

Town of Sudbury ~ Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting
Thursday, January 26, 2006
Lower Town Hall – 7:30pm

Present: Co-Chairs Bob Jacobson & Marty Ragonas, Tracy Billig, Bill Kneeland, Mike Grosberg, Larry Rowe, Sheila Stewart, Ralph Verni, and Debbie Zurka. Also present: Suzanne Petersen, Finance Director, and Robin Porcella, Recording Secretary.

Item 1: Joint meeting with Lincoln Finance Committee:

Lincoln Finance Committee members in attendance: Chairman John Robinson, John Koenig, Robert Steinbrook, Paul Giese, Mary Cancian, Mary Hartman, and Pat Phillips.

John Robinson (Lincoln FinCom) stated that they are looking at a 2% increase with a non-override budget. Bob Jacobson stated that right now the Town of Sudbury is at about a 4% budget with no override.

John Robinson stated that they are looking at a \$400,000 override. The Town of Lincoln has been having overrides for the last 4 to 5 years. He is sure a non-override budget would have an effect on LSRHS. Bob Jacobson stated that on the Sudbury side of the LS budget, there is a \$219,000 increase in the assessment. This is over & above what is listed now. This increase would require another \$32,000 from the Town's side.

Bob Jacobson reminded the Lincoln FinCom that the Board of Selectmen has the final say as to whether or not there will be an override. The Sudbury Finance Committee will place their final votes on February 2, 2006.

Ralph Verni made the point that in business and other not-for-profit organizations he has worked with, expenses are usually divided into fixed and variable, the latter usually being the largest portion. Accordingly he wondered if either Finance Committee or Town Councils had ever considered the point relative to the allocation of the LSRHS expense, which currently is done as a 100% variable expense, utilizing a multi-year average of students by town. For example much of the administrative and basic operating expenses of the school would seem to be largely fixed, yet because of the dramatically different percentages of students from the respective towns, Sudbury is paying almost all of these expenses. He then asked if Lincoln would be willing to explore this further before next year's budget process. John Roberts, Lincoln FinCom, stated that they would, and it was therefore mutually agreed to discuss this idea over the next year.

Pat Phillips (Lincoln FinCom) stated that the past philosophy has been to maintain level services. He believes the school has made a strong argument for the target budget, but realistically the level staff budget is more in line. He stated that the following increase would be needed to maintain each budget:

- 8.04% for Target Budget
- 6.09% for Level Class
- 4.900% for Level Staff

Bob Jacobson believes the Level Staff budget could be achieved with no override. There is potential revenue that has not been taken into account.

Pat Phillips stated that the Town of Lincoln has never delayed their Town Meeting because of unknowns like Sudbury has in the past. Their inclination is to go forward as usual. Bob Jacobson stated that the Town of Sudbury has never postponed their Annual Town Meeting. With input from all of the cost centers, the voting of the budget has been postponed. He stated that the problem with this is that you do not know what or when the information would be released. He reminded everyone that the State Aid figures do not affect the town side as much. Most of the monies that come in go out to the other cost centers.

Robert Steinbrook (Lincoln FinCom) asked if State Aid came in lower than what is expected, is it still possible to have a 4% increase in the budget without an override. Bob Jacobson stated that it is probable, but would be much harder. He stated that it is realistic we can get to level staff, but getting to level service will be difficult.

John Robinson stated that the next Lincoln FinCom is on February 2. He hopes and recommends that the communication is continued between the two committees.

The Committee recessed for a 5 minute break.

Item 2: Wayland Sudbury Septage Treatment Facility

The committee was introduced to Bob Gottberg, chairman of the Septage Committee. He informed the committee that he is the only member serving on the septage committee who has been on the committee before there was even a building.

Bob Gottberg gave a brief history of the facility. He stated that in 1970 by law the Town had to have a location to take care of the septage. The Towns of Sudbury and Wayland got together and opened the facility in 1983. Initially for the first 12 or 13 years the facility only handled Sudbury and Wayland, but eventually opened the facility to the surrounding communities to generate revenue. The volume being processed currently is going gang buster, and the facility is expecting to receive a profit this year.

The DEP is requiring another pollution device to prevent nitrogen's from entering the water tables.

Bob Jacobson brought up the discussion regarding which town is responsible for the bonding. Bob Gottberg stated that the Town of Wayland is responsible, and that The Town of Sudbury would be responsible for 50% of the costs. Bob Jacobson stated that he is concerned that another community can sign on financial paperwork making Sudbury financially responsible when the town has no say as to what paperwork does or does not get signed. Bob Gottberg informed the committee that the Town of Sudbury could assume the financial responsibility, but it would take some time to do so.

Bob Jacobson thanked Bob Gottberg for the information, and asked that he keep the committee advised as to what goes on the septage facility.

There being no further business, the committee adjourned at 8:55pm.