

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE  
February 21, 2007**

A meeting of the Municipal Budget Committee was reconvened at 6:30 PM in the Meeting Room at the Conway Town Hall with the following members present: Chairman Melissa Stacey, Robert Drinkhall, Maureen Seavey, Pat Libby, Phil Dighello, Doug Swett, Crow Dickinson, Rick Paquette, Bill Jones, Betty Boucher, Deb Deschenes, Bill Aughton, James LeFebvre, and Karen Umberger. Also present were Randy Davison, Cindy LeFebvre, Mike DiGregorio, Lloyd Jones and other members of the public.

Rick Paquette questioned if a precedent was being set with voters sending e-mails and Chairman Stacey stated it has been done before, have had 3 or 4, not a lot. Chairman the only forms left to sign besides the School is the East Conway Precinct Budget which Mike Valladares is supposed to present tonight. Phil Dighello stated on the draft letter to the DRA handed out, please e-mail any comments to him, any suggestions let him know.

**Karen Umberger moved, seconded by James LeFebvre, to have Chairman Stacey sign the letter to the DRA, following the concurrence of the majority of the Budget Committee. In favor: 13; Opposed - 0; Abstain: 1 - Deb Deschenes.** Pat Libby asked if Phil Dighello was going to do the final draft and Phil stated before the final draft goes out everyone will get a copy. Every year we do this, carry on and on; let's get a determination to see what, if anything, can be done. Chairman Stacey asked that all members get back to Phil by Friday.

Bill Aughton stated he went home frustrated Monday night; need notes and need basic decision on how to vote; some areas are open to discussion. On Monday, we were here for 5.5 hours; listening to a number of us asking questions; wasted two hours on the Town; we are through all of that and should have done our homework. Bill Jones stated sometimes need to ask why; sometimes questions are asked for a particular reason. Bill Aughton stated was not the TV here on Saturday; time is of the essence. We debated for 25 minutes, it's a done deal any way.

Rick Paquette stated in his opinion, this is the time set aside to discuss and/or debate the issues. The voter is what put him here and he thinks it is an important position that he takes seriously; he will debate every dollar if necessary. There are a lot that can't afford to pay their taxes. Bill Aughton stated he agreed 100%.

Chairman Stacey stated basically questions should have been answered already; could we keep the debates and comments to a minimum on each issue. Bill Jones stated Monday's a done deal, tonight have spent 25 minutes to discuss whether or not to have a debate.

Chairman stated she received a meeting notice for the insurance. Karen Umberger stated this is a committee that has been going on for about 3 years where representatives of the school, Selectmen and representatives from the Budget Committee along with members of the various labor unions,

commissioners from the Police Department and Earl Sires all meet to discuss the issue of insurance and, as she understood it Dr. Nelson had called Earl asking to set up a meeting.

Chairman Stacey advised she had been approached by a few people because of the length of discussion and she would like to remind everyone not to reiterate comments already made; will allow public comment before and after; and a reminder that any items can be reopened for reconsideration. Rick Paquette stated he didn't understand, have heard from the public already, was there some precedent for this. Chairman stated at all meetings the public has the right to speak, otherwise infringing on freedom of speech. Bill Jones stated at this point with a motion on the floor the public should not be allowed to speak. Chairman stated during the meeting there will be no public input.

Ted Sares stated last night you had a process and followed it, in between somebody got to you, someone got to you. Chairman Stacey stated she was not asking to change, but to run the meeting more efficiently. Bill Jones stated we are 20 minutes into the meeting, same as Monday night. Bob Drinkhall stated we have talked about not talking; it is ridiculous to limit. Crow Dickinson stated he agreed with Bob. Mr. Sares stated there was a number of people that have come in response to issues in the newspaper; some want to have a say and be on their way, some want to stay. Crow stated there was no reason it couldn't be done both ways; he would like to see that comments are made as we go through the budget. Chairman stated she was just asked to bring it up.

Mike DiGregorio stated he may upset few people, but had the public hearing and that was the opportunity for input, like it or not. This meeting is like a workshop, you focus and start to vote. He believes there should be some input, but this is the Committee's time to vote. Rick Paquette stated he supported Crow's position.

Chairman Stacey stated on Monday night there were three motions on the floor when we recessed: Rick's motion to reduce by \$3,104,585.00; James motion to reduce to \$29,493,562.00; and Rick's motion to reduce by 15%.

**Rick Paquette moved, seconded by Betty Boucher, to reduce the Operating Budget by 15%. Rick withdrew motion; Betty withdrew the second.**

Ted Sares stated if assume reduction of the budget of more than \$500,000.00, what does it do to the Default Budget; if higher, it goes into effect. No matter what you do with this Budget, only going to reduce by \$300,000.00; why waste your time. Mr. Sares further stated don't do it by this slip and sliding stuff, do it in chunks; be careful of the Default Budget. Karen Umberger stated a percentage decrease is not something that would stand up; her recommendation is that we vote down the concept of a 15% decrease since that is the latest motion.

**James LeFebvre moved, seconded by Bill Jones, to modify number to \$29,493,562.00. In favor: 7; Opposed: 7; Abstain: 0. Reconsideration vote: In favor: 6; Opposed: 7; Abstain: 1 - Chairman Stacey.**

Chairman Stacey stated James LeFebvre's motion to modify to \$29,493,562.00 off the bottom line of the budget; a decrease of \$1,550,000.00. Doug Swett stated with the default the way it is, not going to work. Karen Umberger stated she didn't think we should worry about the Default Budget; that is what the School Board has set as the Default Budget. We may recommend a budget as long as we can justify the number. Our decision is to bring forth to the taxpayer what we believe to be accurate. Rick Paquette stated he agreed with Karen; important for this Budget Committee to send a message that we believe, as a committee, a number we can support.

Bill Jones stated he couldn't see why we can't challenge; there are items in there that should not be in there. Phil Dighello stated that is why the letter was passed around asking the DRA to determine where the check and balance is, who is going to check; there has to be a mechanism somewhere saying this. That is the next step; at this point default is going to stay there. Karen Umberger stated to send the letter right now with a recommendation of \$29,493,562.00 and asked James LeFebvre to state what he was taking out in relationship to that figure. James stated first up is 16 additional staff at \$480,000.00, depending on their benefits, 2 Reading Specialists at \$89,000.00 and the rest from other things, give administration some discretion, excluding new custodians. Administration discretion is to make cuts, not tie their hands. Here is the number, how they do that we can not effectively tell where to cut. James stated approximately \$1 Million; there is enough fat in that budget that they can use their own scalpel; on the issue with the insurance, save \$300,000.00 and are opening negotiations.

Ted Sares suggested \$500,000.00 is a solid number; School Board has produced a huge surplus. Karen Umberger stated she had a real problem setting a budget that we can't specifically say this number of dollars eliminating because no additional head count; her figure would be \$650,000.00, no problem with that because she could pinpoint that and tell where it came from. Where she is having a problem is giving administration discretion. Karen stated saying \$1.5 Million is to say \$540,000.00 in head count and \$400,000.00 in Middle School because of the number of kids to staff ratio.

Dick Klement asked how do you figure part time; assume 5 classroom periods, how many teachers actually teach for those periods; are they part-time employees, why give benefits if doing half the job. Ted Sares stated the problem with that is that those benefits are derived from the contract. Doug Swett stated this has gone on for years, wasting our time; either reduce the budget or don't accept.

Karen Umberger stated department heads by contract are required to teach 3 periods a day; regular teachers are required to teach 5. Anyone teaching less than that should not be a full time employee; however, the way the contract reads is that a part-time employee working 20 hours per week receives some portion of benefits. If you are a department head and teach 3 periods you are full time.

Bill Aughton stated this is something that doesn't seem possible right now; maybe next year. He looks forward to working with, instead of

against the School Board. The budget should be going down instead of up; it is reasonable to help the School Board. One way is to look at the figures, no future hires; perhaps \$500,000.00 in surplus; against micro-managing the School system. It would be really nice to work together; can't be done this year, but can form some committees and help costs come down.

Bob Drinkhall stated he disagreed with Karen and if we specify cuts, they don't want us to micro-manage; whatever we do is wrong. Bob agreed with Doug Swett pick a figure and go with it; as far as next year, it never comes. At the School Board meeting all of our suggestions were turned down with applause.

James LeFebvre stated when he came up with 5% with Karen's working paper; very small in a budget of \$31 Million. Looking at line items, that doesn't strike him as excessive.

Dick Klement stated that he heard what was being said; lots of overhead and have no performance standard; some teachers don't get enough. Rick Paquette stated he agreed with Mr. Klement; in his opinion, the teachers are underpaid; that is where the budget can really be cut, people not doing their job. He would like to give teachers more money.

Bill Aughton stated in the private sector, you would get fired for a budget like this. Budget needs to go down; \$.68 on the dollar, taxes go up, apartment rents go up.

**Rick Paquette moved, seconded by James LeFebvre, to adjust by \$3,104,585.00, 10% of the Operating Budget. In favor: 4 - Rick Paquette; Opposed: 9; Abstain: 1 - James LeFebvre.**

Ted Sares stated he would like to know where that number is coming from. The reality of just what that figure means; is that a reduction based on percentage and as Doug Swett stated at the end of the day it doesn't matter, whatever you give they will make it as a recommendation. Mr. Sares recommended to the Committee to go down a bit further from that, a good solid number; go with that and take a census.

Doug Swett stated this can all be changed at the Deliberative meeting; might as well do something and keep going. Rick Paquette stated it was important that we give voters a choice; need to give a reason to attend. Ted Sares stated \$1 Million gives them a choice.

James LeFebvre stated \$1 Million on a \$31 Million budget is approximately 3.2%; looking at a 3.2% reduction comes back to where can it be afforded to cut; almost everyone could live on 95% of what's earned.

Ted Sares stated 5% then, just do it. Deb Deschenes stated point of Order; come up with a number. Mr. Sares stated he thought that as a member of the public, he thought 3.2% to 5% gives people a choice. Crow Dickinson stated he needed a clarification on what is before us. Chairman Stacey stated the motion to reduce by \$3,104,585.00.

**Bill Jones moved, seconded by James LeFebvre, to reconsider a 5% reduction. In favor: 10; Opposed: 3 - Rick Paquette, Karen Umberger and Bob Drinkhall; Abstain: 1 - Deb Deschenes.**

Bill Jones stated he thought we could get by to educate the children on 5% of the Operating Budget; \$17,000.00 on each student to educate them. Crow Dickinson stated point of order on reconsideration.

Bill Jones stated 5% is a reasonable figure; a lot of issues to defend; must sit here and try to defend my position as a representative. A lot of people don't make median average, they are working three jobs.

Crow Dickinson stated we will need to justify the number, more or less. Chairman Stacey stated the RSA doesn't say we have to justify. Crow stated he thought it would be a good idea. Ted Sares stated he didn't think there would be a problem with the culmination of James and Karen's analysis.

James LeFebvre stated if you look at what he worked up and looked at Karen's suggestions adopted by this Board, that is easily \$1.55 Million which is 5%; if line items are requested, can give it to them. Bill Aughton stated there didn't seem to be any trouble justifying. Karen Umberger stated she thought the Committee was going down a slippery slope when using a percentage, a very slippery slope; need to talk about a number, don't pass on a percentage, pass on what needs to come out of the budget; concept of a percentage is going to send us to Court.

**Bill Jones moved, seconded by Bill Aughton, to cut \$1,552,292.00 from the budget. In favor: 6; Opposed: 8; Abstain: 0.**

Ted Sares stated to Karen Umberger that she needed to listen to the people, talking about chunks of money; what were her suggestions and recommendations. Crow Dickinson stated if we go with Karen's figures that will be specific cuts. Karen stated her figure was a Default Budget figure, not a budget figure so it is a different number. Rick Paquette stated he didn't believe this number is significant enough to make a difference to the voter and suspected that this will not motivate voters to go to the Deliberative Session; not motivating to the general public.

Phil Dighello stated the reason he voted against it was because of his past experience of seeing the budget go in with a big cut and then brought back up at the Deliberative; have to have something credible, 3.2% very credible.

**Phil Dighello moved to amend, seconded by Karen Umberger, the reduction to the Operating Budget by \$1 Million. In favor: 4 - Phil Dighello, Karen Umberger, Maureen Seavey and Pat Libby; Opposed: 9; Abstain: 1 - Chairman Stacey.**

Ted Sares stated could have saved heavily if this had come out sooner; be careful or you might get what you don't want. Dick Klement stated it seemed they threw the kitchen sink into this budget; in the public system if you are given a 10% challenge, and didn't come in at 90%, you are told to find another job; you are giving them a free ride. This Committee is

the one thing standing between the taxpayer and the kitchen sink. Ted Sares stated they are not the only thing, there is the Deliberative Session. Karen Umberger moved the question.

Pat Libby stated she misunderstood, thought the last vote was on Bill Jones' specific figure. Karen Umberger stated that is it exactly, but Phil has put forth an amendment. Pat asked if the original motion was still there.

Chairman Stacey stated the original motion was 5% or \$29,493,562.00 for a \$1,552,292.00 difference. Bill Jones stated he was not supporting \$1,552,292.00; they set \$309,233.00, need to get real; cut this budget. Crow Dickinson asked if this motion passes, will the budget be reduced to \$29,493,562.00 and Chairman stated actually we are right back to Jim's original motion. Crow stated he wanted to avoid that discussion. Ted Sares requested that the motion be voted on again. Karen Umberger moved the question.

Ted Sares stated that this is a process involving compromise, even if it is a few thousand; this is crazy watching from the outside. Rick Paquette stated he was not here to compromise in the name of the taxpayer; he didn't sign on to compromise. He believes he is representing the taxpayers. There is no debate, but a one-sided discussion. Every year we think it is going to be smaller, but it continues to rise; it is time to throw the tea in the harbor. Mr. Sares stated he thought what Rick says is very gallant, but he needs to hear what the public says; here to facilitate, to help you get a number. Crow Dickinson asked Mr. Sares what that figure would be and Mr. Sares stated \$1.2 Million.

**Bill Aughton moved, seconded by Crow Dickinson, to reduce the Operating Budget by \$2 Million. In favor: 6; Opposed: 8; Abstain: 0.**

**Karen Umberger moved, seconded by James LeFebvre, to amend Motion by Bill Aughton to \$1.25 Million. In favor: 6; Opposed: 7; Abstain: 1 - Bill Jones.**

Crow Dickinson asked if anybody really thought we should go with what the School Board is recommending and Chairman Stacey asked if anyone agreed with Crow. Deb Deschenes stated she did.

Doug Swett stated taking into account the Default Budget, what are we gaining; figure will be thrown out at Deliberative. James LeFebvre stated it is his belief that if the Operating Budget was reduced by "x", the Default Budget goes away. If we cut by whatever and it passes, that eliminates the Default Budget. Bob Drinkhall stated we haven't discussed the fact that the number is going to be voted back up no matter what cut we make; could go with 15%, \$4.5 Million.

Randy Davison stated historically in years past, the voter has followed what the Budget Committee recommends. Usually voters are smart enough to know what is going on. In the past, we have come up with different figures and different numbers. He thought the Committee's best bet was to settle on a figure everyone was comfortable with and get as many votes as you can.

Crow Dickinson asked if people could live with a \$2 Million cut; reduce the budget figure approximately 12%. He was told that at the Deliberative Session cannot increase our recommendation more than 10%. If we pass approximately 12%, Deliberative couldn't bring back up. Ted Sares stated it sounded to him that if all agreed with 12%, that would be a statement that shows solidarity; go in with a split vote and forget it.

Karen Umberger stated she wanted to clarify what the 10% represents; it is not 10% of the budget, it is 10% of the total. James LeFebvre asked plus Warrant Articles and Karen stated plus the approved Warrants; add up the budget and all the Warrant Articles that is the 10%. If approve \$30 Million and nothing else, then it is 10% of \$30 Million; but if approve all other, then 10% of \$30 Million; you then need to start talking about percentage; wrong thing to do, need to talk dollars and cents.

Ted Sares stated he believed a 5.5% or 6% gets you where you want to go; he thought you can rationalize the specifics. Begin at \$500,000.00 for starters and go from there; there is some rationale based on some reasoning; 8% or 9% will not pass.

Deb Deschenes stated going around and around; almost two hours have past and still on the same thing. Ted Sares asked if anybody had a reaction to 6%. Karen Umberger requested to table the discussion and move on to Article 3.

**Crow Dickinson moved, seconded by Phil Dighello, to table Article 2 and move on to Article 3. In favor: 9; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 5 - Bill Aughton, Betty Boucher, Rick Paquette, Bob Drinkhall and Chairman Stacey.**

Rick Paquette stated he couldn't vote to support unless he knew what the big chunk was; improper to support any Article. Bob Drinkhall stated he concurred. Crow Dickinson moved the question.

Bill Jones stated we are sending the wrong message, splitting the votes; non-sensical; foregoing the major problem we need to deal with, by not doing that effecting the image to the voter; negative actions, negative results.

**Rick Paquette moved, seconded by Bob Drinkhall, to reconsider Article 2. In favor: 11; Opposed: 2 - Karen Umberger and Doug Swett; Abstain: 1 - Deb Deschenes.**

Karen Umberger stated we have had 7 votes on Article 2 any where from \$4.7 Million down to \$1 Million; there was nothing in between that range. There isn't a number out there to get any agreement on, any number either low, medium or high; doesn't appear to be any agreement.

Rick Paquette stated he wanted to add that it is very difficult for this committee member and that he suspects the voters are also struggling with this, it is hard work. Again, this will not be smaller next year; a small number this year because of sending towns, next year there is not going to be a big difference. Next year it will be big again and no new revenue; it will be a sledge hammer in the face.

Deb Deschenes stated point of order as soon as possible; making assumptions for 08/09 budget. We have no idea what it will be; to assume much higher is totally wrong. Chairman Stacey stated point of order can only be called if something is procedurally wrong. Bill Jones called the question.

**Chairman Stacey moved, seconded by James LeFebvre, to reduce the Operating Budget to \$29,338,333.00 or \$1,707,521.00 off the School Board recommended Operating Budget. In favor: 8; Opposed: 5 - Rick Paquette, Maureen Seavey, Deb Deschenes, Karen Umberger and Betty Boucher; Abstain: 1 - Chairman Stacey.**

Bill Jones stated that would reduce it by \$1,707,521.00; have made motions, passed on or discussion all over the place; time to stand up and be prepared to defend it and be prepared to bring 5 people and 5 more and 5 more. Ted Sares stated he totally agreed.

Rick Paquette stated he believed the reason we are here is because the School Board gets it to us the last minute. Why, instead of September and October, same thing last year, same thing about the Middle School last year. Karen Umberger stated it doesn't matter when they get it to us, always at this time of the year. James LeFebvre stated he wanted to bring to everyone's attention that it was now 8:30 PM, two hours and have voted only on one Article; suggest moving the question.

**Karen Umberger moved, seconded by Bob Drinkhall, to reconsider Article 3. In favor: 11; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 3 - Doug Swett, Crow Dickinson and Chairman Stacey.**

**Rick Paquette moved, seconded by Betty Boucher, to support Article 3 - the New Kennett High School Facilities Maintenance Fund in amount \$54,443.00. In favor: 14; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 0.**

**Crow Dickinson moved, seconded by Betty Boucher, to support Article 4 - the A. Crosby Kennett Middle School Facilities Maintenance Fund in amount \$17,086.00. In favor: 14; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 0.**

**Crow Dickinson moved, seconded by James LeFebvre, to support Article 5 - the Elementary Schools Facilities Maintenance Fund in amount \$9,900.00. In favor: 14; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 0.**

**Bill Jones moved, seconded by Deb Deschenes, to support Article 6 - employee salaries and benefits for the Conway Educational Support Personnel for the 2007-08 School Year. In favor: 14; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 0.**

Ted Sares asked if this contract included a re-open clause and Deb Deschenes stated that it did not, it is a one-year contract.

**Bill Jones moved, seconded by Deb Deschenes, to support Article 7 - collective bargaining agreement reached between the Conway School Board and the Conway Education Association. In favor: 6; Opposed: 6; Abstain: 2 - James LeFebvre and Crow Dickinson.**

Bill Jones stated he would support this 2 year contract which we didn't want because at the public hearing it was stated they are willing and the Union is willing to open negotiations. Ted Sares stated it is not automatic, most openers tend to be very difficult; don't run with what the Union president says today.

Karen Umberger read a clause from the contract concerning reopening; the way this thing is written it says that the whole package of money is still there, that is what the contract says. She cautioned to think about this as it isn't a matter of reducing health insurance, the entire package is on the floor.

Deb Deschenes stated Sheryl Kovalik, herself, representatives from the CEA and Phil Dighello were meeting on Tuesday; second meeting to discuss health insurance. Ted Sares stated with all due respect you don't want this clause in your contract. Do not, do not, do not agree.

Rick Paquette stated because of it being a two year contract, he was not in support of it; suggested a professional negotiator to save tax money. Ted Sares stated North Conway Water Precinct has 10 employees and they hire a professional negotiator. Doug Swett stated it would be better to have a professional negotiator.

Dick Klement asked if this was for the teaching staff and Chairman Stacey stated yes. Deb Deschenes stated the CEA contract is only for the teachers. Dick stated teachers are where the pedal hits the metal, that is the contact with the student. You are saying they are making hirer than median; they should look for ways to save.

Phil Dighello stated they were quite firm last year on two year contracts and is having a hard time with another two year contract; was quite firm and he didn't like opening up the entire pay package. On the other end and in all fairness, he hasn't been to the meeting and he is going to stick with not recommending tonight. If he sees some movement before the Deliberative, entitled to request reconsideration vote.

Rebecca Hill stated this is the first time bringing in someone from the outside like Phil; you were loud and clear; we are open and want to help find a solution.

Randy Davison stated this contract leaves base pay where it is; it was mentioned about quality teachers, not going to get. Deb Deschenes stated starting salary is not high, but it has not been stagnate; working to attract teachers but can only have so high, do not want to raise higher than what a teacher there already has; over time has increased, just not at the rate Randy may want; negotiations have been very fair and have made strides; asking you to support.

Bill Jones stated he understands the frustrations; he will support and trust negotiators and School Board to get better. Chairman Stacey stated she was listening to all the conversation and was having a real hard time. As a Budget Committee member she understands, but as a parent she finds that her child's teacher is incredibly important.

Deb Deschenes stated she couldn't say any more than what has already been said; very fair negotiation; heard message on health insurance loud and clear.

Rick Paquette stated this Committee, in his opinion, struggled with Article 2 and he was not prepared to lay over and say it doesn't matter; not prepared to support because it is a two year contract. Deb Deschenes moved the question.

Deb Deschenes stated the vote is not recommending the CEA and Chairman Stacey stated not recommended by a vote of 6-6-2.

**Crow Dickinson moved, seconded by Deb Deschenes, to support Article 8 - the collective bargaining agreement between the Conway School Board and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) in amount \$44,782.00 for the 2007-08 fiscal year and \$47,351.00 for the 2008-09 fiscal year. In favor: 5 - Chairman Stacey, Maureen Seavey, Deb Deschenes, Bill Aughton and Crow Dickinson; Opposed: 8; Abstain: 1 - James LeFebvre.**

Doug Swett asked if there was a clause to reopen in this contract and Deb Deschenes stated yes, there was one. Maureen Seavey stated she was voting for this. Deb stated if insurance issue works out, they are willing to open up as well. Chairman Stacey stated she was going to support as some of their members have asked for Phil's numbers and are willing to look at the health insurance issue. Rick Paquette stated he was voting no because it was a two year contract.

Deb Deschenes stated when there is a vote on this contract make it fair; can she assume this failed because of a two year contract and Phil Dighello stated he would have to say it was. Bill Jones stated yes. Rick Paquette stated there are other things going on; when we say that we want "x, y and z", two years is DOA. Pat Libby stated she had some concerns on a two year contract; tying hands when not knowing what the economical future is going to be in another year.

**Rick Paquette moved, seconded by Bob Drinkhall, to support Article 9 - adding \$111,100.00 to the Expendable General Trust Fund (School Buildings Maintenance Fund). In favor: 14; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 0.**

Deb Deschenes stated this is the final stage for the Pine Tree School roof.

**Bob Drinkhall moved, seconded by Betty Boucher, to support Article 10 - purchase of one 14 passenger handicapped bus in amount \$60,000.00. In favor: 13; Opposed: 1 - Bill Aughton; Abstain: 0.**

**Bill Jones moved, seconded by James LeFebvre, to support Article 11 - replace equipment (a maintenance vehicle) in amount \$38,000.00. In favor: 12; Opposed: 2 - Bill Aughton and Karen Umberger; Abstain: 0.**

**Bill Jones moved, seconded by Bill Aughton, to support Article 12 - the John H. Fuller School, Conway Elementary School and Pine Tree School**

**Project SUCCEED Programs. In favor: 10; Opposed: 3 - Betty Boucher, Bob Drinkhall and Doug Swett; Abstain: 1 - Rick Paquette.**

Bill Jones stated this request will supposedly be offset by anticipated revenue of \$24,000.00. Betty Boucher stated she would not support. Deb Deschenes stated Christine Thompson has been very good in getting grant money; this is additional money; the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant is running out, but we can re-apply.

Dick Klement stated this program essentially insures that latch key children are looked after in the school environment; School is there to educate the child, School is not a babysitting service; he disagreed that this is a town thing, should be under the Recreation Department or something else, not the School. Karen Umberger stated the Project SUCCEED is an educational program, not a babysitting service, it is like a homework club; more than just something for latch key children. Karen stated she voted against it in the past, but she was going to change her mind on the Elementary Program. The Elementary School program has shown children are actually doing better in their grades and they are making good progress; have always said if she saw measurable progress, she would support. What she can't support is things that don't have any measurable progress.

Deb Deschenes stated the voters have been very supportive over the past 5 or 6 years; ask to continue to support. Rick Paquette asked if this was a percentage and if the children are mandated and Deb Deschenes stated there was no mandate. Rick asked who was involved, teachers or staff and Deb stated most are volunteers; Christine Thompson could answer better; some of the people in Project SUCCEED are support staff and she believed 75% of the staff do work in the school during the day. Rick stated he would rather see teachers that make above average wage involved.

Bill Aughton stated he was very supportive as it was more than babysitting, helps fight drop out rate. Karen Umberger stated they did cut out the school bus for John Fuller and Pine Tree, Conway Elementary still has a bus.

Betty Boucher stated the drop out rate was still going up. Bill Aughton stated drop out rate is a problem, but it is not a 100% reflection on education, could be on community, difficult to raise kids.

Bob Drinkhall asked if there was any indication Project SUCCEED has helped the drop out rate and Deb Deschenes stated in existence for 7 or 8 years and it was her understanding the statistics have improved on homework. Chairman Stacey stated this is Elementary, not High School. Mike DiGregorio stated when it began it was just like a babysitting thing, but since Christine Thompson took over it is remarkable. Crow Dickinson moved the question.

**Deb Deschenes moved, seconded by James LeFebvre, to support Article 13 - the A. Crosby Kennett Middle School Project SUCCEED Program in amount \$29,902.00. In favor: 2 - Maureen Seavey and Deb Deschenes; Opposed: 12; Abstain: 0.**

Karen Umberger stated at the Middle School the class size is small enough that they should be able to help; she thought that we are spending more than enough money in that area to help. Rick Paquette stated with the ratio of teachers to students, if they can't figure out a way to help the few children in front of them, then I think they don't need extra money. James LeFebvre moved the question.

**Bill Jones moved, seconded by Deb Deschenes, to support Article 14 - to install/upgrade security systems at the elementary schools in amount \$60,000.00 (Install new security system at Pine Tree and John Fuller, \$30,000.00 each). In favor: 1 - Deb Deschenes; Opposed: 12; Abstain: 1.**

Bill Jones stated we have asked the School Board to change, to go for part, \$30,000.00 for one and \$30,000.00 for another, not doing it; it was his right and privilege to vote against it. Rick Paquette stated he agreed with Bill, wish for cooperation from the School Board, just another example of we are going to do it our way; voting no.

Mike DiGregorio stated we looked at what you were saying, every time you put this off it costs us money; been putting off for an entire year and the cost is \$10,000.00 more; every single year this is put off it is costing more; we as a School Board want to increase security in our schools; we believe this is the right way to go. Wait another year and see how much it is going to cost. The School Board definitely heard "try to save money", but believe we need to get security in our schools; this is a package.

Bill Jones stated need to stop leaving doors open; School Board is going to come back with need to upgrade; he will vote against. Rick Paquette stated he would be more willing to support if it was connected to the Police Department so they would know what is happening.

Deb Deschenes stated she was not a fan of the security system especially when what is in place is not being used; she would like to see the entire security system rather than piece meal it a little at a time; would rather see total package to put in a complete security system and hold the Administrators responsible; she will vote to support.

Betty Boucher stated she was voting against this; this Committee was told that eventually monitors were going to be set up; when asked who was going to do the monitoring, never got an answer. Kirk Smith stated he was not willing to spend money on the illusion of security. Betty Boucher called the question.

Mike DiGregorio stated it would be the same door security system as in the High School; there was additional stuff in the High School: 18 cameras, that is the difference. Bill Jones requested that the School Board bring in an every door package. Mike stated he thought the Budget Committee would support. Rick Paquette asked if they had mag doors and Mike stated no.

Dick Klement stated he believed that something needed to be done to protect the children; there are a lot of whack jobs out there. Bill Jones stated could begin by firing people who put the trash cans in the door.

Randy Davison stated he voted no on this Article; he firmly believes it should be connected to the Police Department; he has been in the buildings and the system doesn't seem to be working.

**Crow Dickinson moved, seconded by Karen Umberger, to support Article 15 - to replace phone systems at two elementary schools in amount \$50,000.00 (Replace existing phones at John Fuller and Pine Tree at \$25,000.00 each.) In favor: 14; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 0.**

Deb Deschenes stated she was going to ask the Committee to support this Article. The School Board did as this Committee asked and removed from the Operating Budget and put as a special Article; she asked that this Committee keep their word. Crow Dickinson stated he heard that there were only two phone lines at Pine Tree and that one had to find a spot for cell phone reception; definitely need this. Rick Paquette stated he agreed with Crow and he certainly does support the School Board when on the same page; he will support.

**Crow Dickinson moved, seconded by Betty Boucher, to support Article 16 in amount \$550,000.00 to renovate the SAU #9 offices at 176 Main Street (current Kennett High School), Conway, NH, owned by the District, such sum to be offset by revenue from the SAU #9 facilities funds, state building aid, and other existing revenue. In favor: 14; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 0.**

Karen Umberger asked if the \$550,000.00 was all that was left from the \$650,000.00 raised and Deb Deschenes stated some money used for roof replacement and sprinkler at current site.

Betty Boucher asked Mike DiGregorio if there was any negotiation on paying for lights, heat and space and Mike DiGregorio stated that was all covered; paying their fair share based on percentage of building they will be using; may or may not contract for maintenance.

Randy Davison stated he hoped all Budget Committee members would support this Article. James LeFebvre moved the question.

**Crow Dickinson moved, seconded by Deb Deschenes, to support Article 17 in amount \$1,700,000.00 to be added to the Expendable Trust Fund (Tuition Trust Fund) established for that purpose in 2005, with such amount to be funded from the year end undesignated fund balance available on July 1, 2007. In favor; 14; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 0.**

Doug Swett stated he wanted to mention Article 18 as the public needs to know that in order to change for our control need 60%. Chairman Stacey read Article 18: "Shall we adopt the provisions of RSA 40:14-b to delegate the determination of the Default Budget to the Municipal Budget Committee which has been adopted under RSA 32:14." Chairman stated that this Article was not recommended by the School Board by a 2-3-0 vote.

Rick Paquette stated if the voting public wishes for this body to have any effective way of reviewing and having any input on the School budget, they must vote "yes" on this Article, must have a 3/5 vote. Rick wanted the voters to understand that if this Article does not pass, essentially

our hands become tied by the existing RSAs and State laws that apply. We need the voters to support in order for the Budget Committee to have this authority.

Dick Klement stated the School Board being able to give the Default Budget flies in the face of reason. The Budget Committee needs to oversee what they are doing. A High School with no books and a Library, but got to get that track; it is wrong to have the School Board do it.

Deb Deschenes stated she has been the School Board representative for the past 3 years and she would not be coming back as their representative, someone else will be doing it. Rick Paquette stated he was going to miss Deb and thanked her for her service to the Town. Karen Umberger stated Deb may think she won't be back. Bill Jones stated Deb did a good job and was sorry to see her go.

**Karen Umberger moved, seconded by Betty Boucher, to sign the School forms out of session. In favor: 13; Opposed: 0; Abstain: 0.**

Chairman Stacey reminded members of the Deliberative Sessions on March 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM at Kennett High School.

**Karen Umberger moved, seconded by Betty Boucher, to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 PM. Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Iris A. Bowden, Recording Secretary