

**Brookline- Newfane School Board Meeting  
12/20/10**

**Minutes**

Present: Dan Seiden, LeeAnne Parker, April Wellman, Brookline; Kim Colligan, Kim Friedman, Ken McFadden, Pam Miehak Brandy Pickering, Newfane (Board members); Bruce Garrow, NewBrook Principal; Steven John, WCSU Superintendent; Frank Rucker, CFO; Samantha Bovat, recorder; Joseph Towle, Jennifer Towle, Doug Wellman, Kim Rink, Emily Bullock, Barbara Bourne, Molly Wilson (members of the public)

**I. Call to order, introductions & agenda review (including consent agenda):** Kim Friedman called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM. No changes to the agenda.

**II. Community Input (members of the public & faculty/staff)**

Doug Wellman-What is the procedure for reserving Brookline school for Town Meeting? Kim F. advised him to talk with Bruce directly.

Joe Towle: Will you be discussing a change to the starting time of the school day, because Bruce had put it in the Principal's report? Steven said that he had some info. in his report and is encouraging consideration for a change in start times in relation to Brattleboro's. In Jan/February boards will have time to vote. The Master Agreement only has start and end dates and number of hours for the school day.

Is that something that this board will decide? SJ-Each individual board has control over start times.

Emily Long- The article in the Reformer today was inaccurate regarding Challenge for Change.

Steven clarified that the Challenge for Change information was inaccurate – that the \$666,000 indicated in the paper includes those districts that don't have schools and that the actual increase throughout SU is \$66,000.

**III. Review FY12 Budget (Option II) & Vote on Proposed FY12 Budget:**

Kim F- Based on initial draft- Steven & Frank were asked to add ½ day of PE and 1 day increase in Guidance. Goal of tonight's meeting is to adopt one version of the budget to warn to the public.

5 aspects to look at:

1. Tax rates- impact of changes for both the towns
2. Possible increase in PE and

3. Increase in Guidance
4. Clarification of Guidance Salary figure
5. Interest paid on loans
6. Pre-k

**Frank was asked to review the revised budget.**

NewBrook budget includes 5 entities-NewBrook, Brookline, Newfane, L&G and WCSU. (1st page of this budget could be used for town reports as it is a summary.)

Total Expenses- Including the 5 items above= \$76, 798 increase or 4% over last year. (Note: not even comparison from last year)

Equalized students 28% Brookline 28/29% Newfane

Difference between first and second budget draft is \$46,000

6 hours of guidance a week (full day)

½ day PE- kids can get 2 classes per week. (increase time for each session potentially)

Enrollment projections- current per budget based on the lagging 2 year average for enrollment. Keep in mind the decreasing enrollment vs increase in budgets. Student enrollment is used to calculate tax rate. In order to stay within the threshold the board needs to consider future enrollments, which is decreasing. Student teacher ratios will also be coming into play.

If add staff this year, will be facing a big challenge next year- unless enrollment stays the same.

**Interest on loan** is not significant and is a variable based on cash flow from state and our fund balance.

Ken asked what was the interest we paid last year? - \$170,000 draw potential in September- 2% (approx \$400 interest/month) Can we add a small amount into a line item so that we can cover the amount in the future? Perhaps create reserve for future cash flow?

TICKLER: Steven suggested that the Board look at this again in May/June.

**Pre-k-** We have budgeted for same # of students in this budget of 12- Included as .46 student. Brandy questioned the accuracy of numbers. Steven assured her that Bettyanne has confirmed that the numbers of students is correct.

**Guidance-** no corrections of salary- .35 salary position + .25= .6 fte was the plan 2011 and .8 is new FTE for FY12

### **Community-**

Emily Bullock- asked for clarification on numbers for guidance.

Kim F- Reminded the Board that they vote on bottom line.

Doug Wellman- Can the board consider potential of adding positions now and having to reduce and make cuts down the road? Please take this into consideration and discussion. As a Selectboard member -we are competing for same tax dollars.

Joe Towle- What are the state guidelines for PE and are we meeting them?  
Steven- we are exceeding them.

### **Board**

Further Board discussion ensued about budget that has been presented.

LeeAnne- I don't feel as though we need to reach consensus.

Kim Friedman makes a motion to adopt the budget that was presented for \$1,995,170. Dan seconds. No further discussion. All in favor- 6. Opposed -1 (4.67 in favor and .33 opposed)

Budget has been adopted as proposed budget to bring to the both towns at the Newfane Brookline Joint Annual Meeting. Motion carries.

### **IV. Discussion with Rep. Dick Marek re: Education Issues**

**Dick Marek was asked to give an overview of educational issues.** School spending has been under severe attack and perhaps a new perspective on spending is on the horizon Philosophy- more supportive of public education, more encouragement. Board of Ed will move more slowly (4 years really to change majority to educational philosophy) Tax rates- going to stay the same more than likely. Decrease enrollment state wide problem. Still have many unknowns such as health insurance, fuel costs....)

Gap of \$150 million in spending ...Unless enrollment numbers change- suspect more challenges ahead. The 2 year rolling average cushions the blows...to some extent.

**Brandy-**I am having a hard time looking at the amount of state spending happening in Corrections when we are here losing sleep over adding PE.

**Dick-** A drop in enrollment doesn't mean that there can be a proportionate drop in school spending. If we want to make VT competitive- quality of

education is imperative. How do we maintain quality at the same time maintain budgets? People have been voting for budget increases throughout the state- meaning they support the education. Administration and legislation created Challenge for Change jointly and it was not oriented simply for cutting, but for working more efficiently.

**Kim-** We are considering RED as a way to reinvigorate discussions about.

**Dan-** Good education is the investment we need to make in order to bring in residents/students.

## **V. Discuss and Decide on Brookline Building Committee's Proposal re: Building's Future Use**

Dan's proposal- push back to January's meeting. Please submit ahead of time. No extra costs for heat this past weekend at the art opening and play.

## **VI. How Are We Doing? (tracking progress towards outcomes)**

### **Superintendent's report:**

Class size policy is all set and Steven has a letter into the DOE about Truancy Policy. NewBrook has a policy in place for attendance, so should be set until DOE indicates otherwise.

Unless there are objections- will write a letter to the commissioner about our intention to study a RED.

### **Principal's report**

Currently no refund or recourse for the failure of the ultraviolet light installation. Bruce will find out about water quality results in the next week or so.

Bruce- We are not meeting the breakfast #s 35-40 (We get 50 whether or not we have children signed up). Lunch #s are ok.

Kim Friedman expressed her gratitude for board members, along with Steven John and Bruce Garrow, for moving forward as a team with a shared vision of how they want to function and she acknowledged all the work and changes that the Board, Steven John and Bruce Garrow have made since June of this year.

## **VII Short Items Requiring Action**

**Review Warning-** Change location of joint budget vote meeting to read NewBrook Elementary School and include Saturday, February 12<sup>th</sup>.

Reminder for both school districts to approve warnings for individual Town Meetings: election of school officers and Australian ballot.

TASK: Steven John notify Town Clerk's.

TICKLER: Discuss prior to January's meeting.

Discussion about Article V- comingled vote.

Approved warning for Joint meeting budget with changes.

Newsletter-Dan will write piece for January newsletter.

TASK: Kim Colligan will remind Dan.

**Teacher Request:** Extension of First Right of Refusal- Dan moves to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent to extend the terms of the contract for a former employee to be considered for future employment in FY12. LeeAnne Seconded- No discussion. All in favor. Motion Carries.

**Letter from Parent:** Discussion ensued to determine if the Board would support this request for tuition. Frank suggests that we defer the request until January when Steven and Frank could look into this further.

TASK: Steven and Frank will research and make a recommendation for consideration at the January meeting.

TICKLER: Make final decision at Jan. 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Alternates to upcoming SU meeting:** Kim F moves to appoint Brandy as the Newfane rep from the Newfane Board to the WCSU Board meeting on 3/30/11. Pam seconds. No discussion. Motion carries. Pam and Kim F. will also attend this meeting representing Newfane.

## VIII. Info Sharing

**Outcome of WCSU Board Discussion (12/8/10) of Brookline/Newfane assessment.** Steven clarified that because of all the new contractual time the central office has to put in on these schools joining together- there is no reduction in assessment costs. Ken not satisfied with the assessment.

## IX. Consent Agenda

- **Thermal Envelope Project-** happening during Feb. vacation and April vacation. Bid came in under \$5000.
- **November minutes**

Brandy moved to approve consent agenda. Ken 2nded – Motion carries.

## **X. Upcoming Meetings**

Next joint board Meeting -January 20, 2010  
Brookline School Use- 5:30 p.m.  
Brookline-Newfane Joint Board at 6:30 p.m.

Brookline-Newfane Budget Information Meeting- January 24<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. at  
Newbrook Fire House

**VIX. Executive Session:** Dan Seiden. made a motion to go into executive session at 10:20 pm to discuss a personnel matter. Brandy Pickering seconded. Left Executive Session at 10:22 PM. No action taken.

Brandy Pickering moved to adjourn at 10:22 PM. Pam Meihak seconded. Approved unanimously.

## **TICKLERS**

### **January**

- Brookline Bldg. use
- School Start Times for January's agenda
- Tuition Request
- Land Use Update

**February:** Review finances around breakfast & lunch programs

**April:** Elect Kim Colligan as Newfane rep. for the WCSU Board (pending outcome of elections)

### **May**

- Increase reserve cash fund? (for Newfane & Brookline School Boards to consider separately?)
- Look at numbers and what would it look like to bring Pre-k into the school (impact on tax rate)