

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE  
October 18, 2005**

A meeting of the Municipal Budget Committee was called to order at 6:34 p.m. in the meeting room of the Conway Public Library with the following members present: Chairperson Melissa Stacey, Rick Paquette, Phil Dighello, Bill Jones, Randy Davison, Bob Drinkhall, Betty Boucher, Carl Rosenthal, Debra Deschenes, Bill Aughton (joined at 6:35), Kirk Smith (joined at 6:41), Maureen Seavey and Karen Umberger (joined at 6:46). Also present were: Lucy Philbrick, Carl Nelson, Chief Wagner, Paul Whetton, Dave Emerson, Earl Sires (joined at 6:46) and Mark Hounsell (joined at 7:11). Chairperson Stacey noted that Maureen, Earl and Karen were at the Selectmen's meeting and would join as soon as they could.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Bill Jones moved, seconded by Bob Drinkhall, to approve the minutes of September 21, 2005.** There were no corrections. **The motion carried 8 -0-1 (Stacey, Paquette, Dighello, Jones, Davison, Drinkhall, Boucher and Rosenthal in the affirmative, Deschenes abstains).**

APPOINTMENT TO FILL VACANCY

Chairperson Stacey noted that we have a vacancy to fill (Bill Aughton joins). We had two applicants: Mr. Fishman and Mr. Vitale. She reviewed Mr. Fishman's letter of application at our last meeting. Chairperson Stacey read Mr. Vitale's letter of application (copy included in packet). Mr. Vitale expressed concern that he has commitments that might preclude his being able to participate in all of the meetings. **Betty Boucher moved, seconded by Bill Jones, to recommend that Richard Vitale fill the vacant seat on the Budget Committee.** Chairperson Stacey opened the motion for discussion and Dick was asked to speak with the Committee about his concerns. Dick feels that he has a lot to give to the Committee but he has some commitments and he'd like to know what sort of schedule the Committee would be having. Chairperson Stacey noted that we are looking at a meeting on December 19<sup>th</sup>, then a break for the holidays then from January right through April the Committee is involved in the budgeting process. Dick doesn't feel it would be right for him to take this seat if he isn't able to be here consistently. (Kirk Smith joined) Dick reviewed his specific dates of absence and the Committee felt that Dick would not be absent during the heavy season. Bill Jones noted that it is possible to get by if Dick is absent as long as he is available as we could consider teleconferencing – or by computer or by fax. Chairperson Stacey noted that last year the Committee had agreed that we would take teleconferencing into consideration. Bill Jones asked if Dick had any other reservations about being a member of the Committee, which he did not. Betty thanked Dick for coming forward. Bill Jones called the question. **The motion to recommend that Richard Vitale fill the vacant seat on the Budget Committee passed unanimously.** Randy Davison noted that he typically abstains on filling seats this way, as he believes people should be voted in. He didn't abstain on this because he is aware of Dick's credentials. Dick was invited to join the Committee at the table. Chairperson Stacey noted that Dick couldn't vote until he is

sworn in and that would happen as soon as Karen Umberger arrives. (Karen Umberger, Earl Sires and Maureen Seavey joined)

#### SWEAR IN NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER

Karen Umberger swore Richard Vitale in.

#### POLICE BUDGET REVIEW

Chairperson Stacey informed the Committee that she had included the RSA information that was requested at the last meeting in their packets. She then asked Chief Wagner to join the table. The Committee had asked some questions at the last meeting, which couldn't be answered, which is why attendance of the Chief was requested. Paul Whetton asked if the commissioners should join the table and Chairperson Stacey noted that she is trying to keep them out of the hot seat here! She then asked the Committee members if they had any questions for Chief Wagner. Bill Jones asked how the payout to the resigning Chief affected the police. He wants to know if the money coming out of the Regular Officer's line would affect the Department's ability to provide services. Chief Wagner noted that the Department is short and doing the best we can. He hopes to hire another officer in January. Bill commends the Police Department's services; he just wanted to confirm that the money coming out of the Regular Officer's line is affecting services. Karen Umberger countered that the Department's performance is not affected, it is just that they were unable to replace the officer they were short. Chief Wagner noted that this affects how well the people we have are able to perform their duties. There are investigations that have to be cut short because we are handling more calls per person. He again noted that we are doing the best we can with what we have.

Rick Paquette noted that if a team is deployed to address an issue and there are five officers instead of six then the performance of the team is degraded. Their resources are spread thinner and therefore it does affect performance. Karen noted that last year we were down one officer, and then we lost Sean Billert, so they were down two. We filled one vacancy and that person is currently at the Police Academy. The vacancy that has not been filled is due to promotions within the department. The promotions used up the money that would have been freed up when Sean Billert left. Karen would like to know if the Department has advertised for these vacancies and Chief Wagner noted that they haven't advertised for the second position.

Betty Boucher would like to know if the response from the Hastings Law firm is covered under what we have already paid them or is it an additional cost. She would like to know if the cost is to the Police Department or to the Budget Committee. Earl Sires noted that the cost associated with this correspondence is covered under the town's line item for legal services.

Chairperson Stacey noted that the other questions that the Committee had are related to the use of our officers and units for construction details. Chief Wagner noted that the contractor pays \$37 per hour for the officer. \$7 per hour goes to the town and if the contractor has use of a cruiser then there is another \$10 per hour cost. Bill Jones would like to know who decides who gets these details. Chief Wagner noted that officers who are off-duty take the shifts. Bill would like to know if it is possible that someone on sick time could do this and Chief Wagner assured him this wouldn't be the case. Bill would like to know where these officers are all coming from. Chief Wagner stated that we have

three part time officers who do these details and then there are others who come from towns other than Conway. Two of the part time officers are specifically for working commercial duty. Bill would like to know if all the officers who serve construction duty are current or former police, which was affirmed; some are current some are retired. Bill noted that these officers seem to be out there longer than eight hours, which was affirmed. Bill asked if this did not, then, affect their job performance. He sees our officers doing their own detail and then again on construction detail. Chief Wagner agreed it could be tiring with the extra hours. Bill wants to make sure that it isn't costing the town to have our officers out there. Chief Wagner noted that when these calculations were done last time it came out to about a dollar that the town gets. Lucy Philbrick noted she could provide that information to the Committee. Bill noted that the Police Department is doing a fine job, it's a tough detail being out there rain or shine and he wants to make sure it isn't affecting our officers' ability to perform their duties.

Rick Paquette would like to know if Officer Fred (fictitious name) works a ten-hour shift for a contractor, is that connected in any way to retirement? Chief Wagner noted that all hours worked count towards retirement and the town pays all of the other required costs (unemployment, FICA, Medicare, Social Security, etc.) out of the \$7 paid to the town. The contractor is billed \$37 per hour (without a cruiser); \$30 per hour goes to the officer and \$7 goes to the town to cover the officer's benefits.

Dick Vitale would like to know what other towns charge, which Chief Wagner couldn't answer. Dick wants to know if the \$7 charge has ever been changed. Dick noted that in his former town they raised the amount charged to contractors and they didn't even blink. Earl Sires noted that we were at \$5 and raised it to \$7 but we barely break even on it. We are planning to look at that again to see if it is time for another adjustment. Rick noted that with the price of gas and the cruisers running all the time they are out there, it would seem likely that we would need to increase the cost for their use. Bill Jones wants to know if we are really going to look at this and Lucy Philbrick promised that was already on the agenda. Bill noted that he is here for the taxpayers and money is short.

Another question that came up at the last meeting was who belongs to the bargaining unit? Chief Wagner noted that the unit is made up of union personnel. Any personnel from the rank of Sergeant up are not part of the unit, including the Chief's secretary. Bill Jones wants to know if we have a negotiator. The Police are struggling with their budget but so is Bill Jones. With the price of heating oil and gas prices going up it is going to further affect their budget. Chief Wagner noted that gas is going to be more of a problem than heating fuel. We were budgeting \$1.30 per gallon for gas and it's currently at \$1.86. Dick would like to know if the usage per unit is tracked and Chief Wagner affirmed this, stating that every unit has a key to the pumps and the information is downloaded. (Mark Hounsell joined) When the Commissioners last met they discussed ways to cut the fuel costs. They have set a 100-mile limit on the cruisers and are going to try to go down to 75 miles. Earl Sires noted that when the town discussed its fuel costs that includes the Police Department as well. Betty Boucher noted that the town, the police and the school are all under the same fuel deal and Earl noted that the town and Police are slightly different from the school. Maureen Seavey asked if, when the town asked the DRA for permission to overspend, did that include the Police Department, which Earl affirmed. Rick would like to know if we have officers assigned to different areas of the town on

each shift and Chief Wagner noted that we have the northern area, from the Elks Club north, and the southern area, which is from the Elks Club south. If we have more than two officers on then these additional cars are roving.

Karen Umberger would like to know how many patrolmen we have under the rank of Sergeant. Chief Wagner responded that we have twenty-one total, with seven at the rank of Sergeant or above. Karen wants to know if that includes the Chief's secretary and Chief Wagner noted including his secretary there are eight who are outside of the bargaining unit. There were no further questions of the Chief. He, the commissioners and Lucy Philbrick left the meeting.

### SCHOOL BUDGET REVIEW

Chairperson Stacey noted that the next agenda item is the School Budget and asked Carl Nelson to join the table. He distributed a tentative schedule for the School District budget meetings. He noted that in the past many of the Budget Committee's members have shown up and it has been helpful. Karen Umberger had called Carl and asked him to bring a copy of the Warrant Article on the bond from November 2003, which he brought. There is also a handout regarding Senate Bill 38 and what the increase in aid to the building project is going to mean to the towns involved. Conway's portion is going down by \$210,000. Carl noted that he did not receive any questions from the Budget Committee. Chairperson Stacey noted that in looking at the minutes, Bob Drinkhall wanted to know if there is a summary of functions for the budget. Carl noted that he has another form, which Bob might find meets his needs. This gives the function number with an explanation of what the number stands for. Bob agrees this would be helpful.

Carl noted that an issue that always comes up is Special Education, how much it costs and how we budget for it. Last year we had \$650,000 left; today we are \$150,000 in the hole due to new kids coming into the system and changes to the IEPs that occurred in the spring. A 1:1 aide costs about \$30,000 including benefits. Things might change; this is always a moving target. Phil Dighello wants to know how much of what we spend comes back as reimbursement. Carl noted we get what is called "catastrophic aid". We had budgeted that at 50% and it came in at 69%. Phil would like to see how much we are spending over what we are getting.

Randy Davison noted that he has reviewed the budget and he'd like some clarification. On page 3, line function 2722 was budgeted at \$3,500 and now is at (\$35,400). He wants to know what this is. Carl Nelson noted this is the Transportation function. Part of that is going to be due to Special Education transportation but he would have to look this up to be sure. Carl noted that if the Committee intends to go through the budget with specific questions, he'd prefer that those questions be turned in to him so he can get the answers. Randy noted that one item he is adamant about is the cost of fuel. The school does the entire negotiating on this. We've had discussion about the amount the District is paying and he feels both the School Board and Carl need to look at how fuel is purchased, especially since it involves the town and the police. Randy called Madison and they are locked in at \$1.74. The District says it saved \$30,000 but it really isn't saving anything, this is money that we don't need to spend. It looks like we are only working with two vendors. He doesn't understand how SAU 13 can lock in at \$1.74 when SAU 9 is paying \$2.15. Randy is a residential consumer and he is paying less than the SAU. The business

manager at SAU 13 doesn't understand why we are doing this. There is an Alliance that many folks are using and they are all satisfied. Randy would like to see the contract. We are in a deficit because we budgeted \$1.75 per gallon. He did some research and in contacting the Superintendents of Vermont, almost every one of them joined a Coop or Alliance. Chairperson Stacey noted she had asked Jim Hill to come but he was unable to attend. Betty noted that she had spoken with Jim and he knows we want to see the contract. Carl noted that no other agency (town, police) are required to be involved with the District's negotiations for fuel. The District does the legwork they can purchase where they want. This year the costs have gone beyond the \$1.75 we budgeted however, he reminded all that the Committee criticized the District for budgeting this amount. Betty would like to know if Jim sent a copy of the paper he sent to Paul DegliAngeli. Chairperson Stacey noted she would get copies to the Committee.

Earl Sires noted that he isn't sure why Randy thinks the town is locked in with the District. The town can purchase from anyone but, to date, this process has worked really well for the town. We have discussed options. We are on the list for Energy Tamworth. SAU 13 does their budgeting in July so they have more lead-time. The town raises money for fuel. The District also raises money for fuel. We bill them. If the District pays independently that will mitigate our bottom-line expenditures. We are trying to deal with this and Randy has some good points to consider going forward. Bob Drinkhall noted that when the District was settling on \$2.15 he got his fuel for \$1.75. Rick Paquette would like to know if we have been using the Rapid Return method for purchasing fuel for the last ten years, as it is an inadequate method. Bill Jones noted this method tucks it to the taxpayers.

Karen Umberger noted that if you look back over the last ten years you would see that we paid less than the homeowner. This year it didn't work out that way. Every year we have paid significantly less than the homeowner and also less than Coops could offer. She understands the frustration this year but we haven't done badly. We've had two hurricanes and several refineries were knocked out. Carl noted that he would provide a copy of the bid. Bob Drinkhall wants to know what we paid last year and Carl noted he would get that as well. Debra Deschenes noted that she thinks it was around \$1.40. Chairperson Stacey noted the town paid \$1.45. Chairperson Stacey asked Deb how the School Board feels about this. Deb stated that the Board isn't happy about it but it isn't a matter of the Board screwing up, as seems to be the opinion here. Randy disputes that, noting this is in every taxpayer's face. Our contract is from November to February. February is a cold month and fuel prices go up. We're going to lose again. He believes it is time for the town and the school to separate on this matter. Most of the southern districts have one person who takes care of the fuel bids for \$100 per year. In February are we looking at another Rapid Return, which was affirmed. Carl noted that Jim would be better able to speak to this but it hasn't necessarily been cheaper in the summer than in February but Jim has that documentation. Bob Drinkhall noted this is his twenty-seventh year purchasing fuel and he has beaten the rise every year by purchasing in July. Carl noted that Bob is purchasing privately while we are buying for the District. Jim has found that the price falls in February. Bob disagreed noting he always purchased in July or August. Karen Umberger cautioned folks against making rash statements. She'd like us to ask for this information for the Committee's meeting in December. Carl was asked to provide the price for fuel over the last ten years. If someone private could provide the

same we could have a real comparison. Bob believes he has that information. Carl noted that we usually hit a bull's eye but not this year.

Earl Sires noted that we are going to spend an awful lot of time looking into the past. The future isn't like the past. We have gotten the message. We have identified a lot of things that need to be looked into. We can go through the exercise but it might not provide the information the Committee is looking for. Bill Jones noted that Randy makes a good point. We must look at this closer this year. How is this advertised? How many responses do we get? Carl noted that we only had two responses. Bill noted this means we aren't advertising sufficiently, Carl countered it means we aren't getting responses and Bill reiterated that it means we aren't advertising sufficiently. Chairperson Stacey noted that we could discuss this for another two hours.

Randy Davison takes exception to Carl's response about the November to February contract. We all utilize oil and we all know that fuel goes up in February so we purchase in July or August. All these other Districts locked in at \$1.74. It also looks like the bid automatically goes to one of the two people we have bids from and that isn't a competitive bidding process. It would behoove the District and the School Board to do what is in the best interest of the taxpayer. Phil Dighello asked what the Coop's contract runs and Randy noted it is a full year. For \$100 they do all the legwork.

Chairperson Stacey asked if there were any further questions for Carl. (Earl Sires leaves) Randy Davison asked what was the amount of money turned back to the taxpayers last year. He believes the figure stated was low. Carl noted the information is available but he doesn't have it with him. Randy believes we need to publicize the amount being returned. Carl noted that we will be doing that but we just closed the year. A ballpark figure is \$800,000. Randy countered that the Committee was told it was \$400,000 and Carl noted he believes that includes revenue.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

Chairperson Stacey noted that in the Committee's mailing was a packet from Mark Hounsell. Mark was asked to join the Committee to discuss this information.

Mark Hounsell noted that it isn't so much his "position" in the Position Paper that he wants folks to pay attention to; it is the numbers. Although he is a member of the School Board and a Selectman, tonight he represents neither. And he has no apologies for raising concerns, having been a resident of this town for many years. The issue is being able to understand what is happening financially; what it is costing us versus what we were told it would cost. It has to do with credibility. Perception is equal to reality in the community. There is a need to come to terms with the High School project being completed in a way that makes it suitable. There are shortfalls, which Mark would like to discuss and clarify. The High School and Vocational Center were viewed as one project, with the renovation of the Middle School as a second project. The third project was the purchase of the land and construction of the road. As it stands right now we have a disagreement on cost – he doesn't understand it. Mark quipped that maybe he doesn't know how to add but he does understand how construction projects are put together. We are fortunate to have people who have the ability to get through complicated hoops to get things done. I am very happy with the Building project; the ground has been broken and cement is being poured.

Mark asked folks to look at the last page. The first item he pointed out is the budget amount. This is what was established in November 2003 and adopted in April 2004. Then we got a two million dollar donation. This was supposed to cover \$700,000 for the purchase of the land, \$1,000,000 for the road and \$300,000 for future athletic fields. This all looks right. Then as the project began, there were a lot of costs and change orders attributed to the road. You can see what the projected costs were. The paving also wasn't included. Mark has developed a list of the actual costs to build the road. This is the total cost, not including the cost to repair the private Kennett road. His figures show the cost of the road to be \$1,866,504. The original budget was a million. Mark won't second-guess if the money that was supposed to go to the athletic fields actually went to the road cost. Before we can make a decision about using funds from the bond, we need to have the real cost of the road. He doesn't agree with using the bond, but it is permissible for the School Board to use the money, In the strongest words he can, Mark states that there needs to be a plan to replace that money. We are borrowing from Peter to pay Paul and that is an approach that we, as a community, should settle on. This is why Mark has come to the Committee. What did it cost us to build the road? He has been trying to get that information for two months.

Randy Davison noted that all he should have to do is take the bills and add them up. Carl Nelson noted that we really ought to have Blair Banker (from Lee Kennedy) come up and have a conversation about this. Mark noted that there is money for the archeological dig and then there is the cost for the Water Precinct and the hook up fees. His concern is that we don't know what is included! Carl noted that the hard construction costs are \$1.3 million but he still suggests that Blair come to address these concerns. Mark noted he didn't sign-on to build the school and to then do it half-assed. He is not going to sit back. We can manage this without negatively impacting the taxpayers. We can do this and we can be proud of the school we build but we have to have answers before we can move forward.

Chairperson Stacey asked Carl if the figures that Mark is presenting are accurate and Carl noted he hasn't had an opportunity to review those figures. Any figures provided by Blair are correct. There are monies out there, such as the interest on the bond. Mark noted that would take a vote of the taxpayers in Conway and Carl noted he is working on that right now. Mark also cautioned that we must not use the interest on the portion of the bond that is for the Middle School as that involves different towns than the High School and Career Technical Center. Carl noted that it wouldn't take a vote from other communities to make this happen; the control of this is in Conway's lap. From July 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup> we earned \$373,000 in interest, some of which is credited to the Middle School. Bob Drinkhall would like to know if the buy-in for the water is in the cost of the road and Mark said it was, showing him where it is in his documentation. Bob believes the buy-in was \$45,000. Carl believes we should wait until we have backup from Blair. Bob would also like to know what the original intent for the use of the interest was. Carl noted it was going to go to decrease the amount each town had to come up with. Bob noted if we spend the interest, it wouldn't decrease our tax rate.

Betty Boucher noted that when we voted on the bond we were given a donation of \$2 million, of which \$300,000 was to go towards future athletic fields. What if we don't use it for the fields, will we have to repay the donation? Carl noted that we do have

permission from the donor(s) to use that donation as we see fit. Betty noted that she has been on the Budget Committee for over fifteen years. It really bothers her that citizens are so concerned about athletic fields when we don't have a library or the music room. It was portrayed to the voters that we were going to have a specific building design and this Committee has no idea what is going to be up there (on the site). Carl noted he would have brought his presentation had he known this was going to come up. The School Board had to make some choices in order to meet the GMP. It is not the intention of the Board to keep these things out of the project. We are able to defer some decisions until a later point in time and that would be when additional monies become available. There is a \$300,000 owner contingency and an \$800,000 contingency with Lee Kennedy. We can release that if we find we don't need it. The decisions that the Board has made (other than the Brick pavers, which were deleted from the project) are to defer these items and get pricing later. Betty noted that we couldn't use the interest money; the state says you have to put it back to the bond. Carl explained that the state does say that \$100,000 can be used towards the project. The interest above \$100,000 has to be used to offset the cost of the bond unless the voters of the town say we can spend it towards building the building.

Betty is concerned that we are looking for more money from the taxpayers. This Committee is interested in the impact on the taxpayer. Mark noted that is what his whole point is. It is important that you serve the people. You have a School Board that has demonstrated their concern. When it came to spending the surplus this year they spent "zero". Spending impacts taxes. There were needs but the Board is supporting the process of asking the people for their permission. Other Boards are making the same commitment but we need to finish the school in a way that we can be proud of. Mark noted that he came tonight as a citizen.

Phil noted that Mark says the Budget Committee should look at the numbers. Only four out of fourteen on the Budget Committee voted for the bond but that was disregarded. There was a big PR campaign and we were told there would be plenty of money to complete the project when the Budget Committee said it would be \$2.5 million short. Mark noted we needed to put the past behind us and move forward. He is here asking for help. Some of these things that pushed the costs up were not foreseeable; there was no bad intent. There isn't a total lack of credibility but there is the need for more credibility. Bill Aughton noted that he is very frustrated. The cost of the school seemed expensive to start and now we have a school with no road, no track and no bleachers. This doesn't speak to a particularly well-done job. Where is the money going to come from? The bond didn't work. We have a school that is not what we hoped it would be.

Bill Jones noted that we had a confirmed bid of a million dollars. If that wasn't enough then the contractor should absorb that cost. Carl noted that the estimate was for a million but the confirmed bid was for \$1.3 million. Bill believes we made a mistake by having the same contractor bidding on two projects. Mark would like to know what Bill is referring to and Bill noted that there were two proposals; one to rehab the Kennett building and the other was for a new school. The same architect was consulting on both. Mark noted that the budget was built on the estimates that were provided. Bill noted that he didn't hear this kind of discussion at the time. Randy noted that the School District presented a lot of publicity and sold the public a sham. Mark countered that it wasn't a

sham and he'd appreciate it if Randy eased up on the rhetoric. Randy noted that after everything was presented the design changed. He voted against the new school because he didn't feel it could be purchased or built as it had been presented and he can't change his opinion about it. Mark noted that Randy is free not to change his opinion but he wants to work with those who want to go forward with a little bit less of the "See, I told you so" attitude.

Chairperson Stacey noted that we are coming up on the nine o'clock hour. Karen noted the library closes at nine and we have a standing agreement not to go past nine. **Betty Boucher moved, seconded by Randy Davison, to continue the meeting past 9 p.m.** There was no discussion. **The motion to continue the meeting past 9 p.m. passed 8-6-0 (Boucher, Paquette, Vitale, Rosenthal, Drinkhall, Davison, Seavey and Stacey affirmative, Aughton, Dighello, Jones, Umberger, Deschenes and Smith in the negative).**

Carl Rosenthal asked if there were specific items that could be attributed to the cost overrun on the road. Carl Nelson noted the best way to get that information is to ask the guy who designed it. Carl Rosenthal asked if Mark had no quarrel with the math and Mark clarified that the math is ok, he just doesn't know what that figure contains, there should be a breakdown. At no point has anyone voted to create a shortfall. Carl Nelson noted that is why we are developing a plan looking at the interest earned. One town has already sent a letter noting that they are willing to put the interest towards the project. Rick noted that if we take the interest there is going to be an impact on the taxpayers and wondered if the thought is that this would be less painful to the taxpayers to get the funds through this method. Mark noted that the taxpayers are listening to the Budget Committee. This is an opportunity not a crisis. In November of 2003, 65% voted for the bond and we need to finish this project as best as we can. We now have Senate Bill 38 so we need to find a way to show the taxpayers that the impact is not negative. Dick Vitale noted that this business of seeing the \$11 million from Senate Bill 38 as "free money" is troublesome. We were told it would take a million dollars to build the road and now it just about doubled in cost. Talk about hiring amateurs. We had pods and atriums. Where are the architectural plans and what is the price? Bill Jones thanked Mark for his work on this item and noted that he would go home more knowledgeable. He is committed to finishing this school to be the best we possibly can make it. If we are short of money, then we have to raise more money and let's be big enough to say so.

Randy Davison noted that he still has a big problem with the way fuel was purchased. And he wonders why we aren't looking at a wood chip boiler. One school went from 90,000 gallons to 20,000 of fuel oil when they began utilizing a wood chip boiler.

Bill Aughton would like to know how much money will be generated in interest and Carl Nelson noted he doesn't have the exact figure but it is somewhere between \$1.5 and \$2 million. He also noted that if we are short of money then we could either raise more funds or cut expenses. He will provide a comparison of the space you voted for and the space you are getting. He will also provide all the alternatives and value-engineering information. It would take about fifteen or twenty minutes and it would give the Committee a clearer picture of where we sit. Mark Hounsell noted that one of the things we were looking for was to start construction before now. This money is earning interest that we never anticipated, it isn't free money but it is unanticipated. He thinks this should

be an item on the agenda. He is in favor of asking the taxpayers what to do. There is nothing wrong with being proactive and moving forward on this. What he hopes to avoid is spending money without asking. We have taken money from the High School to pay for the road and we are allowed to do it under the law. We have to pay our bills but we should also go to the voters and present what we are going to need to finish this. Phil agrees with Dick on this. We need to look to the future on this. We are going to have another campus to maintain and fuel costs are not going to go down. We have some money now if we use it what happens in two or three years? Rick Paquette noted that the footage of the building has changed. He doesn't want to see us dragging trailers up there after the first week.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

Chairperson Stacey noted that a letter has been sent to the DRA to let them know that the Selectmen have agreed to overspend. A set of our minutes will go out as well. Karen Umberger noted that the Municipal Association has a book about the budget process and Chairperson Stacey noted that she has the 2005 version and Karen Hallowell will make copies for the Committee. Randy Davison would like to know if Banwell has ever designed a school. Betty Boucher thanked the library for allowing us to use their facilities. Bill Jones noted that he is going to the luncheon regarding Project SUCCEED and he'd like to know if anyone else is going. No one else is planning to attend.

Rick Paquette would like to know when we are planning to meet, as he needs to plan his flights for the holidays. Chairperson Stacey noted that we had set December 19<sup>th</sup> for our next meeting. Debra Deschenes noted that the Board meets on December 5<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup> to review the budget. **Randy Davison moved, seconded by Rick Paquette, to require that the school budget be to the budget committee for Friday December 16<sup>th</sup>.** Chairperson Stacey noted that this would give the Committee time to have the information for its meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Karen Umberger wonders if this is going to be our only meeting on the budget and Betty Boucher noted that the RSA states that the Budget Committee sets the time frame for receiving the budget. We were told we could have the information by the 12<sup>th</sup>. Karen still wants to know if we are meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> and Chairperson Stacey noted she wasn't planning for anything other than meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Karen doesn't think we should wait until the first week in January to have discussions on the budget. Chairperson Stacey noted that the Committee had discussed getting the budget information in November and we were told we couldn't have it that early. Karen noted that she understands that the school gets to go first this year but she feels we should look at the town budget on the 14<sup>th</sup> then meet again on the 19<sup>th</sup> for the school budget. We didn't have enough time last year. Carl has requested that we e-mail questions about the budget to him before the meeting. Chairperson Stacey asked that all questions go to her and then she would send them to Carl. Bill Jones called the question. **The motion to require that the school budget be to the budget committee for Friday December 16<sup>th</sup> passed 13-0-1 (Deschenes abstains).**

**Bill Jones moved, seconded by Karen Umberger, to meet on the 14<sup>th</sup> to discuss the town budget and on the 19<sup>th</sup> to discuss the school budget.** There was no discussion. **The motion to meet on the 14<sup>th</sup> to discuss the town budget and on the 19<sup>th</sup> to discuss the school budget passed unanimously.**

Betty Boucher wants to know if when we tell Carl Nelson that we want the information on December 16<sup>th</sup> are we going to allow him to say he can't have the information by then? Chairperson Stacey noted this would not be the case and she would note that we are enforcing the RSA that gives us the right to set the date for that information being available. Betty wants to know if we are going to be meeting mostly on Monday and Wednesday and Chairperson Stacey affirmed this, noting that the only reason we met tonight is because it was the only night Carl Nelson would be available. Randy likes this venue better than the town hall. Rick and Dick both noted they would not be in the area during November.

ADJOURN

**Bill Jones moved, seconded by Phil Dighello, to adjourn the meeting at 9:26 p.m. The motion to adjourn carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Martha D. Tobin  
Recording Secretary