

**Town of Tiverton
Budget Committee
Meeting
Judson Street Community Center
Thursday, 15 January 2009**

Jeff Caron called the meeting to order at approximately 7p.m. Attending members were: Jeff Caron, Sanford Mantell, Ray Joubert, Rob Coulter, Cynthia Nebergall, Dan Rapoza, Tom Parker, Art Moeller, and Alex Cote. Joe Bento was absent. Dave Perry arrived at approximately 7:30p.m. Town Treasurer Phil DeMattia attended and Jeff Caron asked that each Budget Committee member introduce himself to Mr. DeMattia.

1. Treasurer.

Jeff Caron asked Phil DeMattia to present the Treasurer's report for December 2008. Phil DeMattia gave each member of the Budget Committee a copy of the Treasurer's Monthly Revenue and Budget Reports to the Town Council and the Town Treasurer for the month ending December 31, 2008. Phil DeMattia reviewed and explained the Report and answered members questions, clarifying the information presented. Mr. DeMattia said that, comparing this year to last year, collections are ahead and expenditures are behind, except for overtime which is ahead. Mr. DeMattia said that the Treasurer's Report is now on the Town website, that the Report was prepared using new upgraded software, that the revenue side of the budget was not approved by the electors at the Financial Town Meeting, and that the Town is struggling to pay the high cost of litigation. Mr. DeMattia will produce this report monthly and he will provide the Budget Committee with copies of invoices if requested. Ray Joubert said that he would like to see historical expenditure information for each department. In response to a question from Rob Coulter, Mr. DeMattia confirmed that benefits and employer contributions to FICA are not included in each department's personnel costs line item.

2. Establish Committee Rules.

Jeff Caron requested that the Vice Chairman draft Budget Committee rules and policies and Rob Coulter agreed to do so. Mr. Coulter also suggested working on rules and policies with the Treasurer.

3. Subcommittee assignments.

Jeff Caron opened discussion of subcommittee assignments. Cynthia Nebergall suggested that, to avoid inadvertent violations of the Open Meetings Act, the Committee not form subcommittees and discussion followed. It was the consensus of the Committee not to form subcommittees but to endeavor to have the entire Committee, rather than subcommittees, participate in site visits.

4. Budget Plan and Strategy.

Jeff Caron presented the Budget Committee Working Schedule. (Copy attached.)

Leonard Wright, School Committee member, said that School Committee has a meeting on 24 January, the date scheduled for the Committee's site visit to the schools. It was the consensus of the Committee that Superintendent Rearick will conduct the Committee's site visit rather than the School Committee.

Jeff Caron then asked for volunteers to coordinate site visits to each of the other Town facilities. Volunteers and sites were:

Dave Perry, Senior Center
 Alex Cote, Public Works and Fire
 Jeff Caron, Schools
 Dan Rapoza, Police
 Tom Parker, library

It was agreed that site visits will be between 10a.m. and 12 noon.

Jeff Caron presented, on Power Point, a blank docket which had been provided by the Town Administrator. Mr. Caron said that the Committee must recognize the reduction in State aid to the Town and this would be accomplished by adding a column to the docket reflecting the mid-year reduction. Mr. Caron showed an additional column that would reflect a 2% reduction. (2% = anticipated current year reduction of approximately 6% divided by 3; given that state aid is approximately 1/3 of the budget, tax revenue is approximately 2/3). After discussion there was agreement that timely receipt of the Town Council's mid-year reductions would properly fulfill the column entries. Rob Coulter suggested that the Committee address the reduction in State aid by budgeting for the worst case.

Jeff Caron advised that the Town Council will have a meeting Tuesday, 20 January, and the two items on the agenda are:

Current FY 08-09 reduction in State aid to the Town;
 FY 09-10 reduction in State aid to the Town

Jeff Caron suggested that the Committee suggest to the Town Council that it consider leasing the new school buildings to the School Committee for an amount equal to some portion of the school bond debt. Sanford Mantell so moved and Cynthia Nebergall seconded the motion. The motion failed with five voting aye: Jeff Caron, Sanford Mantell, Rob Coulter, Cynthia Nebergall, and Tom Parker; and five voting nay: Ray Joubert, Dan Rapoza, Dave Perry, Alex Cote, and Art Moeller.

Jeff Caron said that at the joint meeting of the Town Council, Budget Committee and School Committee on 08 January Mr. Rearick stated that School enrollment had declined by approximately 10% over the past two years. Mr. Caron projected a copy of Section 16-7-23, Rhode Island General Laws, highlighting the italicized portion:

The school committee's budget provisions of each community for current expenditures in each budget year shall provide for an amount from all sources sufficient to support the basic program and all other approved programs shared by the

state. Each community shall contribute local funds to its school committee in an amount not less than its local contribution for schools in the previous fiscal year....*A community which has a decrease in enrollment may compute maintenance of effort on a per pupil rather than on an aggregate basis when determining its local contribution;* furthermore, a community which experiences a nonrecurring expenditure for its schools may deduct the nonrecurring expenditure in computing its maintenance of effort.

Rob Coulter read the following from the 15 January Newport Daily News (on-line): "Rearick said there are 79 fewer students in town schools this year compared to last June." (Copy attached.)

Ray Joubert moved, and Cynthia Nebergall seconded, that the Committee suggest to the Town Council that it seek exemption from State farm/open space law. The motion failed with three voting aye: Tom Parker, Ray Joubert, and Cynthia Nebergall; and six voting nay: Sanford Mantell, Rob Coulter, Dave Perry, Alex Cote, Art Moeller, and Dan Rapoza.

The meeting adjourned at 10p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Nebergall, Secretary

Public Contact: Robert Coulter, Vice Chairman
401.525.0469
bc@tiverton.ri.gov

15 Jan 09 BC Mtg

Budget Committee Working Schedule

<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>		<u>Site Visit</u>	<u>Meet</u>	<u>Deliberations</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Thursday	12/4/2008	Cancelled				
Thursday	12/11/2008	Mtg				
Thursday	1/8/2009	Joint Workshop				
Thursday	1/15/2009	Mtg				
Thursday	1/22/2009	Mtg	Town Hall			
Saturday	1/24/2009	Site Visit	School			
Thursday	1/29/2009	Mtg		School	Town Hall	
Saturday	1/31/2009	Site Visit	Fire			
Thursday	2/5/2009	Mtg		Fire	School	
Saturday	2/7/2009	Site Visit	Police			
Thursday	2/12/2009	Mtg		Police	Fire	
Saturday	2/14/2009	Site Visit	Public Works			
Thursday	2/19/2009	Mtg		Public Works	Police	
Saturday	2/21/2009	Site Visit	Library			
Thursday	2/26/2009	Mtg		Library	Public Works	
Saturday	2/28/2009	Site Visit	Senior Center			
Thursday	3/5/2009	Mtg		Senior Center	Library	
Thursday	3/12/2009	Mtg			Senior Center	
Thursday	3/19/2009	Mtg				
Thursday	3/26/2009	Mtg				
Thursday	4/2/2009	Mtg				
Thursday	4/9/2009	Mtg, Publish Docket				
Thursday	4/16/2009					
Thursday	4/23/2009	Public Hearing				between 4/19 - 4/28
Thursday	4/30/2009					
Thursday	5/7/2009					
Saturday	5/9/2009	FTM				
If Needed						
Site Visit						

From Rob Coulter
15 Jan 09
BC Mtg

Online Thursday, January 15, 2009

The Newport Daily News

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TIVERTON HEADLINES

Posted: Wednesday, January 14, 2009 10:58 AM EST

Proposed Tiverton school budget includes job cuts

More than \$300,000 still needs to be trimmed

By Marcia Pobzeznik
Daily News correspondent

Tiverton's school budget for the fiscal year that begins July 1 will be delivered to the town administrator and the budget committee with a note that the committee still needs to cut more than \$323,000 to make it balance.

Superintendent William Rearick submitted a preliminary budget that reflects a 5 percent cut in state aid to the School Committee Tuesday night along with a list of job cuts he will recommend because of a decrease in the school population. More cuts may be recommended in special education areas after Rearick meets with the regional special education director.

The \$26.1 million proposed fiscal 2010 budget is \$1.02 million more than the current budget, but Rearick said next year's increase cannot exceed \$696,870 in keeping with a mandated tax -levy cap of 4.75 percent.

The most significant increase in the proposed budget is \$505,515 for tuition for out-of-district residential placements. Business manager Douglas Fiore said the town has to pay for more than 20 out-of-district placements next year, with three of them totaling more than a quarter of a million dollars.

Other major line-item increases are for electricity and health insurance.

The three new elementary schools are expected to cost the town \$40,000 more for electricity. Health insurance increases will add another \$277,938 to the town's bill. Tuition to the Newport Area Career & Technical Center will be \$25,000 more, and special-education assistants are expected to cost the town nearly \$88,000 more in the next school year.

The positions Rearick will recommend to be cut include one full-time kindergarten teacher, one first-grade teacher, and two full-time and one

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Also MEETING MINUTES

When: Tuesday night.

Where: Tiverton High School auditorium, 100 North Brayton Road.

Present: All.

Action: Voted 4-0, with School Committee member Carol Herrmann abstaining, to appoint Stephen Robinson school board attorney. Robinson has served as the board's attorney for 15

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*Rob Coulter
quoted:
15 Jan 09
BC Mtg*

part-time teaching assistants. In addition, he will recommend that four full-time teaching positions at the middle school be reduced by one-fifth each.

The proposed budget includes no programming cuts at this time.

Rearick said there are 79 fewer students in town schools this year compared to last June.

In response to a question from School Committee member Danielle Coulter, Rearick said he has seen no indication that the bad economy might force some parents to transfer their children from private school to the town's public schools.

Capital expenditure requests include a proposal to replace the bleachers in the high school gymnasium at a cost of \$14,306 a year for seven years. The list includes several other items and totals \$96,830. The list for capital items that need to be funded but are not included in the budget request because of a lack of money total \$386,340. The largest is \$341,000 for phase 2 of a renovation to the sewage treatment plant at the high school.

Send correspondent Marcia Pobeznik e-mail at Pobeznik@NewportRI.com.

Reader Comments

years, but the new board at the beginning of its term in November decided to seek bids for the services. Robinson was one of three that submitted bids, but only two were considered because one of the firms had no experience representing school committees. A subcommittee made up of School Committee member Danielle Coulter and Chairman Jan Bergandy recommended Robinson be re-appointed. Herrmann said she had hoped more firms would apply and said in the future the committee should do more to ensure that the pool of candidates is much larger. Bergandy said Robinson had the lowest price, at \$150 an hour, and has not lost a case for the School Committee during his tenure, and also has not given the committee bad advice.

- Voted unanimously to hire four substitute teachers to cover classrooms while groups of four teachers spend a day setting up their new classrooms at the new Fort Barton and Pocasset elementary schools once the certificates of occupancy are issued by town inspectors. Opening day for the new schools is Feb. 23, but Superintendent William Rearick expects that teachers will be able to begin setting up by the end of this month. The substitutes will be hired for 10 days to give all 40 staff enough time to each unpack dozens of boxes and organize their classrooms. Volunteers are also being sought and can contact Fort Barton Principal Suzette Wordell at Nonquit and Pocasset Principal Fran Blais at the old Ranger to sign up.

- Accepted the resignations of Matt McGuire, boys varsity baseball coach, and Andy Anderson, golf coach at the high school.

- Appointed Jeannine Earl, teacher assistant at Pocasset School, Gloria Christ, drama coach at the high school, and William Phillips to the job of building level mentoring facilitator at the high school.

Of note: Parent-teacher conferences at the elementary schools are expected to be rescheduled and held the first week of February rather than the second week so classrooms

at Nonquit and the old Ranger School are not filled with boxes for the impending move to the new Fort Barton and Pocasset schools. Middle and high school parent-teacher conference dates will not change.

Next meeting: Tuesday, Jan. 27, 7 p.m., high school auditorium.

The following are comments from the readers. In no way do they represent the view of newportdailynews.com.

Please wrote on Jan 14, 2009 2:35 PM:

" Please Mr. Rearick, when are you going to take a cut in your salary???? "

cdelanocox.net wrote on Jan 14, 2009 8:28 PM:

" mr.Rearick is paid to run our school district .He works a full year unlike the teachers and his pay is comparable to the work he does.Dont compair the two as if teachers share the same responsibility "

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