favor.

December 5, 2009

N. Comai motioned to approve the minutes of December 5, 2009 as presented. Seconded by J. Danforth.

Vote unanimously in favor

December 17, 2009

J. Danforth motioned to approve the minutes as presented. K. Hughes seconded.

Vote unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 pm.

Next meeting is January 21st at 6:30 for meeting and Public Hearing

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Ann Moynihan