

**North Andover School Committee
Regular Session**

Date: January 21, 2010

Location: Town Hall

Present: Members Allen, Burzlaff, Limpert, Nobile and Rhoton. Also present Superintendent Hottel, Assistant Superintendent Hutchinson, Business Manager Mealey.

Call to Order

At 7:00 p.m. Chair Limpert called the meeting to order.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Allen moved to approve the minutes of January 5, January 7, January 11 and January 14, 2010. Ms. Rhoton seconded the motion.

Ms. Rhoton asked that the January 11th vote on Race To The Top be corrected to reflect her no vote.

The vote on the motion with change noted was 5-0 Ms. Allen, Ms. Burzlaff, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile and Ms. Rhoton.

Chair Report

Chair Limpert thanked all who helped with the recent election.

Mr. Nobile stated that he had received an anonymous donation to the North Andover School Department for \$4,000.

Mr. Nobile moved to accept the anonymous donation of \$4,000. Ms. Allen seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 Ms. Allen, Ms. Burzlaff, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile and Ms. Rhoton.

Superintendent Report

Superintendent Hottel also thanked all involved with the recent election. Superintendent Hottel stated that additional information regarding the budget, MCAS schedule, and kindergarten registration are all posted on the district's main website. He encouraged the community to go to the website and review information. Superintendent Hottel updated the Committee on the status of the Sargent principal search, he noted that approximately 30 resumes were received. Superintendent Hottel discussed the MASS mid-winter conference he attended.

Public Hearing FY11 Budget

Ms. Allen moved to enter public hearing for the purpose of discussing the FY11 budget. Mr. Nobile seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 Ms. Allen, Ms. Burzlaff, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile and Ms. Rhoton.

Mr. Mealey gave a powerpoint presentation summarizing the proposed FY11 budget. In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Mealey stated that the elementary identified needs were not in prioritized order yet.

Superintendent Hottel and Chair Limpert encouraged members of the community to go to the website and submit their questions regarding the budget. Answers will be posted on the website as quickly as possible.

Chair Limpert asked for public comment.

Ms. McNeil asked if column increases for teachers appeared in the budget. She also asked for the status of negotiations with all bargaining units. Ms. McNeil stated as a parent her priorities for the budget are teacher quality, teacher professional development, safety and maintenance. She asked the Committee to take those priorities into account when considering the budget.

Response to the questions will be posted to the website. Ms. Allen informed Ms. McNeil that all school department employee contracts can be found on the town's website.

Ms. McMillan asked for clarification on the \$448,000 in step increases is this for the current contracts. She also asked if there were a place-holder in the budget for the settlement of negotiations. She asked for clarification on why kindergarten showed an 18% increase. She asked for clarification on what made up the system wide budget. She questioned why, with the budget issues facing the district, the boys' volleyball coaches even appeared as an identified need.

In response to the questions, Mr. Mealey stated that the \$448,000 was for the current contracts. There is no place holder in the budget for the settlement of negotiations. Kindergarten increase was due to the correction of some mixing of preschool and kindergarten funds in the current budget. Ms. Allen stated that the volleyball coaches were included because the Athletic Director was asked to submit his needs as a department head.

There was no further public comment.

Ms. Allen moved to return to regular session. Mr. Nobile seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 Ms. Allen, Ms. Burzlaff, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile and Ms. Rhoton.

FY10 Budget Status Report

Mr. Mealey discussed the FY10 budget status. We are currently projecting a budget surplus of \$25,000 if we limit the remaining amount of expenditures to 60%. Mr. Mealey discussed replenishing the expense and salary lines of the budget that were used as placeholders to cover expenses to be paid using SFSF funds. If the salary lines are replenished with SFSF funds and if allowed to expend 100% of expense lines we will have a projected balance of \$57,000. If we do not replenish the expense accounts

then the projected year-end balance will be \$180,000. Those funds can be used to prepay special education tuition for FY11. In FY09 approximately \$180,000 was used to prepay special education tuition for FY10. Mr. Mealey stated that the projected \$146,000 shortfall in special education is included in the bottom line figure and even with that shortfall we are currently projecting a \$25,000 surplus. In response to a question from the Committee, Mr. Mealey stated that if additional students are sent out on 45 day placements or students with special needs move in to the district the special education deficit could increase. Mr. Mealey stated that the proposed FY11 budget includes \$250,000 in unanticipated special education expenses. Mr. Nobile compared the unanticipated expenses to the town's snow removal contingency funds. In response to comments from the Committee, Mr. Mealey stated that he would keep the Committee advised on additional unanticipated expenses.

The Committee suggested that residents call their legislators and inquire when the district can expect the SFSF funds to arrive. Mr. Mealey stated that he did receive an email from Representative Torrisi's office asking if we wanted support in determining when SFSF funds will arrive.

FY11 Budget

Chair Limpert suggested to the Committee that at the January 26th meeting the Committee start the final process by working together to prioritize the identified needs and agree on a dollar amount for the requested budget increase. Chair Limpert stated that his thinking on the budget amount was somewhere around a 4% increase. Chair Limpert stated that his thought is that once the Committee votes the bottom line dollar amount the Committee should direct the administration to go back and amend the recommended budget to meet the voted dollar amount. In response to comments by the Committee, Mr. Mealey agreed to include a note on each identified need whether the cost was recurring or a one-time cost. He also agreed to email the Committee the spreadsheet so they could do their own prioritization prior to the meeting.

Chair Limpert also discussed the need to have different presentations for the different stakeholders in town. Ms. Rhoton stated that the Budget and Finance Committee is working on this issue and would make a recommendation to the Committee on some different budget formats.

Chair Limpert thanked Superintendent Hottel and Business Manager Mealey for their work on the budget.

In response to a concern raised by the Committee, Mr. Mealey stated that he would follow up to be sure that the SFSF funds can be used for the \$120,000 the school department agreed to return to the town's stabilization fund.

Public Comment

Ms. McMillan asked if a budget freeze had been implemented.

Mr. Mealey stated that an official freeze has not been implemented.

Ms. McMillan asked why the town was not funding 1/3 of the reduction in circuit breaker funds.

Mr. Mealey explained that circuit breaker money is reimbursement money and not factored into state aid calculation. The town does not receive 1/3 of the circuit breaker funds and therefore would not be

expected to fund a reduction in reimbursement. Mr. Mealey clarified that \$322,000 of the ARRA funds could be use to maintain positions and \$322,000 could be used to invest in programs such as curriculum.

Other Comments

Ms. Allen discussed the middle school concert.

Executive Session

At 8:15 p.m. Ms. Allen moved to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter and not to return to regular session. Ms. Burzlaff seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 Ms. Allen, Ms. Burzlaff, Mr. Limpert, Mr. Nobile and Ms. Rhoton.

Approved 2/4/10