

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES  
TOWN OF PEMBROKE  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2010**

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*Members Present:* Mark LePage, Chair; Gerry Fleury, Vice Chair; Michael Connor; Bruce Kurinkas; Stacey Sheldon; Ray Foss; Marie Chouinard; Dan Crean; Brian Seaworth; Tom Serafin, School Board Rep.; Tina Courtemanche, Selectmen Rep.

*Others Present:* David Jodoin, Town Administrator; Peter Warburton, Superintendent of Schools; Michael Reardon, Headmaster, Pembroke Academy; Deb Bulkley, Principal, Three Rivers School; Ryan Quinn, Principal, Hill and Village Schools; Jonathan Burnham, Facilities Director; Peter Aubrey, Business Administrator; Clint Hanson, School Board Chair; Tammy Boucher, School Board Rep.; Patty Willis, Director, Special Education; Dorothy O'Rourke, Special Education Coordinator, K-8.

*Documents Distributed by the School Department:* Updated Summary of Tax Rate 2005-2010; answers to questions sent by budget committee members; Pembroke Tax Rate Forecast Fiscal Year 2010/2011; Fiscal Year Combined Budgets; changes to proposed budget; Salary Projections

The meeting began at 6:30 PM.

**Approval of Minutes 12/17/2009**

A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Ray, seconded by Stacey, and passed by unanimous vote.

David Jodoin – Town Budget

David Jodoin was present to review various items involving the town budget.

The Summary of Tax Rate spreadsheet has been updated to include the county tax rate (no increase) and the school numbers.

The Selectmen approved the cost to repair the boiler at the Safety Center and to add it to the budget. It has not been added as of yet therefore it is not calculated in the proposed rate on the spreadsheet. Also still under investigation is whether or not something could be done in conjunction with the school department's new biomass plant at PA. Also not added into the spreadsheet is the cost for a new generator for the Safety Center; the selectmen approved the 50/50 matching grant but no decision was made on the purchase or the funding. The generator will be discussed again at their next meeting scheduled for January 18<sup>th</sup>. There is \$75,000 in the budget for assessing services and it is anticipated that this amount will decrease slightly as the selectmen decided not to pursue cycled inspections and to only award the contract for one year. Any remaining funds will transferred to capital reserve. The library budget has also been updated to reflect changes. There will be an increase of approximately \$20,000 to the budget for the workman's compensation increase.

David plans to update the budgets with the new library numbers, add in the boiler, and pending selectmen decision on January 18<sup>th</sup>, add in the generator funding. He will then prepare new spreadsheets for all department budgets, MS-7, tax impact and revenue reports and will be able to e-mail the information to the committee by January 19<sup>th</sup> and have copies available at Town Hall by January 20<sup>th</sup>.

### Ryan Quinn - Hill and Village Schools

Ryan Quinn, Principal, Hill and Village Schools reviewed recent successes including: standardized test scores; computer labs and curriculum in both schools; library curriculum and programming; and the Safe Routes to Schools grant application that has been completed and submitted with positive feedback received. The Safe Routes to School program studies how children get to school, traffic patterns, sidewalks, and crosswalks. The ultimate goal is to encourage children to walk or bike to school.

In keeping with the present state of the economy, Ryan has only one new initiative for the upcoming school year; safety entrances at Village School. This item is currently listed under Warrant from Building and Maintenance Capital Reserve and will be transferred to the appropriate line item upon approval.

When asked about recent trends or budget implications, Ryan indicated that he does not foresee any budgetary issues however, due to the recent increase in behavioral issues with children specifically violence, he has had to call upon the resource officer more frequently and would be more comfortable if Hill and Village School had their own resource officer. Ryan gave a brief overview on what programs are available at both schools for these issues as well as qualifications of teachers dealing with those students and the training they receive. He indicated that as the number of students requiring these programs increases, more staff will be required. When asked if he would choose a resource officer or more staff, he replied that he would prefer more staff members as they have been able to handle most situations so far and the resource officer responds when necessary.

### School Department Budget

Peter Aubrey reviewed and provided detail on the following changes to the school budget that have been made resulting in an overall decrease of \$11,372: Decreases in Tutoring \$9,800 and Fringe Benefits \$6,749, increases in Treasurer Salary \$900, Custodian Salaries \$1,366, and Lease/Purchase – Energy Related \$2,911.

Questions that were e-mailed to the school department by budget committee members and not already answered were reviewed and answered.

Mike Reardon, PA, Headmaster, explained that further study and research is being done relative to the alternative high school. This initiative was withdrawn for 2010 but it is anticipated that it will be an initiative for 2011/2012. Pertaining to the 2.2% drop out rate, the new rule of staying in school until the age of 18 affected approximately 6-8 students. The 2.2% unofficial rate for the class of 2009 represents kids quantitatively who would benefit from an alternative high school but that tools are not currently available to help those students. The goal is to reach and transition at risk students at a younger age to eliminate the drop out rate altogether and to assure that every student that enters Pembroke Academy is successful.

Peter Warburton explained the zero based budgeting process used by the school board this year versus increases/decreases by line item. Essentially, each line item starts off at a zero balance and adjustments are then made accordingly. Tom Serafin indicated that although the numbers in the budget may not be substantially different by using this procedure, the process of preparing the budget was simplified.

There has been no decision by the school board regarding purchasing multi-year items from the Instructional Materials Capital Reserve. According to Gerry, there is enough in that fund to negate the entire \$15,000 increase and still leave a sizable reserve for emergencies. Tom indicated that this item will be discussed at the next school board meeting and it is anticipated that a decision will be made.

Patty Willis explained that tutoring has been decreased due to a previously incarcerated student who no longer requires services. Patty also explained that the increase in travel is due to an increase of special education students in the district requiring transportation and there was also a line shift for this item. Other districts are being billed for a portion of this expense. Tom indicated that the mileage reimbursement rate will be adjusted to reflect the recently adjusted IRS rate of \$.50 per mile versus \$.55.

Peter Warburton commented on the non-certified and administrative increases and if these items will be adjusted once a CB agreement is reached. He indicated that the increase is set at 1.5%, an agreement has not been reached, and the total will not be readjusted.

Mike Reardon explained that the substantial increase in Other Information Resources reflects the subscription for PLATO, which provides an array of on-line courses that are not available at Pembroke Academy. These range from high end and specialized courses to make up classes, and can also be taken as smaller units to assist with the new competency grading system. In the past, this has been funded through other sources such as adult education or at risk students which are no longer available due to the increasing need for those programs.

Dorothy O'Rourke gave an overview of the recent trends for special education focusing primarily on the increase in children diagnosed with Autism. She feels that this increase may be due to the variety of disorders now being classified as Autism such as Asperger's Disorder. More information on special education was provided by Ryan Quinn and Patty Willis. Student enrollment has decreased over the past couple of years however the numbers could increase at any time which makes predicting future trends difficult. The increase in contracted services is for nursing services for children in severe medical danger requiring a nurse be present at all times. The alternative middle school has been instrumental in helping some at risk students.

Gerry asked Jonathan Burnham his opinion on the adequacy of the budget as it pertains to building maintenance. John gave a brief review of this portion of the budget and stated that he is comfortable with it and staff levels.

Mark questioned a decrease of approximately \$30,000 in aide salaries. Ryan indicated that Hill and Village Schools have eliminated two aide positions and has replaced one with a paraprofessional position. Ryan gave a brief description of aide versus paraprofessional. Additionally, one half of a speech person was eliminated and the librarian is now classified as a full time position.

There was a question regarding the second bus to transport students to Concord Regional for an amount of \$37,756 when the first bus costs only \$18,893. Peter Aubrey explained that only a portion of the first bus is included in the budget whereas the entire cost is added for the second bus. Also questioned was how full the second bus will be and if the option of a smaller vehicle has been considered.

Gerry noted that there is not a large increase in vocational students and it is unclear if that increase coincides with the need for the additional bus. Peter Warburton will provide more information on this item at the next meeting.

The SAU budget was briefly discussed and Peter Warburton indicated that he could supply the detailed budget information for review if needed.

Catastrophic Aid was briefly discussed.

### **Other**

It was agreed that any further issues with the school would be worked through Tom and that the school department need not return next week. Tom indicated that the school board will be meeting on Tuesday, January 12<sup>th</sup> and asked that any questions/issues be e-mailed before then.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 14, 2010 at 6:30 PM.

### **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM was made by Dan, seconded by Tom, and passed by unanimous vote.