

**Town of Sudbury ~ Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
Joint Meeting – Lincoln and Sudbury Finance Committees
Sudbury Finance Committee Meeting
Thursday- January 28, 2010
Lincoln Town Hall – 7:30pm**

Present: Chairman Chuck Woodard, Joan Carlton, Jaime Gossels, Bob Jacobson, Bill Kneeland, Marty Ragonas, Jim Rao, Sheila Stewart, and Bob Stein

Absent: none

Joint Meeting – Lincoln and Sudbury Finance Committees

The meeting was opened at 7:35pm.

After a welcome and introductions, Lincoln Finance Committee Chairman John Koenig reviewed their early estimates of revenues to support the Lincoln FY11 budget. Lincoln believes they will be able to fund a 0% increase in the LSRHS operating budget (the Sudbury non-override case) without an override. Furthermore, they are comfortable that they will be able to fund their share of any larger operating budget supported by a Sudbury override, should there be one.

Sudbury Finance Committee Chairman Chuck Woodard reviewed current estimates for the Sudbury FY11 budget. Because of declines in State aid, local receipts, and the reapportionment from LSRHS that total over \$2 million, the Sudbury non-override budget has been set at a level limiting growth in the operating budget to 0%. No decision has yet been made regarding an override. That decision is expected to be made by February 9 in order to meet the printing and distribution deadlines for the Sudbury Town Warrant. Sudbury is considering again this year the possibility of postponing the Town Meeting discussion of the budget articles one month, into May, because of the continuing uncertainty around the amount of State aid.

There was a discussion concerning the timing of town meetings in the context of the quality of information that has lately been available regarding State aid by the time Town Meeting convenes. The committees agreed to jointly recommend to the Boards of Selectmen of both towns that the advantages and disadvantages of moving back the date of annual elections and town meetings be seriously studied. John Koenig agreed to draft a letter to be approved and signed by both committees.

The joint meeting adjourned at 8:20PM.

Meeting – Sudbury Finance Committee

The Sudbury Finance Committee reconvened in the Selectmen's offices at Lincoln Town Hall at 8:30PM.

The committee discussed whether to consider recommending an override and, if so, in what amount. Most members were supportive of the following:

- 1) Recommending an override.

- 2) Including in any override modest funding of an increase in the Sudbury Stabilization Fund and the LSRHS Excess & Deficiencies (“E&D”) Fund.

Mr. Stein is not supportive of an override because it would essentially be used to fund pay raises for employees at a time when many in the private sector are seeing no pay raises, unemployment is still very high with no signs of abating, and private sector pensions, predominantly 401K and similar plans, are still suffering. It was pointed out that because labor contracts have already been signed, the option of not providing pay raises is not available.

A number of members were supportive of an override that would fund the loss of revenues, a simple 2 ½% increase in last year’s tax levy, a \$50,000 contribution to the Stabilization Fund, and an \$8,500 contribution to the LSRHS E&D Fund (Sudbury’s share of a total \$10,000 contribution). Alternatively, a number of members were supportive of an override that would fund the revenue loss, the Stabilization and E&D Fund contributions, and a 2.25% increase in the operating budget. The committee agreed that any increase in the operating budget would be applied equally to all three cost centers. It was noted that without the revenue loss the 2.25% increase in the operating budgets could have been funded without an override.

The committee requested that the Chairman ask the cost centers to be prepared to address the following questions at the budget hearing on February 2 to hear the presentation of non-override budgets:

- 1) What in addition to layoffs might be done to blunt the impact of a budget that was less than the so-called “roll up” budget that maintains current staffing levels? What are some of the options being considered by the G4, for instance, that might be accelerated as a result of a budget emergency and what dollar impact might they have?
- 2) Specifically for the schools, what can be done now and over the next 12 months with regard to the consolidation of administrative costs incurred by both systems? In particular, what actions can be taken by both managements (with and without the need for school committee concurrence but without the need for town meeting approval) to achieve joint cost savings and how much might be saved?

There being no further business, the committee adjourned at 9:40pm.