

**Town of Sudbury ~ Finance Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
Monday – February 9, 2009  
Lower Town Hall – 7:30pm**

**Present:** Chairman Chuck Woodard, Tobj Gozdeck, Bob Jacobson, Jaime Gossels, Jim Rao, Marty Ragonas, and Sheila Stewart.

**Absent:** Bill Kneeland and Debbie Zurka

**Budget Hearing: Budget Review Task Force Expense Sub-Committee**

Bob Jacobson, co-chair of the Budget Review Task Force, opened the meeting to introduce the mission of the Expense Sub-Committee and members Paul Fuhrman and Tammie Dufault.

Paul Furman presented the recommendation to consolidate the administrative functions of the high school and the K-8 system. He noted that since the original presentation in December they have met with the superintendents of both school systems and refined their estimate of the costs and benefits of such a consolidation to produce an estimated annual savings to Sudbury of \$800,000, still very significant but below the preliminary estimate of \$980,000 per annum. He noted that since the presentation to the Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen on December 15, 2008: 1) a working group of members of the Lincoln and Sudbury committees and communities has been formed to conduct further due diligence on the recommendation with the objective of producing an article for the 2010 Town Meetings of both communities if the benefits of such a consolidation are confirmed; and 2) the LS School Committee has suspended its search for a permanent replacement for Dr. Ritchie, who is retiring, and will instead hire an interim superintendent so that the search will not interfere with the potential implementation of an administrative consolidation.

Tammie Dufault presented the following additional recommendations:

- 1) Explore the regionalization of street and road maintenance services, which could save up to \$500,000 per annum, or 10% of Sudbury's budget for such services, and police and fire services.
- 2) Investigate the merging of the Lincoln K-8 schools with the Sudbury K-8 schools to create a regional K-8 system; and the potential benefits of adding the Wayland high school to the Lincoln-Sudbury regional high school district.
- 3) Collective bargaining suggestions regarding salaries and step tables, teacher course loads at the high school, the number of early release days, and the potential benefits of developing a comprehensive collective bargaining strategy that would encompass both the K-8 and high school systems.
- 4) Movement away from a town sponsored and negotiated health care plan to the state sponsored program ("GIC") that is mandatory for state employees and available to any municipalities that wish to join. Under current law this requires the consent of 70% of the employees in each collective bargaining unit. Potential annual savings are \$2.5 million.
- 5) Continue the effort to develop a full day kindergarten program, which could generate estimated benefits to the school budget of \$385,000 per annum.

- 6) Town Manager, with Board of Selectmen support, should develop an analysis of the cost structure of various town services compared to that of similar towns with the objective of benefiting from the cost saving best practices of others.

Total potential annual savings of all recommendations: \$4.8 million.

At the conclusion of this presentation, the hearing was adjourned and the Finance Committee convened for a meeting, also at lower Town Hall.

**Finance Committee meeting:**

After some discussion, the committee concluded that as a result of the current economic and fiscal crisis the previously announced spending growth limit should be set aside for the fiscal year ending June 2010. Because most of the new labor contracts for the Town and Schools will cover the next three years, the committee also concluded that a spending growth limit is still appropriate for the fiscal years ending June 2011 and June 2012 and reaffirmed the 4 ½% per annum limit that was voted upon at the September 15, 2008 meeting, subject to further review as the shape of those labor contracts becomes clearer to see if the limit should be lowered.

The committee also discussed with member Tobj Gozdeck his decision to take out papers for the Board of Selectmen election. He explained to the committee why he took this step and noted that he decided not to file papers for the election.

There being no further business, the committee adjourned at 9:30pm.