

**Town of Sudbury ~ Finance Committee**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Thursday - January 22, 2009**  
**Lower Town Hall – 7:30pm**

**Sudbury FinCom**

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

**Absent:** Debbie Zurka

**Lincoln FinCom**

**Present:** Chairman Robert Steinbrook, Peter Braun, Stuart Haber, Mary Hartman, John Koenig, Ellen Shorb, and Laura Sander.

**Opening Comments:**

The meeting was opened at 7:40pm. Chuck Woodard explained that the purpose of the meeting was that so each FinCom has a chance to explain their respective budget preparations.

**Joint Meeting with Lincoln FinCom:**

Robert Steinbrook, Lincoln Chairman, thanked the Sudbury FinCom for inviting them and stated that they were glad to participate in the joint meeting. Their budget proposed budget represents a 2.5% increase in operating costs. This does not include their insurance or pension costs. The 2.5% budget is comparable to Sudbury's 4.5% budget that the Sudbury FinCom proposed. They do have funds available if there is a 10% reduction in state aid. Their reserve funds are at an adequate level. The Town of Lincoln currently has an age 50 + over development going in, so they are seeing an increase in permit revenues. The town is currently embarking on a road project that was approved at last year's town meeting.

Bob Jacobson asked if Lincoln has been using their free cash to supplement their budgets. Robert Steinbrook stated that they have done so from time to time and still have a very adequate level.

Chuck Woodard, Sudbury Chairman, stated that all of the major cost centers have had their budget hearing. The FinCom will be taking a vote by February 5<sup>th</sup> as to what budget they will support. He described the different budget proposals that were submitted by the cost centers. In order to avoid an override, a 3.5% tax increase will be needed. The FinCom and Board of Selectmen are receiving pressure from both sides as to whether or not an override should be placed on the ballot.

Robert Steinbrook asked if an explanation of the proposed 4.5% budget could be given. Chuck Woodard stated that this budget assumed flat state aid, and allowed for 4.5% growth in operating expenses net of direct offsets and including pensions and insurance. This is an unrealistic budget based on the current condition of the economy.

Both FinComs asked if a member of the Lincoln-Sudbury School Committee would discuss the status of the Superintendency Union that was proposed by the Budget Review Task Force. Patty

Mostue, Chairman of LS school committee, stated the school committee met the other day and that they created a sub-committee to determine what is best for the school. She stated that such a change would take one or two years to get it in place. The school needs to have stability in its leadership and someone who can step right in and take over. They are planning on having a public interview with Scott Carpenter, a current housemaster, as a potential interim superintendent.

Chuck Woodard stated that the plan is to have the two schools systems work together over the next 10 to 11 months, with the objective of the meetings to be to determine if the Superintendency union is a proposal that could work. The goal is to have an article ready for the 2010 Annual Town Meetings.

Robert Steinbrook stated that he realizes this project will take a period of time, but he thought it would be good to hear from the selectmen who are in attendance.

Larry O'Brien, Sudbury selectmen, explained how & why the Budget Review Task Force was formed. He stated that he believes in order for the Superintendency Union to be formed, approval at both Town Meetings would be needed. Because of all the budget meetings that have been taking place, the first public meeting involving the discussion of the Superintendency Union will be held on February 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Grange Hall. He invited the public to attend. He stated that the LS school committee willingness to approve an interim superintendent was a good first step. It gives everyone a little more time to research this. They hope to have the majority of the work completed by December 2009. He stated that they have met with the Town of Wayland in regards to joining LS. The Town of Wayland has been provided a copy of the BRTF recommendations, but they have not heard anything back from Wayland. In his opinion, it is expected that Wayland will try to build a new school.

Gary Taylor, Lincoln selectmen, stated that they are willing to study the recommendation, but that the first time it could be possibly implemented would be in July 2011. He stated that the committees will need to remember to take the Hanscom students into consideration when the discussion began. He stated that they would like to see the interim LS superintendent hired for 2 years. He stated that they view the combining of the SPS & Lincoln K-8 systems as a second stage in the process.

It was asked how many students that the high school can hold. Jack Ryan, LS school committee member, stated that the high school has a design capacity of 1,850 students. They are sure they would be able to fit a few more, but class sizes would be increased.

**Other Business:**

In order to prepare for the joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen, Chuck Woodard asked for a poll as to how the FinCom feels about an override budget. With the poll, seven members agreed they would not recommend an override, Tobj Gozdeck abstained, and Debbie Zurka was absent.

**There being no further business, the committee adjourned at 9:52pm.**

