Approved: May 12, 2014

TOWN OF WINCHENDON BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES JOINT MEETING WITH SCHOOL COMMITTEE MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2014

Town Hall 2nd Floor Auditorium 109 Front Street, Winchendon

Present: Robert O'Keefe, Chairman

Elizabeth R. Hunt, Chairwoman

Fedor Berndt C. Jackson Blair Keith Barrows James M. Kreidler, Jr., Town Manager Linda A. Daigle, Executive Assistant

School Committee Members Present:

Mike Niles, Chairman

Mike Barbaro Susan Burdsall Andrea Suchocki Dr. Khelfaoui, Supt. of Schools Jane Ripley, Asst. Supt. of Schools

Melissa Dunnet, School Bus. Administrator

Barrie Martin, Secretary

Absent: Chris McDonald

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- ATM Article 30 Ingleside Purchase withdrawal memo from Robinson-Broadhurst Winchendon Enhancement Committee (attached)
 - o Ingleside Map with potential "Community Center" components (attached smaller version)
- Council on Aging Appointment Interest letter from O. Anne Coderre (filed)
- Entertainment Permit Application for June 21, 2014 "Roaming Railroad," Unitarian Universalist Church (filed)
- Entertainment Permit Application Road Race June 21, 2014 Morin 5K & Kids McFun Run, Clark Memorial/YMCA (filed)
- JOINT MEETING WIH SCHOOL COMMITTEE:
 - o FY15 Proposed Budget (attached)
 - o Annual Town Meeting Warrant (filed)
 - o Updated Indirect Cost Agreement and Net School Spending Compliance Summary dated April 10, 2014 (attached)
- Minutes for approval:
 - o Monday, March 24, 2014, Regular Meeting
 - o Monday, March 24, 2014, EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman O'Keefe called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America. The meeting aired live on local cable access channel 8.

Disclosure of Audio/Video Recording: The Gardner News Reporter disclosed she would be audio recording the meeting this evening.

SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS:

Hunt thanked the Parks and Recreation Committee for the Easter Egg Hunt this past weekend and all the volunteers that were there. Over two hundred kids attended and it was a great event.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Supt. John Deline, Dave Romanowski and Pastor J. Lillie came forward representing the Winchendon Enhancement Committee. Mr. Romanowski announced, for the time being, the withdrawal and postponement of Article 30 of the Annual Town Meeting warrant regarding the purchase of the Ingleside Property due to comments that were heard at the last meeting and for some additional reasons including having time to put a plan in place. A brief explanation of the project was given by Supt. Deline who said we are looking in some way for the Town to gain ownership of the Ingleside property off of Maple St. It is currently owned by The Winchendon School, consists of 43.1 acres of land with one half mile of water frontage on Whitney Pond that they would like to see owned by the Town and used for a community center, not being developed. He mentioned some of the activities they hope to see there are athletic fields, a skate park, an art center, perhaps a water/splash park. He explained this isn't a project we were looking for but it fell in place. There will be something here for everyone in Winchendon, for all age groups, forever. He hates to see it go by without checking into the feasibility and putting in our best effort to make it possible for the Town. A map of the property with the ideas of the Committee was displayed. Deline stated the map shows some potential use of the property that is not set in stone.

J. Lillie informed the Board that this idea came about as a result of the Winchendon forum that happened last September and hosted by the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation. A number of things were brought up at that forum from the fourteen tables that were set up. Common issues raised that everyone felt needed to be addressed were greater unity between civic organizations within Town and methods of communication, as well as a skate park and art center that came up several times. The committee hashed out a lot of different ideas, met weekly to decide what it was that would meet the communities needs and sort of do justice to that forum. We realized we have many Makerspace programs in town. Makerspace is just a program where people come together to create something. We are all looking for space. He mentioned there are civic collaborations that are now already going on: community gardens with the Winchendon CAC has been started this year but they don't have a whole lot of space to dedicate; a small art center is run at the Cornerstone Church but it is not conducive to a full art center. This property happened to come along at the right time and it looks like it can truly be developed if we put a proper business plan in place. We are postponing this article for this plan but we all believe this can happen and have great passion for this project and want to see it come to fruition. Deline added it won't be easy, could take decades to come to full fruition but hopefully it will help keep residents here and bring people from surrounding towns here. O'Keefe recommended the committee come back ahead of the Special Town Meeting with additional information about this project. The committee was thanked.

APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS:

Council on Aging Appointment – Anne Coderre – Hunt moved to appoint with the recommendation of the Council on Aging. Berndt seconded. By a vote of all aye, the motion carried. Ms. Coderre was applauded.

PERMIT/LICENSE APPLICATIONS, HEARINGS:

Entertainment Permit June 21, 2014 – "Roaming Railroad," Unitarian Universalist Church - Susan Faucher came forward and explained the trackless train that they did last year as well. It will run from Grove Street to Summer Street from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. offering rides. It will stop and be gone before the parade starts. Blair moved to approve; Keith seconded. By roll call vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.

Road Race June 21, 2014 – Morin 5K & Kids McFun Run, Clark Memorial/YMCA – With the applicant, Ms. Whittemore not in attendance, Dave Romanowski stepped forward to represent the Clark Memorial/YMCA. He stated the runs start at 8:30 a.m. and should be done by 11:00 a.m. Hunt moved to approve; Fedor seconded. By roll call vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.

JOINT MEETING WITH SCHOOL COMMITTEE:

Chairman Niles called the School Committee joint meeting to order at 7:17 p.m. and asked to start with the School budget.

Draft FY15 School Budget

Mr. Niles asked if there were any line item concerns they would like to ask about. Selectwoman Hunt asked about the columns on page 17 in the School's FY15 Proposed Budget wondering if the columns FY13 and FY14 were actual numbers or what was budgeted. School Business Administrator Melissa Dunnet replied that FY13 is what was approved as the budget and confirmed; it was not the actual figures used. She committed to redo the Report to include the actual number and get them out tomorrow. Hunt stated she likes to see the information to compare. Hunt asked to clarify some of the numbers in the line items. For instance, the clothing budget for the janitors is not \$800 for one janitor but for the group of janitors. Dunnet confirmed it was for the group. Hunt stated last year's report listed how many people it included and asked to have that information. Dunnet said they could correct that and add a Full Time Equivalencies (FTEs) column. Ms. Suchocki asked if it was presented that way for the Town budget and available to the public. Kreidler replied that there is a document that the Dept. Heads submit that show this that is available for the public. O'Keefe asked about any major changes in the budget from past recent years. Niles stated he doesn't know if there is any significant major change at all other than on Page 16 "Retirement and Cuts." Dr. Khelfaoui stated the major difference is in order to remain level funded, almost level funded, from last year, we had to make the cuts on Page 16 and listed the positions and retirements that will take place in order to remain level funded with last year. O'Keefe asked for an explanation of "level funded" seeing several \$100,000 in cuts wondering if the overall budget is \$700,000 less than the current fiscal year? Dr. Khelfaoui stated the overall budget listed on Page 1 is roughly a few thousand dollars less than FY14. FY14 is \$19,612,339 and FY15 is at \$19,596,255. In order to sustain that level of funding, honor contracts, we have to cut to remain level funded. The reason of the \$700,000 in cuts is not because of a \$700,000 reduction in the budget, it is the contractual obligations that need to be fulfilled; O'Keefe explained and added if the state would increase their aid by \$700,000, we wouldn't need the cuts.

Mike Barbaro shared some highlights of the report. After School Programs were added, a ski club, and other programs that were put in place between the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation and the Murdock Trust. We want kids to enjoy and stay after school and it is also a way to compete with other schools. We have been able to maintain the after school programs for the children. A lot of things coming through we want to continue but it's a fine balance and he commended the Superintendent for these programs. O'Keefe added so often we get caught up with the numbers and wanted to recognize the School for the work that is getting done. Niles talked about the Murdock Academy for Success with the Pilot program growing from six now to fifteen. The kids are proud of themselves and the school and learning on a level that fits their needs. Steve Haddad is the wonderful leader over there. Ever child we get back gives us money next year in the budget. The reputation is getting out there. It helps the child and us. A plan for next year is to grow the program and move it to Memorial School.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles

Ulysse Maillet, Finance Committee Chairman, came forward to make a comment and recommendations on specific articles within the warrant. He then read a prepared statement:

"For the last four months the Indirect Cost Agreement or dis-agreement has taken more of our time then it deserves. Attempts have been made to resolve the issue with no measurable results. It appears that missteps were made on both sides of the issue. The deeper you dwell into the Indirect Cost Agreement for the past four years, the more confusing one gets. The Finance committee has extended a hand in an attempt to mediate the issue and no agreeable solution surfaced.

Last week at the Finance Committee hearing we heard comments from the Superintendent and the Town Manager about Articles 17,18,19,and 20. Both sides have a clear difference of opinion regarding these four Medicaid articles and both may be valid but again no solution surfaced. We need to set these articles aside before Town Meeting and figure out a way to resolve the issues. I don't feel comfortable going to Town Meeting with these articles in their present format. The issue will not be resolved and will continue to

resurface. There's no reason for this issue to continue consuming our valuable time. As adults we can solve any problems before us, if we are willing to <u>compromise</u>.

Ladies and gentlemen this issue needs to be resolved.

Mr. Chairmen with your permission I would like to make a final proposal:

If the school Committee withdraws their four Medicaid articles that have no source of funding anyways, the BOS, the Finance Committee, the School Committee, the Superintendent and the Town Manager all agree to jointly sponsor an article at the Fall Town Meeting to transfer a sum of money equal to the two years that haven't yet been brought to Town Meeting and that future years the school also receives an amount equal to 20% of the Medicaid reimbursement, provided however, that the school spend this money each year on items that would qualify for Net School Spending so that, if needed, these moneys cover all or a portion of any indirect reconciliation shortages."

Dr. Khelfaoui thanked Mr. Maillet for his recommendation and stated it would only work if Article 14 was amended as well which already commits 100% of all Medicaid in advance. Mr. Maillet explained his recommendation was that the Boards get together to support an article for the Fall Town Meeting to support the shortfall in Article 19 and 20. The Town Manager stated this is the first time hearing this and to Dr. Khelfaoui's point, understanding you, Mr. Maillet, that you are suggesting the two articles previously appropriated come off the table and the two that have not yet been appropriated go to the next Fall Town Meeting, which is around \$63,000 plus or minus dollars and that each year thereafter the 20% goes to the School Dept. again. This ties in with what he said in the Finance Committee's meeting last week, moving forward he is very amendable for a written agreement on Medicaid reimbursement that not only list the percentages but that we do codify the agreement at whatever the percentage is agreed upon and specifically that it be given as part of the Net School Spending within the current year projected that we will see the revenue getting away from that year and a half out. The only issue that comes up with Mr. Maillet's proposal is what Dr. Khelfaoui brought up. For FY15, the way the budget is currently written and balanced, 100% of Medicaid reimbursement projection for FY15 is applied to transportation. We can agree about the FY10 and FY11 articles, the FY12 and FY13 articles, FY14 hasn't been closed yet, but FY15 has been spoken for in the transportation article; we are locked in and doesn't know of another way. Mr. Maillet understands his point and hadn't looked back at Article 14. He sees how it muddies things up. O'Keefe wanted to be clear how we are taking care of FY12 and FY13 at the Fall Town Meeting. Kreidler stated at this point he didn't know with a possibility of free cash becoming available depending on how Article 14 closes at Town Meeting. Absent that, we are maxed under raise and appropriate, under Proposition 2 1/2. He thought of having the Town Accountant review local receipts to see if there is anything since January when she produced the document and this evening to see if it gives her any comfort in that there might be room to increase it; but he wasn't hopeful with that. Absent that, between now and the Fall Town Meeting making a cut someplace in the General Government budget to try and absorb that \$63,000. Something in the budget today, wouldn't be there tomorrow would be the consequence. O'Keefe asked what the School Committee thought of the proposal rather than go to Town Meeting with the four articles trying to get money without knowing where it would be coming from that we all agree now, that at the Fall Town Meeting approximately \$63,000 is given to the school with it being something you can count on and have in their budget. Dr. Khelfaoui replied he is happy to do so, appreciated the gesture but stressed he needed assurance that it won't be taken back. Kreidler explained close to a decade ago there was a timing issue revolving around funds and a conditional vote was taken at Town Meeting. He offered that the last two articles be moved and seconded, presumably everyone at Town Meeting follows suit, that they be appropriated out of stabilization with the following contingencies that no money be drawn from stabilization to pay those unless the Fall Town Meeting doesn't fund it. If we fund it before fall, we don't touch stabilization. Barbaro's asked why we don't take the money now from stabilization and then just replace it. Kreidler explained that we are going out to borrow for a Police Station and a ladder truck. When we do that the bond rating agency will come back in and reevaluate and a conditional vote will give him a better argument then taking money out of stabilization now. Niles said they have a meeting on Thursday night and can discuss but he is comfortable in supporting this. Chairman Maillet was thanked for helping to solve these problems.

O'Keefe then asked how do we get FY14 resolved and how do we take care of the future. Kreidler said to Dr. Khelfaoui's point in moving to amend the transportation article from 100% down to 80% would mean a reduction in funding that article for roughly another \$25,000, he committed between now and Town Meeting to work with the Town Accountant to tease out \$25,000 in anticipated revenues from other lines which will allow whoever moves the article to amend it to be 80% of the Medicaid reimbursement so the extra 20% can go the FY15 School budget. Dr. Khelfaoui suggested the adjustment to the budget be done at the Fall Town Meeting but the Town Manager preferred it be taken care of in the Spring.

Ms. Burdsall said with respect to Ulysse and suggestions of the Finance Committee having these things worked out between the committees she is for it, but the style of the manner of the accounting here needs to be spoken to. It's a school based Medicaid reimbursement program to start with. Mr. Kreidler may have been misquoted recently in the newspaper sort of insinuating a 80/20 split was through the Board of Selectmen's generosity. She doesn't feel that way. Anything less than 100% going towards the school dept., where these funds are generated and where this entire program is supported by the school and school personnel, she is not sure why an 80/20 split is considered fair by the Board of Selectmen. She thought the funds were in a revolving account to be used for special education for an emergency buffer. When they were informed that was not the case, we were not given a grace period of time. Monies generated by the School Department but realizing back only 20% of it and somehow it also reflects in a Net School Spending or minimum contribution to the Town she thought unfair. Kreidler replied if he was reported as stating it was a gift, that is probably too cheeky, but it kind of fits. The law makes it clear that those revenues are General Government revenues not withstanding that they are generated by activities that take place in the School Department. A parallel he drew for this is that \$5,000,000 under the Net School Spending formula comes from the General Government side of the house to the School Department. That \$5,000,000 is generated here by work done in this Town Hall. The parallel does exist where there are funds generated by one arm given to the other. This is just an extension of that. Beyond that, the notion that 100% for the purpose of the work that is being done doesn't bear up to scrutiny, he believes. He's heard at meetings that 20% of a clerk, 40% of a clerk, even 50% of clerk, \$25,000, and then there is an explanation that these twenty-one service providers each have to do these time logs as though that work is necessary for the sole purpose of the work needed for the process of the Medicaid reimbursement which is not the case. That work must be done as part of the provision of the service under federal guidelines. He didn't want it to get to this level of detail but wanted the air to be cleared about this.

Dr. Khelfaoui responded that he is sick and tired of hearing/talking about Medicaid. He explained it does take a lot more than that. Yes, it has to be logged but someone does have to take the logs, compiling, processing and do the work. Twenty percent barely covers that. If you agree on 20%, we will do the best work we can do to make sure the Town gets the maximum amount back. O'Keefe, wrapping up, repeated Ms. Burdsall's comment about the funds being lost. The School administrative staff should have been aware of it as well and didn't want to see the School in any way blame the Accounting office. He does agree with Ms. Burdsall that the School should be receiving more than the 20% and while he would like to see the following Spring Town Meeting, the dollar amount being given in the article where we fund the school should include the Medicaid money right there and over the next ten years increasing it one percent each year up to 30% and if everyone is willing continuing up to 100%. O'Keefe asked how we accomplish this. Kreidler replied, to tell him to do it. O'Keefe asked his fellow Board members how they felt about this. Hunt would like to know what the impact would be. Kreidler said using today as a guide, \$125,000 is the projection, and the impact would be \$1,250 at 1%. Not extraordinary but over time the number would add up. He thinks it could work. Prospectively, this type of stuff can be done. It's difficult with the warrant we have before us now. They discussed having this outlined in the agreements.

Berndt moved that the Board of Selectmen instruct the office of the Town Manager to each year when producing the spring budget, that the funding article for the schools which currently is net minimum minus direct to also include the 20% Medicaid increasing 1% for the next ten years. Barrows seconded for discussion and asked how frequent the Indirect Cost Agreement was reviewed. Kreidler replied roughly every three years. Barrows asked to amend the motion going forward to 25% and then to escalate 1% each year to a maximum of 30%, at that time a review of the specific agreement will be done by the parties to determine if it goes any further. Berndt seconded.

O'Keefe asked the School Committee for their thoughts. Ms. Burdsall appreciates the compromise making things better for the School Dept. and working this out and moving it forward in their direction each year but did wish the ratio was turned around. Barbaro was glad of the compromise and would like to see it a 50/50 split eventually. O'Keefe mentioned in the future he hopes we are also talking about the Town giving in excess of net minimum. Kreidler pointed out that it was brought to his attention over the weekend and he confirmed on the DESE website that over the last decade, the Town has for seven of the last ten years appropriated and expended over and above net minimum. We should be mindful of speaking the data and not the story. Until we've had this issue with the suspected shortfall in FY12, each of the prior seven years we were above minimum spending. O'Keefe would like to see us over net minimum every year. Down the road, we can start talking about 1% over net minimum, 2% over net minimum, and 10% over net minimum, etc.

By a roll call vote of Barrows aye, Hunt aye, Berndt aye, Blair aye and O'Keefe aye, the amendment to the motion was approved unanimously.

By roll call vote of Barrows aye, Hunt aye, Berndt aye, Blair aye and O'Keefe aye, the amended motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Maillet didn't want people to misunderstand his motives and thought it would be helpful to come to some kind of agreement to resolve the issue. He was thanked.

Dr. Khelfaoui wanted to recap for a complete understanding: Articles 17 and 18 would be pulled out, Articles 19 and 20 would stay, amendments to the articles will be funded from stabilization conditionally and the Town Manager will find the language to do that. The Town Manager and the Board of Selectmen are agreeing to amend Article 14 to reduce the use of FY15 Medicaid funds to 80% and the Town Manager will take the 20% and work with them to figure out how to put the 20% in the budget for FY15. Kreidler said he has been figuring it out while they were talking. His Article 21, the School budget, contemplates any number of sources. There is no reason why we can't see as an amendment the inclusion of that 20% or \$25,000 right within that budget at the start of FY15. Dr. Khelfaoui said he had an idea to help if we weren't going to fund the two articles that you have now accepted to fund is to actually count those now towards Article 21 to lower the burden to the Town, not just the 20% you are talking about but those as well. They are trying to do anything they can to minimize the damage and to try and fund the school's properly. Going forward he understands we will have an agreement, starting at Keith's suggestion of 25% on top of net minimum school spending and it will increase up to 5% for review. Kreidler committed getting this in writing to him electronically at close of business tomorrow. The minutes will reflect what it will say.

Article 15, Mike Niles explained this is an attempt to address the action that took place at Special Town Meeting in December in regards to looking at one side of the calculation of the \$109,000 that was added to our indirects trying to adjust back whatever the charter school reimbursement number is at the latest possible date up to town meeting. It's anywhere between \$42,000 and \$62,000 at this point. Dr. Khelfaoui stated this was talked about at the Finance Committee's meeting and he understands the Town Manager supports this article. Kreidler said if we are dealing with just the assessments, yes because that is net/net. The issue of using the reimbursement in this fashion is different of how we have done it in the past; historically it's done at the end of the year with reconciliation. What you are saying you are asking to do and what the article says he fears are two different things. What you are asking is to readdress the indirect number such as that the \$109,000 increase in indirects in December is offset by whatever the charter reimbursement is now as opposed to waiting until the reconciliation. Dr. Khelfaoui explained the \$109,000 figure is based on the Cherry Sheet of July 5, 2013. In December he had argued why are we using a number in July when we have a much more recent and accurate number. The \$109,000 increasing the indirect cost at that time was strictly to tuition debt paid out to other towns, to other charter schools. He is suggesting that figure in and of itself has changed and will continue to change and will become much more accurate on the eye of May 12. By that time, very few kids move. Along with that, the same thing applies to charter school reimbursement for the same reason. Whatever figure we get from the DESE as late as the night before Town Meeting can be amended on Town floor. That will be the closest real number for our budget. Kreidler said he could agree entirely if the

assessment for choice and charter has changed since December which was when we used the July 5th Cherry Sheet numbers. That has no impact on the school budget as a total net school spending number or the town's residual that is left in its budget. As you know, if the indirect number goes up, the availability for your other uses goes down. If choice or charter goes up or down by a nickel, that's all staying with the same pool of funds of the school's current net school spending budget. That part that he will continue to disagree with him because it has a real impact, is midbudget, midstream changing the mechanism that we have always used for over a decade regarding the reimbursement piece. If we go to floor of Town Meeting in May and say the indirect number should be changed and we take into consideration charter reimbursement revenues, what you have done is you have put more revenue on the table for the school budget and left a hole in the General Government budget because it currently is on the table for a projected revenue for the General Government budget. There would need to be a corresponding cut, dollar for dollar in the General Government budget with that move to put the reimbursement on the table now as opposed to reconciliation. That one he can't support because he doesn't know how \$42,000 or \$63,000 gets cut from the General Government budget. O'Keefe broke it into two separate issues. We have the FY14 charter reimbursement and then there is when and how we handle it. Having heard the Superintendent say the way we have been doing it for the past decade is not fair, the Town Manager stated he planned for it and built it into the revenue projection and indirect cost sheet going forward for FY15. In FY14 that's not how the budget was built. Dr. Khelfaoui was asked and agreed to how it is being handled for FY15. For FY14 he disagrees and explained that it is revenue that comes from the state to the schools. Why would the town build its budget around revenue that's coming from the state to the school and having no idea what that number is? Kreidler said that is an excellent question. The net effect of how it is being done is it comes in on the Cherry Sheet as a list of total revenues available that at the end of the day whatever the fiscal year closes, whatever that dollar figure is, is the school's money. It has been used in effect as a hedge against fluctuations in indirect costs. The way the prior Town Accountant had this structured and it goes back to some of the comments in emails you have seen when Dr. Azar was the former Superintendent and suggested changing this last time that revenue comes in and sits in the books and is available to hedge against any overage in the indirects when we do the reconciliation. Ultimately, it goes to the school, it has to go to the school but it is one piece that the Town has the ability to say let's hold it in hedge in case of anything that could happen with the indirects adding 75% of the time the indirects have ridden higher than the estimates. Moving forward he is willing to move away from that decade long practice and actually net it out up front. Dr. Khelfaoui said he appreciates what he says in using it to hedge and balance your risk, he can see but he says we are in the same predicament because back before the beginning of the year they have built their budget on that figure. If you are going to not count the revenue the state has given us now within this current year, he has to now go by law to amend the budget figures he has presented to the state and lower them to what he is spending. There are three sides to the report to the State. One side is the Indirect Cost from the Town, one side is untouchable and is by the state and one side we give them is our budget that we spend. This particular figure of reimbursement that you are talking about is a figure that neither you nor I can touch. The state themselves fill it. When the state fills that cell, that number becomes immediate part of Net School Spending money that we are counting on. We started the year with a number and in December you made us lower that number by \$109,000 and we had to change the budget by literally reducing the available funds we have to spend by that amount. He is hoping to correct it now in May or he'll have to find a way to cut. As much as he appreciates he needs it to balance a potential risk, he has an even greater risk that is current because he already has counted on it in his real budget. Kreidler said we are speaking the same language but come from two different places. When you did your reductions in December after the \$109,000 Town Meeting action, his presumption is he reduced the \$109,000 from the School Committee's expended column and increased the \$109,000 in the indirects town spent column. supposed to net/net. We got into some trouble back in FY12 when the \$145,000 was reduced from the expended but not increased in the indirect. He wants to make certain we are not doing the same thing here. Kreidler ask the Superintendent, when you made the amendment, you decreased the available to expend...the Superintendent interrupted and said "I can't, Mr. Kreidler. You know the cells. The figure that you increase by \$109,000 is not your figure. If you had come to me and said I need to increase my Indirect Cost by \$109,000 because my insurance went up, then yes I do agree with you. He can't change what the state puts in. You raised the state figure on your books but the state didn't raise it. Kreidler understood and appreciated him for clarifying that. He said all we have from the State is the Cherry Sheet. We know that Dept. of Secondary Education (DESE) keeps a running tally but the last official document we had to work with from the Dept. of Revenue (DOR) which unfortunately trumps DESE is the Cherry Sheet of July 5. Dr. Khelfaoui said actually the Cherry Sheet does not trump those. The latest figure that

everybody recognizes is those cells that neither the town nor the school has a right to touch. The problem we are running in to now is those figures the state is showing us they didn't go by the \$109,000 because they didn't agree with the Cherry Sheet of July 25th; but by law because you reduced our available budget by \$109,000, we had to go and lower that. The net effect of that is devastating to the town because net school shortage is going to go up by \$109,000. It works against the Town to do that because you made us lower on our side the state figure in reality did not go up. Kreidler said to be clear and he is tracking with the Superintendent, the DOR, the agency that is solely empowered to set the tax rate for the community so that we all could operate, said you must amend the indirect to account for this Cheery Sheet increase of \$109,898. That's all we could do.

O'Keefe asked the audience by a show of hands how many people fully understood this questions and article. About 10% of the audience raised their hands. We have to find a way to resolve this before Town Meeting. In the past it was done a certain way, the future has been addressed of how it is going to be handled; we just need to fix the current year.

Kreidler added that the problem is far greater for the FY14 article with learning from the Town Accountant after asking her for an updated look at the indirect cost sheet as of today. It is far greater than the \$42,000 or \$62,000 that you are chasing. The costs that are being generated for things like health insurance, liability insurance, and workman's compensation insurance are trending higher and she feels confident that we will be higher than the original estimate than what this budget was built. Dr. Khelfaoui talked about transparency and said he would have no problem with an article addressing an increase in indirect cost because we have serious projections showing a potential increase. They would have to sit down and work on it to address it. We can't say that we are going to increase the indirect cost because of a state figure which is the tuition paid out that only the state determines that and we will not count the tuition reimbursement for the time being because he would like that amount because potentially they might have insurance or retirement rates that are higher. He said he would need to know now about any increases in insurance so it can be addressed now. Kreidler said he got this information literally this evening in an attempt to have the most current data and would be happy to share it with him electronically first thing in the morning. The point he is making is we can say we will address the \$109,000 on whether it should have or not have been done; DOR held the cards that night so it had to be done; you can address the \$42,000 or \$62,000 number for tuition in but all of that is going to be spitting in the wind against what is trending for the other indirect costs. We do have to talk. This is fresh data this evening and we need to talk about it. Dr. Khelfaoui said we would not turn away any projections but said he needs to have the numbers from the 2013 audit in order to make any amendments to the state and does need any information about any increases to deal with it.

O'Keefe asked the Board of Selectmen and School Committee to have the Superintendent and the Town Manager get together in the next week to see what the current reconciliation will be and resolve Article 15. If both parties come to agreement, than we can go to Town Meeting united in support. Dr. Khelfaoui suggested the Town Manager and the Finance subcommittee sit down and start looking at this. O'Keefe replied the two gentlemen need to resolve it with the concern of timing. Dr. Khelfaoui said he would like to have someone in addition to him so he hears things right. Kreidler stated he could bring with him anyone he wanted.

Kreidler said last point, this article does not allow for a change in indirect costs. What it says is to increase the appropriation for FY14. He thinks the School's Counsel who drafted the article should speak with the Moderator. It will be his judgment as to what is within the four corners of the written article. The way it reads now we couldn't say we want to increase or decrease indirects because this doesn't contemplate that at all. This says solely we want to increase the school's FY14 budget by some number which means we have net school spending appropriated, we want to put something on top of it. Khelfaoui stated he would have his attorney look at it and amend it properly to take care of what it needs to take care of. There was a commitment by the Superintendent and the Town Manager to get together within the next week.

Article 16 - Niles stated this article is asking is for \$14,962.42 to defray the cost of a new boiler problem at MMHS. The article will be amended in the motion to identify the source from a prior boiler issue that has this remaining balance in it.

Article 21 - Net School Spending - Dr. Khelfaoui said he had a meeting with the Town Manager and Mr. Roger Hatch from the DESE Finance Department. It was brought to our attention again and through our legal counsel that the way we have always written our articles on budget as in Article 12 leads them to trouble especially when the consolidations are done after the closings of the year. We asked what other towns are doing and asked the attorney to write us an article that most towns do. The intent is to make it a simple article not getting into the calculation of the budget. Secondly, the articles were submitted just before the deadline because they didn't have the figures from the Town Manager regarding the indirect cost what they would be so we did the best estimate we had on that one. We cut 14 positions to try and stay level funded. We did increase a little bit on our indirect cost side to have a little buffer. We had no clue what the actual number will be. Mr. Kreidler has now given us a \$3,200,000 something estimated indirect cost that represents \$287,381 that we build our budget on. He didn't put a number in because he had no idea what the Town Manager was going to do to support the Medicaid accounts or not. He's not in the business of trying to get as much money from the Town Manager, only what they need. He needed to figure out what he is getting. If he is getting something from Medicaid we can apply it to Article 21. Also whatever might come from the state; last year they were surprised with a small amount of \$70,000 more. He's hoping by May 12 to see what is secured so we can count towards this. One of the changes in this budget is that we are now going to use just about every revolving account balance we had the luxury of carrying last year. We've spent two years rebuilding the schools; have done excellent work in bringing the spirit back to the school with the After School Programs, the athletics have improved, the Murdock Academy for Success helped them tremendously capturing students from another school district for \$30,000 they didn't have before. They have been able to prevent the descent of one of our students for a cost of \$60,000 and they have also recovered two dropouts from a year ago bringing in additional funding. All in all, that is the success we are counting on to continue. This is not the year that he will have to worry about trying to fit in with the number and go back and cut, cut, cut. He doesn't build for two years and then destroy everything in one. His recommendation on this article, knowing what the Town Manager wants him to do is to reestimate, recalculate the indirect cost by a higher amount to \$287,381. He knows and promises that every penny he gets from Medicaid towards that to help reduce but he cannot tell us right now going in today and reduce the budget by that much at this time and continue on building on this success.

Kreidler said about the indirect cost and increase over what you projected in your budget when you built it and what you have been since advised it is going to be the \$287,000, just for the record, you knew those numbers as soon as I did, perhaps not as early as you would have liked it but when he found out that insurance was trending to increase, he told him. When he got word with the more significant hit for the retirement occurring, he emailed him within minutes of having been told. He wants just for the record that this isn't a number he knew that for some untoward reason he decided to keep to himself and spring on him after he made his budget. Part of the problem with doing these indirect costs is the numbers aren't known until they are known. We don't know from MIIA, our liability and Workmen's Comp carrier what our rates are going to be for next year until roughly now. He can't give him numbers other than his best estimate until he has the actual numbers. Kreidler asked if it was his intention to not list the indirect cost number in their school budget article. Dr. Khelfaoui replied from now on they write the budget articles as they have presented in Article 21, no longer listing numbers for this and that. Kreidler explained procedurally if you move an article, Article 21, that is the net school spending number and it doesn't reflect the indirect cost number, we will have attempted to doubly appropriate \$3.3 million dollars. Normally your Net School Spending article will be \$15 million less \$3 million for indirects, which then means its accounted for on the books because its being appropriated in the General Government budget, and not reflected in your education budget; it will be doubly appropriated. If its appropriated as it is currently being contemplated in the General Government budget for your health insurance, liability insurance, worker's comp, etc., if that's appropriated in the General Government budget and not reflected in your education budget, we will have doubly appropriated. You will be appropriating the full \$15 million here and he's already appropriated the \$3 million plus over here. Dr. Khelfaoui asked where he would have appropriated that in. Kreidler said the same way it is this year and has been for fifteen years. When the town's budget is voted, you will see in the warrant for instance, health insurance for \$2,000,000. Contained within that number is \$1.2 million of School Department health insurance. He's appropriating the indirect costs in his budget.

Dr. Khelfaoui understood and said he would put in Article 21 a budget number that would subtract out the indirect cost number so we don't have the problem of the double appropriation. Kreidler offered if he preferred to have it all in their budget. Vote that big number and we'll reduce my budget on Town floor the indirect cost number. Then those numbers live in your budget and you can monitor them real time. Dr. Khelfaoui said they can think about that, consider it for the future but that he can only speak about this one in having no problem with getting the closest indirect cost number from him on May 11th and present the net so that we don't double the appropriation. However, he wanted to make it clear that the net that you will see is not going to be necessarily the Net School Spending minus your indirect costs. Kreidler understood and wanting to make clear that the intention of the School Committee is that their School budget is going to be net school spending plus some number, approximately whatever they believe the suggested shortfall is, less these other sources that they are bringing to bear. Dr. Khelfaoui said before today he did not know that the Board/Town Manager would be supporting the \$25,000 and \$60,000 and knows now they have this He can take care of his budget and reduce what he tells him so there are no mistakes, no double appropriation, he will come up with the number. To be completely transparent and fair it isn't necessarily going to be net school spending minus the indirect. His responsibility to this Town, to this School Committee to this Board of Selectmen is to try to give you the best number to run the schools appropriately and building on what they are trying to do. The problem we have is a town that has 400 students going outside. This is a large number. We are doing everything we can to build the credibility of our schools and restore faith in our parents to keep our children here. If we succeed on building on that, we probably won't be talking about this problem at all in the future. He said the Schools are the Town's most important investment.

Kreidler appreciated Dr. Khelfaoui's job is to provide the best quality education as you can and to advocate on behalf of the students. He hopes he can also appreciate as well that that is one part of it that he is charged with and that there are other things as well that he has to judge and balance. Toward that end as he mentioned before the Finance Committee last week, the concern he has is with any penny that is not identified as with this \$88,000 of the Medicaid work we've done earlier above Net School Spending, is a penny that does not exist on the table to be asked for right now. We are taxed to the maximum at 2 ½, the Town budget is what it is, and then there is stabilization. Dr. Khelfaoui said it is not his responsibility to tell him how to do the financials; his responsibility is to deliver the best schools we can with what we've promised them to do. He is not asking for a very large amount and will not pretend to try and tell him how to run the town. His personal opinion is the understanding of the value of having a high bond rating but also understands if he had to pick between the two, the value of good schools and the value of bond, I'd pick the value of good schools anytime. Because the value of good schools will keep your kids and bring you more funding and the value of good schools automatically raises your real estate values which will help you in your funding. If we were level 2 instead of level 3, you will see your revenues come in from the value of real estate taxes and we will all benefit.

Kreidler wanted to be clear on what the School Committee and the school leadership has done in the last few years is tremendous with the Academy's success but being one example. Having said that, the caveat, it's true, relative, it's not much, but something that exists in one or two places, someone will have to move from at Town Meeting from the School Committee and a fund will need to be named. Someone will have to identify a fund that you are seeking these additional dollars above Net School Spending. He is saying this not to be difficult but to provide certain notice because you can't move an article without a source. Dr. Khelfaoui said if you really support our budget tell us where you want us to cut. Kreidler replied if you are empowering me to participate, he would say that it is foolhardy to use stabilization, notwithstanding the fact that good schools mean good real estate, to use stabilization which is a onetime revenue source to fill an operating need which will be there again next year but the revenue will not and again you go to stabilization after some years, that money is no longer there. This is not sustainable. Dr. Khelfaoui said he would take his advice on any way to do it but it has to be done. The alternative to dismantle what we have done is not an alternative. This is a choice of Town Meeting. This is productive as we have been with one another for some time, Kreidler replied. Again if he is being asked to participate in the discussion, he would say not unlike anything he would say in the past ten years. We fight about things like this because relatively speaking we are a poor community. The only way out of the box is to grow the pie; the only way you grow the pie in a municipal government, is for an override. If you need structurally \$300,000 taking it from a onetime bucket is not the answer. The bucket will be drained. He challenged the Superintendent and said the Selectmen are empowered to call a

Special Town Meeting (STM). He apologized to the Board with this being news to them this evening. The Board of Selectmen can call a STM which will contemplate an article for an override. They have been doing a good job in getting people's attention. Parents love their children. If parents are told by their school committee that their children will suffer unless we do these things, by and large they will step out and do these things. The issue here is you are asking them to do something that is not viable. He challenged the School Committee and Superintendent, while they have momentum built and has the attention and interest, make the structural fix. Dr. Khelfaoui told the Town Manager you write that override on our behalf, presented by you and supported by the Board of Selectmen and call a STM and he will make sure he has all the parents come to support him and will work now until May 1 st for the Town Manager to support his override. Kreidler said we got to make certain that it's not just the Town Meeting. The School Department has never lost an override at Town Meeting; it's at the ballot box. It takes effort doing the work especially between Town Meeting and the ballot vote. Dr. Khelfaoui said he hoped all the parents heard that and will support the Town Manager for his override. Kreidler replied, I would hope it would be both our article. O'Keefe would like to see the Town Manager, the Board of Selectmen, the Finance Committee all support this article and to look at a figure whatever it may be, \$200,000, and commit each year that it goes back to the School. If we all go to that STM, every organization affiliated with the school, we could solve this issue this year, get us every year above net minimum and set that revenue stream for the future. Hunt said she is worried about the 75 year old lady that can just barely pay her oil bill. She commented that \$400,000 is going out for raises the third year in a row. She asked if anyone said "freeze me for a year" or how about reducing the percentage of increase to help save someone else's job. She wondered if any of the teachers were asked because she hasn't heard that they have. She said the highest population of elderly is projected to be in Massachusetts. She was concerned about the fire truck and other items that will raise the taxes. She thinks they need to be a little more creative. She talked about the window fix. We need stability and accountability. She is hearing that from both parents and teachers. Why can't this be fixed? She asked if they could do any freezing. Niles responded it's a careful line we have to walk as far as approaching unions with something like this. He said they have approached each leadership of each union and where it goes from there, they can't intercede with that. If they don't choose to represent that to their body, we can't control that, we can't interfere with that. Dr. Khelfaoui has spoken to each of the union representative leaders and they have to respect the contracts. The good news is all the contracts are up this year. With that in mind, there were many years that there were zeros. One of the reasons, talking about stability, is the revolving door. They have attempted to raise the bar on all staff a certain amount of income to keep them as they recognized they were underpaying them compared to other surrounding communities. Same with the Administrative staff, as you know in the last thirteen years, we have probably experienced seven Superintendents. That's not good for a school system. We have found someone here that is not only paid well but invested in this community. He will fight for education. He understands the economics but again where do you value education as a community. We all have to work together to get there.

Kreidler said by vote this evening you could open a warrant tonight, close it 72 hours later on Thursday night at 9:45 p.m. and have it posted the sufficient two week window and have the Special Town Meeting the same night as the Annual Town Meeting. Barrows talked about the potential for an override and shares similar beliefs of Selectwoman Hunt. He wants to get behind something and support it but what he sees disappoints him and disheartens him. He's heard of the absolute garbage being spread on social media, not necessarily from anyone sitting at this table, but folks in the community who feel they are being informed. They are not being informed, they are being scared. We can't scare people, we need to educate them. If they want his support, he'll tell them what he needs. He doesn't want to hear about a number of cuts when we are giving raises in excess of \$400,000. That doesn't reconcile with him. If they are contractual obligations than say what it is. A conscious decision is being made to pay some at the expense of others. Let's say what it is. Let's educate, not divide. Every time we say us or them we are setting ourselves up for division. We are in this together and if we continue to throw around the words us and them, and their doing this and we're doing that, it's unhealthy and he can't put his support behind that when he feels he is being unfairly categorized. Lastly he would like to see a sound plan, not sound bites. He's sick of the sound bites because that's all he hears. He needs to see a plan that says this is the amount of money we need, this is what we believe is needed. He credited his teachers at Murdock for his education stating they did a good job. They taught him to ask questions. to do your research. He hopes questions can be asked so there are not any blind spots. If a sound plan could come forward that they all feel is in the best interest of the community, he'll be the first one to stand behind it because he values the education he got here.

Barrows asked the Superintendent if he had enough time to formulate a plan if a Special Town Meeting was called. Dr. Khelfaoui said the \$287,381 that is needed has already been reduced by \$90,000 this evening so at worse case, we are looking for just under \$200,000. Kreidler cautioned reducing the \$287,000 by the full \$88,000 that we earlier identified as Medicaid funds that can be brought to bear to reduce the number is not going to be available every year. The \$25,000 of that will be conceivably available every year thereafter, but the \$68,000 of the old articles won't happen again. O'Keefe asked Dr. Khelfaoui how much time he needed to determine the dollar amount that we'd go to the people together in asking for an override. Dr. Khelfaoui replied this week. Hunt moved to open this evening the Special Town Meeting warrant, close it on Tuesday, April 22nd at 5:00 p.m.; Berndt seconded. By a roll call vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.

Berndt moved to sponsor the article along with the Town Manager; Hunt seconded for discussion. She stated she is not going to support the article until she sees a plan on how it's going to change the schools knowing there is a good population out there that is struggling financially.

After discussion on when the Board of Selectmen would meet again, it was decided it would be at the call of the Chair if necessary.

Barbaro moved the School Committee sponsor the override article; Burdsall seconded. By a roll call vote of all aye, the motion carried unanimously.

Indirect Cost Agreement Status

Kreidler stated there was no status. Dr. Khelfaoui said there is a status. He said he has received some recommendations from the Town Manager and he further wrote his recommendations that he submitted to the School Committee and the Town Manager. He thought he copied the Board of Selectmen as well and that it was a bulleted list and they have been accepted by the School Committee. He said he has been waiting for a response. Kreidler replied that he has been waiting to meet with him six or seven weeks ago which was supposed to have happened. If those are your voted recommendations, then lets meet. Dr. Khelfaoui said we just need to get them in writing by our Attorney if you agree with them. Kreidler replied that he didn't and that's why they have to talk. O'Keefe asked since the two of you will be meeting in the next week on other issues, can you continue this conversation on the indirect. They both agreed. Niles said if an agreement cannot be made, they would go to the Dept. of Education and they would dictate what would be done. Dr. Khelfaoui said it's not a very big problem; the only thing that we negotiate on represents 5% of the indirect costs. Kreidler said the one issue about the administrative that you are looking to change, the School Committee has adopted your recommendation that we move away from the locally generated per budget and go to the state. Kreidler said he would agree with that prospectively but FY15 is already done. The other issue of assessments, one thing to say we don't have any control but they've never been in our control and we've clearly had difficulty as recently as this fiscal year where there are numbers that appear on the Cherry Sheet, and there are real time numbers that DESE updates their website monthly and then we have DOR telling us something so he thinks we need some language around what that really means. It becomes impossible to do unless they talk. The other thing that he has proposed but understands the Superintendent disagrees with is putting the indirect costs back in their budget. Dr. Khelfaoui doesn't support that because he would have to come to the Town Manager for the numbers anyway. Kreidler said what I offer to you, the agreement would stipulate, for those items that are market driven would be made mutually. Dr. Khelfaoui said if you are telling me you want to change how you do insurance and that we would have a voice in that, that changes the whole thing. Given what he has today his recommendation is that things stay the way they are, they go with option B of the state because there will be no opportunity for disagreement with the state determining the figure yearly. Kreidler asked how do you propose we handle the reconciliation. O'Keefe said if we get the override passed, reconciliation can happen as it currently is as long as that dollar amount, if there is ever a shortage, doesn't exceed the amount that we are over net. Kreidler said he would take the Superintendent's bullets and create a draft tomorrow.

Net School Spending Resolution/Status

Dr. Khelfaoui said stay as it is now currently. Going to the Net School Spending compliance, shows currently including FY14 without the amendment of \$109,000, it stands now at \$371,000. FY13 stands at \$324,000. As for FY12, it is \$186,000. Two things have happened when they met with the state representative. He made it clear we had a window of two years to amend. So even FY12 figures can be amended, as long as we can show them what we are trying to amend is not an expenditure that occurred and expensed in FY11. FY11 accounting is closed. He had asked the Town Manager to show proof of those expenditures. He hadn't received anything. His position is clear. We are not contesting, we are not amending, we are clearly going to go by what the state says. If you can convince the state, the expenditures, the \$186,000 less \$40,000 being the Charter School reimbursement we are not counting, we are talking about \$146,000 roughly. If you have proof that there were expenditures that were not accounted for, he will amend as he said. As far as the other piece, the amendment of FY13, the current figures of FY13 are the budget figures. We got the FY13 closed books eight months later and we want to have them audited and validated and do the change required. They've asked the auditor when they are coming to do the school side. The answer was as soon as we have finished with the Town. His side of the reporting to the state is all done. It just needs to be audited and checked. We were told we can still amend if needed. The only side that is not actual expenditures is the indirect cost. As soon as he can get those figures audited, they will do the amendment.

Kreidler was happy to hear the FY13 amendment has begun on their side. This entire chain of events started with letters from DESE that have the incorrect numbers. The December 13, 2012 letter first projected the \$186,000 shortfall. It's using a figure for FY13 of \$15,833,000 when in fact the actual was \$15,946,000. That is \$113,000 right there. Dr. Khelfaoui interjected and said the \$186,000 has absolutely nothing to do with FY13. Kreidler's point was that everything is cumulative. Dr. Khelfaoui said the \$186,000 is a different problem from the \$324,000 or \$371,000. The \$186,000 is a FY12 problem that we all agree what happened. In FY11 because the indirect cost agreement, the way it was written earlier says the expenses of one year, would be consolidated the following year. The state said very clearly we do not allow that. Kreidler said he's heard them say they don't like it but not that it was illegal. O'Keefe asked what the current dollar amount is. Dr. Khelfaoui said it is \$371,000 until we amend it to the \$109,000. They have two years to amend it. O'Keefe said with the way we are now going to handle Medicaid and hopefully the override, that will resolve this. He said the Superintendent and the Town Manager can continue to work with DESE, DOR to get whatever amendments need to happen but we know the resolution is going to happen over the next few years already. It was agreed. FY12's amendment needs to be done by June 30th.

It was suggested a Memo of Understanding of everything determined this evening would be helpful for the future.

It was agreed the Town Manager, the Superintendent, and both Chairmen would get together to talk about the Special Town Meeting article this week.

O'Keefe thanked everyone for coming including Finance Committee Chairman Maillet. We are back on the road for cooperation and liked Ms. Burdsall's comment this evening. Hunt wanted to thank them for one of the best productive meetings as a group; it hurt a bit, but was thankful.

Before the break the Town Manager wanted to apologize springing the override on the Board this evening but that it seemed like a logical place to start talking. He mentioned a program from another town when an override passed and a discussion on concerns for those that couldn't afford it. A campaign, to run in parallel after running the schedule, at \$50 on a average home, that you go out and market it and sell slots for those willing to step up and fill in for someone that can't make it. He'd be happy to contribute to such a fund. This won't cover everyone, couple bucks overseen by the Board of Assessors. O'Keefe said he would contribute as well and asked Kreidler to make that happen. Hunt added we need to educate people about the override cost like with the ladder truck.

Barbaro moved to adjourn the joint School Committee meeting; Burdsall seconded. By a vote of all aye, the joint meeting adjourned at 10:13 p.m.

The Selectboard called for a recess at 10:13 p.m. and reconvened their meeting at 10:20 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS: N/A

OLD BUSINESS: N/A

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

Annual Town Meeting Warrant – There was no additional discussion on the warrant.

MINUTES:

Monday, March 24, 2014 - Regular Meeting - Barrows moved to approve as printed; Blair seconded. By a vote of all aye, the minutes were approved.

Monday, March 24, 2014 EXECUTIVE SESSION - Barrows moved to approve the minutes and that they remain in Executive Session until Executive Session privilege no longer applies; Blair seconded. By vote of all aye, the minutes were approved unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Board of Health Chairman Lionel Cloutier was recognized for his presence relating to Article 34 of the ATM warrant regarding Regulations for the Removal and Disposal of Canine Waste. He commented that he hoped it passed.

He also reminded everyone that there will be an Earth Day pick up on April 26 beginning at 8:00 in the morning until 2:00 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Barrows moved to adjourn into Executive Session No. 3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body with the Chair so declaring with the subject being the IBPO Local 578 – Police Officers Union and to reconvene public session for the sole purpose of adjournment. Blair seconded. By roll call vote of all aye, the meeting adjourned at 10:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Daigle Executive Assistant