

September 1, 2010

A meeting of the Wareham School Committee was held on Wednesday, September 1, 2010, at Wareham Middle School Auditorium. Members present were Dr. Cliff Sylvia, Mr. Geoff Swett, Mr. Kenny Fontes, and Ms. Rachel Gillette as well as Superintendent, Dr. Rabinovitch, and recording secretary, Mrs. Ruiz. Absent was Mrs. Rhonda Veugen.

Chair Sylvia called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Discussion of Letter from Town Administrator Requesting Reduction in FY'11 School Budget

Dr. Sylvia stated that the purpose of this meeting was to discuss budget reduction strategies. The Town Administrator, Mr. Mark Andrews, was invited here tonight to present his recommendations. Chair Sylvia thanked Mr. Andrews and Mr. Sanguinet for coming.

Mr. Andrews stated that he was here to work together with the school department to make school cuts whole due to a reduction in Ch.70 funds. He provided a draft Article written by Mr. Sanguinet for the October Town Meeting warrant.

Mr. Andrews proposed using stimulus dollars for the current school year to make Ch.70 whole plus another \$150,000. Under Section 5A, the stimulus funds are for compensation, benefits, and other expenses to retain existing employees, recall or rehire.

Dr. Rabinovitch stated that the school department returned \$278,000 to the town, and he was willing to commit \$238,000 in SFSF funds. EduJobs was not passed at that time and this money would be extra funds since we had to cut the FY11 budget. Our budget was passed at Town Meeting in April. The school department must make an application for the EduJobs funds and will start receiving the money in November.

Ms. Gillette expressed concern with the school budget being at minimum for a long time and our kids being short changed.

Dr. Sylvia stated that he believes the EduJobs funds are to augment, not offset, the budget. He recognized the bind the town is in and appreciated the offer of \$150,000 but was more concerned with FY2012 budget.

Mr. Swett expressed concern that the EduJobs is grant dollars which will not be here a year from now so our budget will be in the hole for next year.

Mr. Andrews left the meeting due to a prior commitment to attend a Conservation Committee meeting. (7:33 p.m.)

Mr. Sanguinet suggested voting the draft article but taking the dollar amount out and placing the dollar amount at Town Meeting floor.

Mr. Swett suggested the town review 1) over \$500,000 in free cash not appropriated at town meeting – some portion needs to be on the table; 2) \$275,000 school department returned to the town as free cash this fall; and 3) \$2.1 million in health trust fund – premium holiday for employees.

Mr. Sanguinet left the meeting. (7:45 p.m.)

Dr. Rabinovitch stated that new positions have been added programmatically. He distributed documents including the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Chapter 70 Summary and comparison of FY'10 to FY'11. The SFSF (federal stimulus) funds are for two years, and we were hoping to use EduJobs to continue these positions.

Dr. Sylvia summarized what action the Committee could take this evening:

- 1) Consider the proposed article by Mr. Andrews striking the dollar amount and include "a sum of money" and continue to negotiate the dollar amount.
- 2) Come up with a dollar amount we can actually live with and reasonable to all parties.
- 3) Present an article of our own for town meeting by this Friday.
- 4) Amend the article on town meeting floor.

Mr. Fontes moved Article 2 Adjustment to FY2011 School Budget – To see if the Town will vote to reduce the FY2011 School Department Budget as approved at the April 28, 2010 Town Meeting Article 6 by a sum of money to defray the reductions in Education Local Aid reductions, or to do or act in any manner relative thereto, seconded by Mr. Swett.

Dr. Rabinovitch recommended including the words "net school spending" after Budget.

Mr. Swett rescinded his second, Mr. Fontes rescinded his motion.

Mr. Fontes moved Article 2 Adjustment to FY2011 School Budget – To see if the Town will vote to reduce the FY2011 School Department Budget net school spending as approved at the April 28, 2010 Town Meeting Article 6 by a sum of money to defray the reductions in Education Local Aid reductions, or to do or act in any manner relative thereto, seconded by Mr. Swett.

VOTE: yea – 4; nay – 0; abstain - 0

It was agreed to have the budget sub-committee continue conversations with the town on a dollar amount for the article.

Any other business

a. Dr. Sylvia stated that Dr. Rabinovitch was unable to attend the meeting of September 8th because of Rosh Hashanah. After discussion Mr. Swett moved to cancel the meeting of Sept. 8th, seconded by Mr. Fontes.

VOTE: yea – 4; nay – 0; abstain - 0

The next regular meeting will be on Sept. 22nd.

b. Mr. Fontes reported that the transportation subcommittee has completed its work except for the RFP. He would like to allow time for Mr. Tatro to evaluate our transportation department first.

Dr. Rabinovitch will develop a timeline associated with a RFP and report back at next school committee meeting.

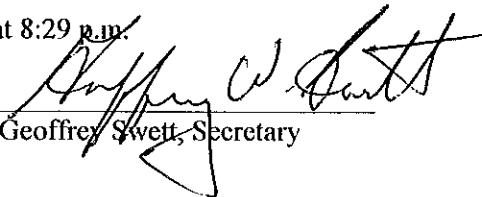
Dr. Sylvia publicly thanked those who served on the transportation sub-committee and for the valuable information given to the school board. The Chair placed this subcommittee on recess for awhile. Dr. Sylvia will send a letter from the school department thanking the members for their service.

Mr. Fontes moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Gillette.

VOTE: yea – 4; nay – 0; abstain - 0

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:


Geoffrey Swett, Secretary