

**TOWN OF MILLBURY  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES  
MILLBURY PUBLIC LIBRARY- MEETING ROOM**

**May 2, 2013**

**7:00 p.m.**

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**Present:** Chairman E. Bernard Plante, Francis King, Brian Ashmankas, Sandy Cristo, Mary Krumsiek, Town Manager Bob Spain, Chairman Jennifer Nietupski, William Borowski, Leslie Vigneau, Art Corey, Kevin Plante; Superintendent Susan Hitchcock, Chairman Michael O'Connor, Donald Gauthier, Albert Kupcinkas; John Bartosiewicz, Steve Hebert. Finance Director Brian Turbitt; School Business Manager, Rick Bedard, Tom Reilly, Matthew Ashmankas, Board of Assessors Chairman Jude Cristo; and concerned citizens.

Chairman Plante opened the meeting noting that the boards need to work together going into Town Meeting.

Finance Committee Chairman, Mr. O'Connor spoke thanking Mr. King who suggested the meeting. He asked to speak first because they are not on the same page with the Town Manager, Superintendent and School Committee. The manager presented the budget on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March. He had a \$460,631 deficient. He tried to take care of that problem by taking \$182,043 amount by splitting it 60/40 reductions from school and municipal. There was still more deficient-the town manager proposed that the tax payers approve to have \$278,588 borrowed for books and switches with first payments in 2015. This would keep the town under the levy limit thereby having a balanced budget. Mr. O'Connor describes this as a credit card. The finance committee recommended that that school budget be reduced by \$387,814 and the municipal side by \$72,817. Millbury Public School spending is 66% of the total budget which is well over historical spending. The finance committee does not believe this spending scheme is a good one. The school asked for a \$1,170,000 increase in their budget, which is 75% of the total budget. The finance committee has reviewed the municipal offices budget down to the last penny spent-but the schools budget they only get a summary budget with accounts where they plan to spend money. Based on that review he describes the problem as the schools spending is out of control. It is lacking balance with budgeting and spending. They do not plan for unexpected priorities. Current status has yet to comment on the finance committee recommendations since the 26<sup>th</sup> of March. School committee has yet to take a public response to the town manager's budget.

Mr. Borowski respects the finance committee but he 100% disagrees with them. He intends to stand up at town meeting and speak in favor of the warrant articles. He takes offense to the words schemes and out of control. They have 299 employees and 2000 children. He thinks that creative financing is important.

Mr. K. Plante said that in our contract negotiations have not done anything out of the ordinary and asked Bob Spain to concur. Mr. Spain said that he doesn't think this is out of the ordinary. We have to base our estimates on state aid and we do not have the actual numbers. The school has a couple of needs that they cannot get in their regular budget so he recommended doing it this way. One time, short term problem-he does not recommend doing this every year. He

agrees this should not be done all the time. Borrowing is not a good way of doing business but on a short term basis it may be necessary. We have controlled our debt and upgraded in our bond rating. There are just not enough dollars to do everything we need to.

Ms. Hitchcock passed out a document which was developed in 2011 which is a listing of all of the reductions. The math text books occur every 10 years and the technology was last done 12 years ago. The cost of the math text book adoption is \$103,000-which we would have had if we did not make the cuts. The math program does not meet the common core program mandated by the state. The technology budget has been eliminated. This is a onetime article to get us where we need to be.

Selectman King is in favor of the schools but at this point we got to this place because of over borrowing. If we have a credit card- we will not be able to fund it. He does not believe this is the right way to pay for this.

Mr. O'Connor-the finance committee is recommending at town meeting that the articles be approved. Trying to paint that the borrowing scheme is the same is untrue. We do not use debt-exclusions for textbooks and switches.

Chairman Plante said that they are doing a great job. But we do not have enough revenue to meet the expenses.

Ms. Hitchcock would not like it called a finance scheme. They reduced their staff by 14 people in the last 4 years whiling trying to keep teachers in classrooms. There is no money left in the technology or supply and material budget.

Mr. O'Connor said that you should make at least one of the payments in that first year.

Mr. Spain said that we do have to do this sometimes-he agrees that textbooks should not be borrowed, but the curriculum does not change every year. He is a very conservative person and found a way to get done what he needed to.

Jude Cristo spoke saying that borrowing is not the best way; he asked which one of these articles has to happen? Ms. Hitchcock said that it is not an either/or, both will have to done, she has accepted the \$109,000 reduction-they have identified the area it just needs to be voted. Mr. Cristo as the Chairman of the Assessors-asked if \$30,000 would help this problem.

Brian Turbitt said that on the town side he could find approximately \$50,000 for the first year payment but he needed help from the school for this to work.

Matthew Ashmankas said that the school budget has gone up 202% and the town side 109%. He does not think it is a sustainable situation; you should not do this by borrowing. This should not be decided at town meeting next week.

Selectman Ashmankas asked what would happen if these did not pass. Ms. Hitchcock said the textbooks would be cut and then looking at cutting staff. He also asked if the School Committee could commit to never using this action again. Chairman Neitupski said they do not have a crystal ball.

Mr. Kupcinkas asked if they can come up with the \$40,000; Ms. Hitchcock said yes but they will have to cut projects.

Mr. Bedard said that he will look into finding the money.

Selectman Ashmankas asked if there was any benefit to half of the textbooks or half of the technology. Ms. Hitchcock said no.

Selectman King asked to find a way to finance this without borrowing or at the very least without not making the first year payment.

Mr. Spain said that the budget that this is based on is the governor’s numbers. The budget will be significantly lower and we may have a \$500,000 deficient. We are looking at a more drastic budget-we do not have a choice-we have to have a balanced budget and it is going to take everyone working together to get this done. Senator Moore said that the senate numbers will not be in until at least May 15<sup>th</sup>.

Senator Moore spoke saying that they have been battling with the governor over taxes and a transportation package.

Mr. O’Connor said that the budget of record is the budget presented by the Town Manager on March 7<sup>th</sup>. The finance committee will present its findings at town meeting on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Adjournment**

Motion made by Selectman King, seconded by Selectman Cristo to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Tish Hayes

E. Bernard Plante \_\_\_\_\_

Francis B. King \_\_\_\_\_

Brian M. Ashmankas \_\_\_\_\_

Sandy J. Cristo \_\_\_\_\_

Mary Krumsiek \_\_\_\_\_