

**Finance Committee ~ Minutes of Meeting
Tuesday, January 7, 2003
Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School – 7:30pm**

Present: Co-Chairs Michael Grosberg & Tracy Billig, Bob Jacobson, Marty Ragonas, Sheila Stewart, John Nikula, Don Hutchinson, Bob Hurstak, Larry Rowe. Also present: Kerry Speidel, Finance Director, and Robin Porcella, Recording Secretary. John Ritchie, Superintendent, Pauline Paste, Director of Finance, Renel Fredriksen, School committee Chairperson, Eileen Glovsky, Vice-Chairperson, Eric Harris, Jack Ryan, Charles Schwager, and Lauri Wishner

Opening Remarks

Co-Chair Michael Grosberg opened the meeting at 7:40pm. He thanked the School Committee for inviting the Finance Committee to discuss the budget and for allowing to use the library.

Sheila Stewart and Bob Jacobson, Finance Committee liaisons to Lincoln-Sudbury High School, thanked John Ritchie, Superintendent, and Pauline Paste, Director of Finance, for all their help the last few months and for taking their time to meet with the Finance Committee.

Budget Hearing for Fiscal year 2004 for Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School

John Ritchie, Superintendent, informed the Finance Committee that he and Pauline Paste would be making the presentation. He stated that it will be a brief presentation, but the committee could ask as many questions as they would like.

Pauline Paste, Director of Finance, started the presentation by informing the committee of the School Committee's operational Goal: "Provide sufficient funds to support the district's educational mission".

There were 65 new students this year, and another 65 are expected for Fiscal Year 2004.

Pauline Paste informed the committee that the following are some components that are and have effected the budget: Chapter 70 Aid, Regional Transportation Aid, Grants, and Sped Cost Shares.

John Ritchie, Superintendent, discussed the different budget scenarios based on a 7, 5, 3 or 0% increase.

7% Increase Scenario: John Ritchie informed the committee, that although this would be the optimal for the school system, it was not realistic to put much time into this scenario. Without counsel from the school committee, Mr. Ritchie did not believe this was realistic. Considering the financial crisis, he believes the school is in good shape. Morale is high at the school, and everyone is making best of what is available.

5% Increase Scenario: John Ritchie informed the committee that this scenario, the school would continue to operate as it is currently. Some of the consequences of this would be: same class size, same curriculum opportunities, reduced text & supplies, and the same number of sections.

3% Increase Scenario: At this scenario, the consequences would be: significant increase in class size, same curriculum opportunities, reduced text & supplies. Also, sub-varsity (Jr. varsity and 9th grade teams) would suffer severe cuts or be eliminated.

0% Increase Scenario: John Ritchie informed the committee that this budget scenario provides severely diminished educational services. Other consequences would be: reduced number of sections, drastic increase in class sizes, loss of many curriculum opportunities, loss of appropriate administrative oversight, and a reduction of athletic and extracurricular activities.

Tracy Billig asked how things look on the Lincoln's side. Renel Fredriksen, School Committee Chairperson, informed the committee that Lincoln would likely go along with whatever Sudbury wants. Past history has shown that Lincoln votes in lower numbers than Sudbury.

Bob Hurstak asked about the step increase and contractual increases. Negotiations are currently going on between the teachers' union and the school committee. The hope is that the contract will be settled by the end of February. Bob Hurstak asked if the Town could get blind sided, ie: What happens if a 7% of higher increase is agreed upon? Jack Ryan informed the Finance Committee that it then would become the School Committee's issue, and it is out of the Town's hands. Renel Fredriksen, School committee, informed everyone that Lincoln-Sudbury High School has one of the lowest pay scales in the local area.

The next meeting with the liaisons is scheduled for January 15, 2003.

Michael Grosberg asked the Finance Committee for their opinions, thoughts, or questions on the presentation from Lincoln-Sudbury High School. The general consensus amongst the committee was that it was a well prepared and informative presentation. Bob Hurstak and Tracy Billig agreed that a lot of thought has to be put into the 0% increase scenario.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:10pm.