

Dunbarton School District Meeting

Saturday, March 5, 2011

The annual School District Meeting of the Town of Dunbarton, New Hampshire was called to order by Moderator Fred Mullen at 7:00 PM. The Moderator welcomed the public to the 125th School District Meeting; the first was held on March 16, 1886. The Moderator introduced himself and stated the election of school officials would take place on Tuesday, March 8, 2011 on town Meeting Day. The Moderator led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Moderator reviewed building exits, voting cards, and meeting procedures with the public. The Moderator recognized the following individuals:

Moderator:	Fred Mullen
School Board Members:	Debra Foster, Chair Rene Ouellet, Vice Chair Carl Metzger Betty Ann Noyes
School District Clerk:	Deborah Jore
Superintendent:	Stacy Buckley
Asst. Superintendents:	MaryClaire Barry Brian Balke
Business Manager:	Raymond Labore
Human Resource Director:	Carol Kilmister
Principal:	Carol Thibaudeau
Supervisors of the Checklist:	Ronald Slocum Janet Casey Margaret Venator

The Moderator thanked Dan and Gayle Troy for their help with the sound system for the meeting.

The Moderator recognized John Wiggin for whom the 2010 Dunbarton Town Report was dedicated.

The Moderator reviewed parliamentary procedures. The Moderator read aloud Page 106 in the Town Report entitled “Dunbarton School District Warrant, Election of Officers, 2011” and Page 107 in the Town Report entitled “Dunbarton School District Warrant, 2011”. *Debra Foster made a motion to waive the further reading of the warrant article. Rene Ouellet seconded.* The Moderator asked if there was any discussion. Being no discussion, the Moderator called for a vote. *VOTE The motion was passed by a show of hands.*

Approved Minutes

Article 1

The Moderator read Article 1: *To determine and appoint the salaries of the School Board and Truant Officer and fix the compensation of any other officer or agent of the District, or to take any other action in relation thereto.*

Debra Foster made a motion to determine and appoint the salaries of the School Board and Truant Officer and fix the compensation of any other officer or agent of the District, or to take any other action in relation thereto. Rene Ouellet seconded. The Moderator asked if Debra Foster would like to speak on Article 1; Mrs. Foster stated salaries could be found in the annual Town Report under School Board Services on page 118. The Moderator asked if there was any further discussion on Article 1. Being no further discussion, the Moderator again read Article 1 and called for a vote. *VOTE Article 1 passed by a show of hands.*

Article 2

The Moderator read Article 2: *To hear the reports of Agents, Auditors, Officers or Committees of the District or to take any other action related thereto.*

Debra Foster made a motion to hear the reports of Agents, Auditors, Officers or Committees of the District or to take any other action related thereto. Rene Ouellet seconded. The Moderator asked if Debra Foster would like to speak on Article 2; Mrs. Foster stated the auditors report and letter is in the annual Town Report and there are copies available if the public is interested in reading them. The Moderator asked if there was any further discussion on Article 2. Being no further discussion, the Moderator read Article 2 and called for a vote. *VOTE Article 2 passed by a show of hands.*

Article 3

The Moderator read Article 3: *To see if the School District shall raise and appropriate FIVE MILLION, TWO HUNDRED TWENTY NINE THOUSAND, EIGHT HUNDRED SEVEN DOLLARS (\$5,229,807.00) for the support of schools, for the payment of salaries for School District officials and agents, and for the payment of statutory and contractual obligations of the District, or to take any other action in relation thereto. This warrant article (Operating Budget) does not include appropriations in any other warrant article. (Majority vote required)*

Debra Foster made a motion to see if the School District shall raise and appropriate FIVE MILLION, TWO HUNDRED TWENTY NINE THOUSAND, EIGHT HUNDRED SEVEN DOLLARS (\$5,229,807.00) for the support of schools, for the payment of salaries for School District officials and agents, and for the payment of statutory and contractual obligations of the District, or to take any other action in relation thereto. This warrant article (Operating Budget) does not include appropriations in any other warrant article. Rene Ouellet seconded. The Moderator asked if Debra Foster would like to speak on Article 3; Mrs. Foster reviewed the approach the School Board took on the budget and which Board member would talk on each portion.

Debra Foster stated the School Board had wonderful support from the principal and school staff and they worked hard to trim as much as possible. Mrs. Foster stated the proposed budget is \$145,000 less than the current budget without sacrificing the quality of education at DES. Mrs. Foster stated special education costs, transportation costs, and nursing office costs were reduced and there were decreases in maintenance/utilities, tuition, and heating system. Mrs. Foster stated there were increases in staff benefits, staff track changes, supplies for math, science and social studies, computer software and library furniture.

Debra Foster reviewed the regular education portion of the budget. Mrs. Foster briefly discussed the following areas:

- Teacher salaries are almost identical to this year's budget; a new teacher's contract will be addressed in a separate warrant and that amount would be added if approved.
- Increase in Health line item (supplies, salary, new hearing equipment, new medicine cabinet)
- Increase in Retirement costs
- Slight increase in Math/Science/Social Studies supplies
- Increase in Electronic Information (software licenses)
- Increase in Information Center (two tables, chair, bookcase)
- Decrease in SAU Services (assessment based on three school districts)
- Increase in Office of Principal (stipend for calling in of substitutes)
- Decrease in Transportation

Mrs. Foster stated the total increase in proposed budget is \$79,000. The Moderator asked if there were any questions for Mrs. Foster. Being none, the Moderator recognized Carl Metzger.

Carl Metzger reviewed the maintenance portion of the budget. Mr. Metzger stated this part of the budget covers the costs of maintaining the facility (general repairs, supplies, custodial costs, propane, oil, supplies, and general emergency repairs); the maintenance budget has decreased by \$3,374 for a total amount of \$279,000. Mr. Metzger stated they have replaced a number of items over the past few years based on need and safety. Mr. Metzger stated for the coming year they have not seen any items that need to be addressed and will be skipping any general repairs for 2012. The Moderator asked if there were any questions for Mr. Metzger.

The Moderator recognized Mike Mitskey. Mr. Mitskey asked about the telephone increase in maintenance, line is \$1,000. The Moderator recognized Superintendent Stacy Buckley to explain increase. Mrs. Buckley stated expenditures were almost \$57,000 and they are budgeting more appropriately for telephone services. Mr. Mitskey asked about custodial services, if an employee was added or if there was a raise. Mr. Metzger stated a daytime janitor was replaced and the new janitor's salary is higher. Debra Foster stated the new janitor came in with different experience and to accommodate that, they looked at the grid/support staff agreement; more duties have been assigned to him. Mr. Mitskey stated the janitors were receiving a pretty good pay raise for one year. Mrs. Foster stated three custodians went up a step. Mr. Mitskey stated he felt propane costs in the budget were underestimated. Mrs. Foster stated the Board has to make the best guess of future market price at the time they do the budget and are trying to keep the budget as trim as possible. Mrs. Foster stated they have insulated the roof of the entire school and hope to use less fuel.

The Moderator recognized Ed Wagner. Mr. Wagner stated he noticed in statistics from the prior year to current year a decrease in the number of students, yet the budget continues to go up. Mr. Wagner stated he would like to know why the budget is up 10% from two years ago when enrollment has gone down and asked if they had looked at eliminating any positions. Debra Foster stated it is not a 10% increase, the budget decreased. Rene Ouellet stated the reduction in enrollment last year was 7-8 students and class sizes currently range from 24 to over 30, which does not put the school in a position to double up classes. Mr. Ouellet stated a couple of years ago the Board looked at combining the 4th grade into one class and due to complications and overwhelming opposition at a public hearing did not do so. Mrs. Foster stated enrollment as of January 3, 2011 was 194 students and that the Board did look at class sizes every time they see a drop in enrollment. Mr. Wagner asked why salaries have gone up 10% over two years. Mrs. Foster stated teachers receive a step increase if they are evaluated successfully and nine and half

teachers have Master Degrees that bump them onto a new track; retirement and benefit cost have also gone up. Mr. Wagner stated neither he nor his wife have had salary increases in a couple years and asked if the Board had considered asking the teachers to forgo their step increases.

Mrs. Foster stated the Board is well aware of the economic situation in town. Mr. Wagner asked why software licensing went from \$0 to almost \$6,000. Mrs. Foster stated in previous budgets the licensing was all separated out into separate line items, this year they moved them into one.

Mrs. Foster stated it looks like a big jump, but is the same software, no new programs. Mr. Wagner asked why the in the prior budget the Information Center salary was \$21,000 and is now \$33,000. Mrs. Foster stated the State required DES to have a technology plan and needed to increase training/support for software for students/teachers; had to add one more day to teacher's schedule (now works three days a week) and are now in compliance.

The Moderator recognized a Dunbarton resident. The resident asked how many software programs at the school were licensed. Debra Foster stated about 75 devices. The resident suggested looking into packages available where the district could save money on licensing.

The Moderator recognized Mike Mitskey. Mr. Mitskey asked about 3% salary increase for instructional aides. Debra Foster stated there is a salary grid based on experience and 3-4 aides have been here long enough to increase a step. Mr. Mitskey stated in light of this economy and seeing 3% increases in salaries throughout the budget, he would like to propose that there be no pay increases this year, that we do not have the money.

The Moderator recognized David Hoell. Mr. Hoell reviewed enrollment numbers for 2010 and stated the average class size for grade 2 and 5 is 12 students. Mr. Hoell stated that is great, but he was not sure Dunbarton could afford that. Mr. Hoell stated there are private industries not doing outside development for staff, but Dunbarton is still doing this and then teachers move into higher pay brackets. Rene Ouellet stated course reimbursement is a contractually agreed upon issue and is not going to put anyone quickly through the ranks. Mr. Ouellet stated DES has the smallest special education enrollment in the state and he thinks a large part is the size of our classes and expertise. Mr. Ouellet stated he understands concerns about staff salaries, but if you look at our salary grid and compare it to other school districts in the area and our district's size, we are in the middle of the pack, yet continue to hold onto excellent teachers. Mr. Hoell stated his wife taught grade 1 with 25 students in her class and Dunbarton needs to take a hard look at the increases in operating costs. Mr. Hoell challenged the Board to look at moving class sizes back to 25 students.

The Moderator recognized Tracy Custer. Mrs. Custer stated she found all this discussion of increasing class sizes upsetting. Mrs. Custer stated although the economy is not good and people are not receiving pay raises, she thinks there is something to be said for keeping a high level of education.

The Moderator recognized Margaret Venator. Mrs. Venator stated she is retired and is perfectly glad to pay her taxes. Mrs. Venator stated she is on a fixed income and would never vote to cheat the children; would end up paying makeup costs later on. The Moderator asked if there were any more questions. Being none, the Moderator recognized Debra Foster.

Debra Foster reviewed the special education portion of the budget. Mrs. Foster stated special education costs are down \$11,000 from the previous year and Dunbarton is spending less than 15% compared to the 30% of other districts. Mrs. Foster stated they have been building a special education trust fund just in case a child moves into town with significant needs. Mrs. Foster stated because the need for special education services in Dunbarton is dropping, they would not

get as much reimbursement back from the State. Mrs. Foster stated when you look at the overall quality of education that DES students receive, they end up being in the top part of the middle school/high school population with their grades; they do extremely well as they move on out of elementary school. The Moderator asked if there were any questions for Mrs. Foster. Being none, the Moderator recognized Betty Ann Noyes.

Betty Ann Noyes stated Dunbarton has an agreement to send their students to Goffstown for middle and high school. Mrs. Noyes stated reviewed the following enrolment figures and costs for the middle school as of January 3, 2011:

- 7th grade: 27 students at a cost of \$10,828 each (\$292,356 total)
- 8th grade: 34 students at a cost of \$10,828 each (\$368,152 total)
- The Board includes in budget one extra student at a cost of \$10,828
- The Board also has to add an extended year program for four students at \$500 per student for special help (\$2,000 total)

Mrs. Noyes stated the grand total tuition costs for the middle school are \$673,336.

Betty Ann Noyes then reviewed the following enrollment figures and costs for the high school as of October 1, 2010:

- 9th grade: 38 students at a cost of \$11,566 each (\$439,508 total)
- 10th grade: 38 students at a cost of \$11,566 each (\$439,508 total)
- 11th grade: 34 students at a cost of \$11,566 each (\$393,244 total)
- 12th grade: 33 students at a cost of \$11,566 each (\$381,678 total)
- The Board includes in budget one extra student at a cost of \$11,566

The Moderator asked if there were any questions for Mrs. Noyes.

The Moderator recognized Ed Wagner. Mr. Wagner asked what could be done about tuitioning to other schools, if there were any other choices. Rene Ouellet stated in order to secure middle and high school education for students Dunbarton entered into an AREA agreement with Goffstown and New Boston; Dunbarton is not big enough to have their own high school. Mr. Ouellet stated the AREA agreement was renewed eight years ago. Betty Ann Noyes stated the reason they went with Goffstown was because the cost was more reasonable and still is compared to other towns around us. Mr. Ouellet stated the AREA agreement gives us continuity and currently the tuition costs at the high school are among the lowest in the state. Mr. Ouellet stated for the last two years GHS has scored in the top five on standardized testing in the state. Mr. Wagner asked if there was any way to request Goffstown lower the tuition rate. Mr. Ouellet stated the amount they pay for tuition is the same amount Goffstown and New Boston pays for their students, it is fair, they are all sharing costs.

The Moderator recognized Jason Breault. Mr. Breault referred to difference in tuition price shown in Goffstown Report and asked if Dunbarton was subsidizing them as it shows their amounts cheaper. The Moderator recognized Stacy Buckley in order to answer question. Mrs. Buckley stated the numbers Mr. Breault is looking at are the state average numbers, special education costs are taken out. Mrs. Buckley stated the number Dunbarton pays is the actual Goffstown cost.

The Moderator recognized Matt Colby. Mr. Colby asked if the enrollment numbers were current enrollments. Debra Foster stated yes.

The Moderator recognized David Kane. Mr. Kane stated there are a lot of homeschooled students in the district who attend some classes in Goffstown. Mr. Kane asked how these students were

tuitioned. Debra Foster stated the tuition is prorated. Mr. Kane asked how those are reflected in the budget. Mrs. Foster stated there is none figured into this next year's budget. The Moderator asked if there were any further questions. Being none, the Moderator recognized Rene Ouellet.

Rene Ouellet reviewed the revenue portion of the budget. Mr. Ouellet stated revenues are a moving target and referred the public to page 105 in the Town Report (building aid, catastrophic aid). Mr. Ouellet stated the Board's best projections as of February this year have changed considerably. Mr. Ouellet stated the Board just found out that the governor's budget would wipe out catastrophic aid, reduce building aid, and push back onto the local school districts what the state has been contributing to teacher's retirement; this would reduce revenue by another \$1,100,000. Mr. Ouellet stated food service expenses have been somewhat higher than revenues the last couple years. The Moderator asked if there were any questions for Mr. Ouellet.

The Moderator recognized Chuck Williamson. Mr. Williamson asked what the governor's budget would do to the tax rate. Rene Ouellet stated the governor's budget is not final and the worst-case scenario would be an impact of .34 cents per thousand. Mr. Williamson asked if this would be above and beyond the .86 cent per thousand increase. Mr. Ouellet stated yes, .81 cents plus the .34 cents, but this is worst-case scenario.

The Moderator recognized Mike Mitskey. Mr. Mitskey asked if the public could make an amendment to the warrant. The Moderator stated yes, but can only amend the bottom line and the school district has discretion where to put the funds.

The Moderator asked if there were any further questions. Being none, the Moderator read Article 3 and called for a vote. *VOTE Article 3 passed by a show of hands.*

Article 4

The Moderator read Article 4: *To see if the School District shall vote to approve the cost items included in the multi-year collective bargaining agreement reached between the Dunbarton School Board and the Dunbarton Educational Association which calls for the following increase in salaries and benefits:*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Estimated Increase</i>
<i>2011-2012</i>	<i>\$34,297.00</i>
<i>2012-2013</i>	<i>\$28,651.00</i>

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of THIRTY FOUR THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED NINETY SEVEN DOLLARS (\$34,297.00) for the 2011-2012 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels in accordance with the most recent collective bargaining agreement. This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article #3, the Operating budget Article. (Majority vote required).

Rene Ouellet made a motion to see if the School District shall vote to approve the cost items included in the multi-year collective bargaining agreement reached between the Dunbarton School Board and the Dunbarton Educational Association which calls for the following increase in salaries and benefits:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Estimated Increase</i>
<i>2011-2012</i>	<i>\$34,297.00</i>
<i>2012-2013</i>	<i>\$28,651.00</i>

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the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels in accordance with the most recent collective bargaining agreement. This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article #3, the Operating budget Article. Carl Metzger seconded. The Moderator asked if Rene Ouellet would like to speak on Article 4. Mr. Ouellet stated negotiations started in September and continued until January. Mr. Ouellet stated they discussed many things that had financial implications, one item was the special enrichment program, the 6th grade Sargent Camp trip, in which a stipend was created for each of the two teachers that go (\$1,400 total) for their extra hours. Mr. Ouellet stated another cost item negotiated had to do with the salary grid, minor adjustments were made in grid; negotiated no raise either of the two years. Mr. Ouellet stated increases are from FICA and retirement and some teachers are getting zero raises in the second year. The Moderator asked if there were any questions for Mr. Ouellet.

The Moderator recognized Ron Slocum. Mr. Slocum stated had questions about teacher raises and the grid, if some were getting two raises. Rene Ouellet stated no, that teachers will only see the step increases they are due and some teachers are not going to get that. Debra Foster stated the line item budget that shows teacher salaries is what they have as of this year, does not include any steps.

The Moderator recognized Jim Edwards. Mr. Edwards stated he bought property in 1988, has seen increases over the years and is frankly disappointed to see taxes continually going up. Mr. Edwards stated over the past three years there has been unemployment, pages of foreclosures in the papers and here they continue to see raises. Mr. Edwards stated he would really like the Board to consider taking a second look.

The Moderator asked if there were any further questions. Being none, the Moderator read Article 4 and asked for a vote. *VOTE Article 4 passed by a show of hands.*

Article 5

The Moderator read Article 5: *To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$1,000.00) for deposit into the existing Dunbarton Kitchen Equipment Fund and to authorize the use of that amount from the June 30, 2011 Unreserved Fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2011. This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article #3, the Operating Budget Article. (Majority vote required).*

Rene Ouellet made a motion to see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$1,000.00) for deposit into the existing Dunbarton Kitchen Equipment Fund and to authorize the use of that amount from the June 30, 2011 Unreserved Fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2011. This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article #3, the Operating Budget Article. Betty Ann Noyes seconded. The Moderator asked if Rene Ouellet would like to speak on Article 5. Mr. Ouellet stated about 3-4 years ago an agreement was reached with the selectmen recognizing that both the selectmen and town make use of the community center and kitchen and recognized that much of the equipment in the kitchen has been there a long time and would need replacement in the future. Mr. Ouellet stated this fund lets them respond to needs as they come up, there is a self-proposed cap of \$5,000. The School Board would like to put \$1,000 into the fund (will come from unencumbered funds) as will the selectmen.

The Moderator asked if there were any questions for Mr. Ouellet. Being none, the Moderator read Article 5 and called for a vote. *VOTE Article 5 passed by a show of hands.*

Article 6

The Moderator read Article 6: *To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate up to TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$10,000.00) for deposit into the existing Dunbarton School Capital Reserve Fund and to authorize the use of that amount from the June 30, 2011 Unreserved Fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2011. This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article #3, the Operating Budget Article. (Majority vote required).*

Carl Metzger made a motion to see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate up to TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$10,000.00) for deposit into the existing Dunbarton School Capital Reserve Fund and to authorize the use of that amount from the June 30, 2011 Unreserved Fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2011. This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article #3, the Operating Budget Article. Rene Ouellet seconded. The Moderator asked if Carl Metzger would like to speak on Article 6. Mr. Metzger stated the Board would like to appropriate \$10,000 to start putting money back into the capital reserve fund to cover any major maintenance that may come up; last year \$6,600 was taken out of the fund to insulate the school roof to correct ice dam issues. Debra Foster stated the \$10,000 would come from funds the Board did not expended at the end of this fiscal year. The Moderator asked if there were any questions for Mr. Metzger.

The Moderator recognized Ed Wagner. Mr. Wagner asked if the funds that come from this year's figures were already incorporated into revenue. Debra Foster stated no, that if the \$10,000 is approved, they would still have \$70,000 in unencumbered funds.

The Moderator asked if there were any further questions. Being none, the Moderator read Article 6 and called for a vote. *VOTE Article 6 passed by a show of hands.*

The Moderator called for a motion to dissolve the meeting. *Les Hammond made motion to dissolve the meeting at 9:03 PM. Debra Foster seconded. VOTE All in Favor MOTION PASSED*

Respectfully Submitted:
Deborah L. Jore
School District Clerk