

**Sudbury Public Schools  
Sudbury, Massachusetts  
School Committee Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, December 10, 2008**

**Present:** Susan Iuliano, Chairperson; Jane Santinelli, Vice Chairperson;  
Rich Robison, Jeff Beeler, Michele MacDonald

**Also Present:** Dr. John Brackett, Superintendent; Robert Milley, Assistant Superintendent; Mary Will, Director of Business and Finance; Mary Mahoney, SEA

**1. Open Session**

Susan Iuliano called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m.

**2. Adoption of FY10 Budget**

Dr. Brackett provided an abbreviated presentation on the school budget for FY10. A Budget Scenarios Summary outlined net budget, percent increase, deficit vs. roll-up budget, and possible staff cuts for each of six scenarios. He warned that each scenario was theoretical and not actual because, given the early submittal date, the assumptions and data upon which they are built are likely to change. There is a concern that, once presented, the figures and details might become firm in the public's mind, despite the premature nature of the scenarios. The scenario described in some detail was the Needs Budget (6.71% over FY 09).

**5. Open Forum**

Susan Iuliano entertained questions from the audience at this point. Greg Nicastro, Courtland Lane, asked to what extent parent volunteers were performing tasks that certified teachers would ordinarily be doing and how we could minimize this. Dr. Brackett responded that we rely on parent volunteers, but not in-lieu of teachers.

Susan Iuliano reported on the L-S budget that was voted upon the previous evening. A roll-up budget (level-staffing) yielded a 7.12% increase over last year's budget. The adopted budget included some restorations in areas such as FTEs, supplies, and professional development.

**2. Adoption of FY10 Budget (continued)**

Richard Robison expressed that restorations in the SPS budget shouldn't be proposed only because they were losses from the previous year, but because they resulted in a considerable negative impact to our educational programming. He suggested that we provide some brief rationale for those critical items that we seek to have restored, such as Kindergarten Aides.

It was proposed by Susan Iuliano that the "Needs 2" budget might be the starting point for continued examination. Accordingly, the "Needs 2" budget was reviewed and Members provided their individual input in regard to what should be included or added to this for the adopted budget. Jeff Beeler expressed his position that the Health/Wellness Specialist should be restored to 1.0 FTE. Michele MacDonald was concerned that the review exercise seemed futile given the adopted budget had little chance of being considered. Jeff Beeler responded that the Town has a need to know what is required to provide a quality education that the Committee believes should be provided. He would be supportive of the "Needs 2" budget but would like to find some way to communicate that the "Needs 1" budget items were still important. Susan Iuliano expressed that she was supportive of the "Needs 1" budget because she also believed the public should be informed as to what quality education should include. She argued that the current year's budget not be considered a baseline for quality. Jeff Beeler indicated that some disclaimer might be put on the adopted budget that clearly expressed this needs gap. Rich Robison recommended that a preamble be attached to the adopted budget. Jane Santinelli expressed that the "Needs 1" budget was more the direction previous Committees had taken. She proposed adding an additional teacher to the "Needs 2" budget. An additional staff member, including benefits, was ultimately added to the "Needs 2" budget, the result of which was a budget total of \$572,247 over FY09. The total increase would be 5.63%, including benefits. A motion was made that the adopted budget be \$28,669,766 with benefits totaling \$7,080,617. The total of the adopted budget, including benefits, would therefore be \$35,750,382.

**VOTED:** On a motion by Jane Santinelli and seconded by Richard Robison, to approve an adopted budget of \$28,669,766. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

**3. Revolving Fund Approval**

Mary Will informed the Committee of the need to approve the instrumental music revolving fund and the

transportation revolving fund for FY 2010 for the Town Warrant. The limit of the instrumental music revolving fund would remain at \$75,000. Mary requested that the transportation revolving fund limit be increased from \$350,000 to \$400,000.

**VOTED:** On a motion by Jane Santinelli and seconded by Michele MacDonald, to approve the revolving fund for instrumental music. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

**VOTED:** On a motion by Richard Robison, and seconded by Jane Santinelli, to approve the revolving fund for transportation for FY10 with a limit of \$400,000. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

Mary Will further requested the Committee to increase the limit on the transportation revolving fund for this year from \$350,000 to \$400,000 to help provide budget flexibility in case there are further cuts in State revenue.

**VOTED:** On a motion by Jeff Beeler, and seconded by Richard Robison, to increase the limit of the revolving fund for transportation for FY09 to \$400,000. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

#### **4. School Committee Report**

Discussion on Fees: Current-Year Impact & Role of Fees in FY10 Budget

Mary Will indicated that the increased fees this current school year helped the district meet its objectives in providing financial support for transportation and activities. The transportation fees are sufficient this year to cover the costs of transportation for the students that the District is not mandated by the State to transport. Thirty-five percent of students are in non-mandated status. The fees generated about \$380,000 in revenue, which is about 35% of the total cost of regular education transportation (just under \$1,000,000). Jeff Beeler expressed his ongoing concern that any school-related activities be fee-based. He believes that this is antithetical to proper, and required, public funding of public schools and would prefer no fees be charged.

Jeff Beeler mentioned that recent commentary on the Massachusetts Association of School Committees [MASC] website conveyed deep and widespread concern that raising user fees enables the state to continue its practice of failing to properly support public education. There was much energy on this issue on the MASC ListServ. He questioned whether there is a way to communicate this effectively to legislators. Michele MacDonald added that the response would best come from the constituencies rather than from the School Committees. It was agreed that it was difficult to get the public behind this issue as a broader effort. The potential involvement of MASC or of the Suburban Coalition was suggested.

#### **6. Superintendent's Report**

(a) Bill Schedule  
None presented.

(b) Donations

**VOTED:** On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Jane Santinelli, to accept, with thanks, a \$150,000 donation from the Jack and Mae Rosenberg Charitable Trust for use by the Sudbury Public Schools District primarily for the development and maintenance of an extracurricular program of social/recreational nature for the benefit of autistic children. The vote was 5–0 in favor. Dr. Brackett indicated in the follow-up discussion that funding could be carried over from year to year.

**VOTED:** On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Jeff Beeler, to accept, with thanks, the following donated items from Bryan and Debbie Cadogan for use by the Nixon School staff: four filing cabinets; ten bookcases; binders; and paper. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

(c) Personnel Actions  
As described in the Personnel Packet.

#### **7. Minutes –Regular Session, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

Jeff Beeler indicated that the “Goals for Redistricting” section needed an addition relative to the Superintendent providing a report relative to the Loring equity issue. Jeff indicated that he would provide a recommended change by e-mail to Sheila Cusolito, who was not present. The vote to approve the minutes was therefore postponed until the next meeting on December 18<sup>th</sup>.

**8. Communications**  
None.

#### **9. Members' Forum**

Susan Iuliano described a document that needed to be initialed by the Committee Chair that verified compliance with numerous State and Federal regulations as part of the Comprehensive Program Review. A mid-cycle review is scheduled to take place in Sudbury during the new calendar year. Dr. Brackett indicated that this would be limited to a few specific questions in Special Education.

**10. Executive Session**

None.

**11. Adjourn**

**VOTED:** On a motion by Jane Santinelli, seconded by Michele MacDonald, to adjourn the Regular Session. The time was 9:47 p.m. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

Yes	Susan Iuliano
Yes	Jane Santinelli
Yes	Rich Robison
Yes	Jeff Beeler
Yes	Michele MacDonald

Recorded by Bob Milley, Assistant Superintendent  
Submitted by Sheila Cusolito, Recording Secretary