

BROOKLINE-NEWFANE JOINT SCHOOL BOARD

Budget Informational Meeting

January 24, 2011 7:00pm
NewBrook Firehouse

MINUTES

Members present: Kim Friedman, Brandy Pickering, Pam Meihak, Ken McFadden, Dan Sieden, April Wellman, LeeAnne Parker, Kim Colligan, Bruce Garrow, Steven John, Frank Rucker

Members of the public: Gloria Cristelli, Deb Luskin, Ginny Gabrowski, Dick and Marcia Ullman, Gary and Julie Lavernia, Helen (didn't get the last name).

- I. Kim Friedman gave an **introduction** of the budget process the board followed and Board approval on December 20, 2010, of a proposed FY12 \$1,995,170 budget. She also spoke about the success NewBrook Elementary is having during the first year of the merger of the Brookline and Newfane Schools.
- II. The school board asked for **suggestions** regarding getting budget information out to the public:
 - a. Provide the *Reformer* and the *Commons* with an article discussing the budget
 - b. Submit to the Garden Club email list
 - c. Post on sandwich boards in both towns
 - d. Submit to the Brookline town email list
 - e. Post on the school web page
 - f. Post at the fire department
 - g. Post at Grace Cottage
- III. **Questions regarding the budget**
 - a. What is the maintenance expense for the Brookline building? \$13,000
 - b. Did the school board consider the deisel surcharge?
 - c. What is the impact of the budget on education?
 - i. The school board is committed to offering more educational opportunities.
 - ii. There is an increase in Physical Education and Guidance Counseling Services.
 - iii. A hot lunch program has been started with \$2,500 grant from the state of Vermont, including a staff person to manage the program.
 - iv. The WCSU is streamlining the bus route.
 - v. Installation of a new boiler to reduce heating costs
 - vi. New technology equipment and implementation of "power school" software that permits communication between parents, teachers and students.

- IV. Discussion of **Australian Ballot** for the school budget vote
- a. The pros and cons of Australian ballot were outlined:
 - i. Australian ballot offers greater access to more people to cast a vote.
 - ii. Meeting vote allows discussion if the budget is defeated thereby giving the voters a voice in the resolution.
 - b. It was decided that the school board would research the legal ends of Australian ballot and possibly a hybrid voting system where voters could come together prior to the vote to give in-put and then cast votes by Australian ballot at another time.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.