

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 4, 2010

MINUTES

Moderator Bill Waste called this meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. in the Lyme School Community Gymnasium. There were approximately 200 attendees.

Representing the School Board were Mark Schiffman, Chair, Peter Glenshaw; Audrey Brown, Emily Dentzer, Dan Parish and Kate Semple Barta.

Also in attendance was Gordon Schnare, Superintendent of SAU #76, Jeffrey Valence, Principal of Lyme School, and representatives from Thetford Academy Martha Rich and Dan McGinn. Mr. Schnare, Ms. Rich and Mr. McGinn were given *Voice without Vote* for the purposes of communicating administrative issues at this meeting.

ARTICLE 1. To hear the reports of Agents, Auditors, Committees, or other officers heretofore chosen, and pass any vote relating thereto.

Moderator Waste introduced Martha Rich, Head of School at Thetford Academy and invited her to update attendees on Thetford Academy programs and issues. Ms. Rich provided a short description of construction and academic progress at the Academy. She thanked Lyme for such committed participation in the partnership agreement between Lyme and Thetford Academy. She also noted that she will be “partially retiring”, working part-time as part of a transition team in the near future. She introduced her Assistant Dan McGinn, who spoke briefly.

Moderator Waste then introduced Chairman of the Lyme School Board, Mark Schiffman. Mr. Schiffman introduced members of the School Board in attendance and proceeded with a *Power Point* presentation which detailed how the school budget is determined and why it is recommended. (A copy of this *Power Point* presentation may be found with the notes filed with the School District Clerk for this meeting.)

It was noted that this year’s enrollment is up approximately 10% from the anticipated enrollment. In addition it was clarified that the School fiscal calendar runs from July to June vs. the Town fiscal calendar which runs January to December. The money being used now was voted at last year’s School District Meeting. The amount voted at this meeting will start being used in July 2010.

Mr. Schiffman also indicated that Superintendent of SAU 76, Gordon Schnare will likely be retiring next year.

A series of questions followed the Power Point presentation, including those concerning language arts, specifically the Spanish program. It was confirmed that the Spanish program used now was made possible through a special grant which will last three years.

The school will follow its progress and assess the possibility of continuing the program as time passes. The question of cost for the program was raised. According to the budget printed in the Town Report a \$70,000 cost is attached to this program. This cost is comprised of teacher's salary, benefits and program materials.

Bob Sanborn asked how many teachers the school employed. It was stated that there are currently seventeen full-time teachers and several members of the support staff.

Jeff Lehmann asked if it was the intention of the School Board to replace Superintendent Schnare when he retires and hoped that the Board would continue to try and control costs. Mr. Schiffman replied they would be conducting a search for Mr. Schnare's replacement and would certainly continue to make every effort to control costs.

Paul Sansone asked the history and significance of the \$41,000+ reduction of the original budget as presented to the budget committee. Bill Lewis, speaking as a member of the Budget Committee said that in their effort to keep the budget as tight as possible they asked the School Board to find 1% of the overall budget that could be removed.

Mr. Schiffman continued the explanation by saying that after much consideration it was determined that the Special Education programs, cost of living increases for non-union staff and cutting partial full-time employees from the teaching staff would have the least negative impact on the overall educational program.

Jennifer Cooke wanted to know if Lyme's teachers were the highest paid in the state. Mr. Schiffman responded that they are not although they are compensated well because Lyme operates with very basic needs and lots of volunteer help. The school does not have a lot of "things".

Several people complimented the Board on presenting such a detailed and clear explanation of the budgeting process.

ARTICLE 2. Maggie Minnock made the motion to see if the Lyme School District will vote to raise and appropriate the amount of Four Million, Seven Hundred Forty-three Thousand, Five Hundred Six Dollars (4,743,506) as an operating budget for the Lyme School District for the 2010 – 2011 school year, as submitted by the Budget Committee. This article does not include the amounts requested in Article 3 and Article 4, but does include the amounts included in Article 5. Recommended by the Budget Committee. Not recommended by the School Board.

SECONDED

Barney Brannen offered an **AMENDMENT** to Article 2: Propose to add \$22,000 to the proposed spending in Article 2, bringing the amended total to \$4,765,506 (Four Million Seven Hundred Sixty-five, Five Hundred and Six Dollars).

MOTION TO AMEND ARTICLE 2 was SECONDED by Michael Hinsley

Mr. Brannen explained his intent: Having served on both the Budget Committee and School Board for several years he well understands the cause and effect of the Budget Committees directive to cut the budget and the School Board's efforts to find the place(s) to take the money from. He does not, however, feel that it's in the best interest of the children to remove funding from Special Education and feels this amendment is a good compromise to a bad situation. Although he is aware that the School Board has the power to use these funds as they feel necessary, he respectfully encourages the School Board to allocate \$17,000 toward Special Education efforts and \$5,000 toward Writing Enrichment.

There were assorted comments from attendees, both in support of Mr. Brannen's amendment and in understanding of the directive by the Budget Committee.

The AMENDMENT to Article 2 was VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE BY VOICE VOTE, bringing the total amount to be voted on Article 2 to \$4,765,506.

ARTICLE 2, AS AMENDED WAS VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE BY VOICE VOTE.

ARTICLE 3. Maggie Minnock made the motion to see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate up to Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) to be placed in the High School Tuition Fund, established at the Lyme School District Meeting on March 9, 1995, for funding high school tuition expenses, with such amount to be funded from the year end undesignated fund balance available on July 1, 2010. (Majority vote required) Recommended by the Budget Committee. Recommended by the School Board.

SECONDED

Mr. Schiffman spoke to both Articles 3 and 4. Past members of the Budget Committee, Jeff Lehmann and Earl Strout spoke in support of these articles.

ARTICLE 3 was VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE BY VOICE VOTE.

ARTICLE 4. Maggie Minnock made the motion to see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate up to Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) to add to the Reserve Fund established at the Lyme School District meeting on March 8, 1984, under the provisions of RSA 35:1-b, to meet unanticipated special education expenses, with such amount to be funded from the year end undesignated fund balance available on July 1, 2010. (Majority vote required) Recommended by the Budget Committee. Recommended by the School Board.

SECONDED

ARTICLE 4 was VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE BY VOICE VOTE

ARTICLE 5 Maggie Minnock made the motion to determine and fix the salaries of school district officers as follows: School District Treasurer \$800.00; School District Clerk \$75.00; School District Moderator \$75.00. The amounts in this article are included in Article 2. Recommended by the Budget Committee. Recommended by the School Board.

SECONDED

ARTICLE 5 was VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE BY VOICE VOTE

ARTICLE 6. To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

Mr. Schiffman recognized and thanked out-going School Board members Peter Glenshaw and Dan Parish for their commitment to the school and town. He also thanked everyone in attendance for making the effort to come out and participate in this District Meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia G. Jenks
School District Clerk