

Our mission is to provide rigorous and varied educational opportunities that challenge and engage all students to attain their highest level of intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth. (2007)

LITCHFIELD SCHOOL BOARD - SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT NO. 27

Litchfield, New Hampshire 03052

APPROVED MINUTES

October 15, 2008

(approved as amended 10-22-08)

Present:

Mr. Dennis Miller, Chair
Mrs. Cindy Couture, Vice Chair
Mr. Ralph Boehm, Board Member (*arrived late*)
Mrs. Pat Jewett, Board Member
Mrs. Dot Beauregard, Board Member
Dr. Elaine Cutler, Superintendent
Mr. Steve Martin, Business Administrator
Mrs. Deb Mahoney, Human Resources Director
Mr. Robert Manseau, Principal, CHS
Mrs. Michele E. Flynn, Secretary

1) Public Session – Call to Order - Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

2) Review & Revision of Agenda

Revisions to the agenda included the addition of 2008 Tax Rate and Manifest under Business Affairs.

3) School Board Comments

Mr. Miller reported that the Board will schedule one hour of the November 5 meeting for the Selectmen.

4) Community Input

There was no community input.

5) Budget Work Session

a) CHS

Mr. Manseau presented the FY10 proposed budget for CHS to the Board. He highlighted major changes for the Board. The total decrease for the FY10 proposed budget for CHS is \$62,798. Mr. Manseau included a student enrollment comparison for the 2008-09 and 2009-10 school years. He indicated that at this time it appears that high school enrollment may increase by 15 students next year.

Mr. Manseau provided a list of NEASC recommendations that have a budget impact to the Board at Mr. Miller's previous request. He noted that there are 10 recommendations that have a budget impact. Three recommendations are in progress: resolve football equipment storage; resolve floor, laminate, and roof problems; resolve guidance, library services, and psychological services. Mr. Manseau indicated that the remaining seven recommendations require time for faculty to work on the resolutions. He proposed release time to allow the faculty to work on the recommendations.

Board members requested release time plans (late arrival or early release options) for all three schools. Dr. Cutler agreed that release time would have to be for the district as a whole. She indicated that she will draft some plans and bring them to the Board.

Mr. Manseau asked the Board to consider continuing the Student Support Counselor position in the FY10 budget. He explained that the current funding under Special Services will not be available for the FY10 year. The current counselor works with more than 30 at-risk students and fills a huge need at the high school level. Dr. Cutler pointed out that as of June 2009, high school students will no longer be allowed to drop out of school (by law). This is a position that will be vital to these types of students.

Mr. Manseau also reported that the Athletics budget has been reduced to level funding.

b) Other District-wide

Mr. Martin presented district-wide budget items for the FY10 proposed budget that included: termination payouts, tutoring services, substitute salaries, adult education costs, student assessment, and debt services.

Mr. Martin presented non-position salaries that have not yet been budgeted for FY10 that included: 6th period classes, additional hours for monitors (for meeting coverage), summer reading program, NEASC co-chairs, curriculum writing, extended day detention, and the non-bargaining salary pool.

Mr. Martin distributed to the Board a list of non-critical needs budget requests that were not entered into the FY10 budget. He recommended to the Board to budget the Special Services salary and travel expenses for chaperones to accompany coded students on field trips. Mr. Martin highlighted Building & Grounds items (such lighting) that are required for school approval. He noted that he spoke to Mr. Lynch, the Litchfield Code Enforcement Officer, about the required items. NH DOE indicated that these items can be delayed if the Health Officer makes that recommendation. Mr. Lynch indicated that he would put his recommendations in writing to the District/School Board. Mr. Martin mentioned that Mr. Lynch was pleasantly surprised with the repairs and upgrades that were completed at GMS.

Mr. Martin distributed revised (proposed) new and expanded position requests for the FY10 budget and reviewed them with the Board.

c) FY10 Budget Status

Mr. Martin updated the Board on the current FY10 proposed budget status excluding salaries and benefits. He reported that the net increase to the operating budget, excluding salaries and benefits, is 1.37%. He also noted that when subtracting non-discretionary spending, the budget is down \$297,300.56 or 5.17%. Mr. Martin gave a breakdown of non-discretionary items.

d) Salaries & Benefits

Mrs. Mahoney presented the FY10 proposed Salaries & Benefits budget to the Board. She highlighted major changes for the Board. The estimated salary increase for all non-LEA employees is \$108,422; the estimated benefit increase is \$18,794; the estimated retirement rate increase is \$100,800; the estimated medical rate (a 4% guaranteed maximum) increase is \$56,000; and the estimated dental rate (a guaranteed 3.6% maximum) increase is \$5,000. The total estimated increase for salaries & benefits for non-LEA employees is \$289,016.

Board consensus was that the salary guidelines are agreeable.

Mr. Martin thanked Mrs. Mahoney; Leslie Pearce, LMS; Cheri Pitrone, CHS; Debi Leary, GMS; and Nancy Caissie, Special Services for their diligent work on the FY10 proposed budget. Mr. Martin noted that he will provide the “bottom line” of the budget for the Board on November 5.

6) **Recommended Action**

a) **Business Affairs**

1) Draft School Board Minutes:

a) Public Minutes of October 8, 2008

Mrs. Couture made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried 4-0-0.

b) Business Administrator’s Report – September 2008

Mr. Martin reviewed his monthly financial report with the Board. He noted a significant change in the format of the reports. Mr. Martin reported that the primary focus of the Finance Department in September was on four projects: the audit, the fiscal year close, eFinance, and the FY10 budget.

Mr. Martin reported that there are some areas in the FY09 budget that have been identified to monitor: salaries, health insurance, energy, GMS building repairs, and data communications. These areas will be monitored for over spends.

Mr. Martin reported that at this time we are forecasting to spend 100% of the FY09 adjusted operating budget. He also reported that the FY10 budget process is challenging, but is working out well.

Mr. Martin reported that the building and grounds staff did an outstanding job over the summer readying the schools for their opening. Major projects were completed at GMS and CHS. He indicated that the only items left to complete are: the installation of the jersey barriers at GMS and the provision of power to the power gate on Talent Road at CHS.

Mr. Martin reported that the Technology Department was busy over the summer installing and upgrading PC's and software for the new school year. The switch over to the Microsoft Exchange was completed, eFinancePLUS is functional, and the new network infrastructure is scheduled to be completed on October 16.

Mr. Martin reported that Special Education transportation needed an additional bus and the District contracted to another provider for one out-of-district student.

c) 2008 Tax Rate

Mr. Martin reported that he attended a meeting held at Litchfield Town Hall regarding setting the tax rate. Unofficially, the tax rate for the town of Litchfield will be set at \$15.98. Last year's tax rate was \$14.20. Mr. Martin indicated that the new rate reflects the town portion of \$2.71, the county portion of \$.92, the school portion of \$10.32, and the state portion of \$2.04. Mr. Martin also mentioned that the town fund balance is \$880,000 at this time. The 2008 total school tax rate of \$10.32 was an increase of \$1.27 over the 2007 tax rate, but is \$.04 lower than the 2006 school tax rate.

d) Manifest

The manifest was circulated and signed by the Board.

7) **Committee Reports**

1) Budget Committee

Mr. Miller reported that the Budget Committee met on October 9 and reviewed the code enforcement budget, the highway budget, and the planning board budget. Committee members have deferred voting on all budgets at this time.

2) Selectmen

Mrs. Jewett reported the Selectmen are still working on budgets. Selectmen also discussed town road projects.

8) **Old Business**

a) Response to NHSBA Regarding Athletic Scheduling Resolution

At a previous meeting, Mrs. Couture reported that the NHSBA requested their members review a proposed a resolution from a group of Superintendents from the Upper Valley area of New Hampshire. The proposed resolution addresses the concerns of the Upper Valley districts' athletic travel time and costs. Mrs. Couture drafted a response from the School Board to the NHSBA regarding their position on the proposed resolution. She shared the draft response with Board members and the viewing public.

Board members suggested some revisions. Mrs. Couture will revise the response and send a final copy to Board members.

8) **Non-Public Session: RSA 91-A: 3II (a-c)**

[Minutes of Non-Public Session are written under separate cover.]

Mr s. Jewett made a motion to go into non-public session at 8:29 p.m. under RSA 91-A:3II (a) The dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted. (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee. (c) Matters, which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the body or agency itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. Mrs. Beauregard seconded. The motion carried by roll call: Mr. Miller, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Beauregard, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes.

9) **Return to Public Session**

Mrs. Beauregard made a motion to return to public session at 8:40 p.m. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried by roll call: Mr. Miller, yes; Mr. Boehm, yes; Mrs. Beauregard, yes; Mrs. Jewett, yes.

10) **Adjourn**

Mr. Miller made a motion to adjourn at 8:41 p.m. Mrs. Jewett seconded. The motion carried .

11) **Upcoming Meetings**

>>Litchfield School Board: October 22, 2008 – CHS Media Room - 6:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Michele E. Flynn
School Board Secretary