

**FREMONT SCHOOL DISTRICT
School Board Meeting
March 8, 2010
6:30 P.M.**

**School Administrative Unit #83
Blackrocks Village
5 Hall Road, Unit 1
Fremont, NH 03044**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jeff Rowell called the March 8, 2010 meeting of the Fremont School Board to order at 6:30 PM at the School Administrative Unit #83, Blackrocks Village, 5 Hall Road, Unit 1, Fremont, NH 03044.

II. ROLL CALL

Present were School Board Chairman Jeff Rowell, Peg Pinkham (arriving at 6:35 PM), Deb Genthner, Sharon Girardi, Ida Keane, Elementary Principal Dawn Lewis, Middle School Principal John Safina, Financial Administrator Bonnie Sandstrom and Superintendent Bill Lander.

Members of the public included: Sophie Rowell, Mary Hale, Melissa McKeon, and Carol Ann Foley.

III. OLD BUSINESS: Q & A

Mr. Lander distributed copies of letters from Wadleigh, Starr & Peters, P.L.L.C. regarding whether the \$1,000 payment in Article V for teachers who are at the top step of the salary schedule would be "evergreened." The agreement between the attorney and the FEA is for a one-time payment of \$1,000 and this would not be evergreened. Mr. Lander asked if the Budget Committee had been notified of this. Ms. Keane did not think so. Mr. Lander said he would mail copies to the Budget Committee.

IV. AGENDA REVISIONS

Board Consensus: to table INFORMATION ITEMS B (February Financial Report) and C (2008-09 Year End Audited Final Report)

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Deb Genthner made a motion to approve the budget review minutes for February 6, 2010 as amended. Ida Keane seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

Deb Genthner made a motion to approve the public School Board minutes for February 11, 2010 as amended. Ida Keane seconded the motion. Motion passed 4:1 (abstention from Peg Pinkham).

VI. BOARD, SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Lander distributed a letter from North Reading Transportation that reviewed a recent incident they had that resulted in the termination of a driver's employment with the company.

Mr. Rowell asked if there would be cameras on busses used in Fremont. Mr. Lander said he would ask. Mr. Lander said that if so, they would need to notify parents if there have not been cameras on busses in the past.

Mr. Lander distributed information on the lawsuit with NH Retirement.

Mr. Lander distributed a letter stating that NH was not selected for the Race to the Top Grant. Ms. Girardi asked if there was reasoning behind the decision and Mr. Lander said no, not in the letter but that he should know more information after the Commissioner's meeting in a few weeks.

Mr. Lander handed out information from the Department of Education about NH's persistently lowest achieving schools. Ellis School was not on the list. Criteria included NECAP, high school graduation rate, etc.

VII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. PRINCIPAL'S REPORTS

Mr. Safina reviewed his written report on the middle school. He mentioned that Carol Foley has been selected as the New Hampshire Environmental Educator of the Year and she will be honored at the NH Environmental Educators Annual Conference on March 10. Mr. Rowell and Ms. Pinkham congratulated her. Ms. Pinkham thought it would be nice to recognize Ms. Foley at the District Meeting. The School Board and Mr. Lander agreed.

Mr. Safina mentioned that the newspaper ran a photo of the students in Future City. Mr. Rowell suggested bringing that to the District Meeting also. Ms. Keane suggested that it be included in Mr. Lander's PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Lewis suggested adding a few other instances where students have been in the paper.

Ms. Lewis reviewed her written report on the elementary school.

A report by Maintenance Supervisor Scott Brown was included in the agenda.

B. AUDIT REPORT OVERVIEW

Ms. Sandstrom said that, in the near future, Plodzick and Sanderson would not be able to do the audit report for Fremont. She said that, due to a law change, Fremont School District will need to hire an accountant to do the financial statements and Plodzick and Sanderson could do the audit report. Plodzick and Sanderson will no longer be able to do both legally.

Ms. Girardi asked about the adjustment of \$142,420.33 needed in the Grants Fund in order to properly reflect the intergovernmental receivable balance at year-end. Ms. Sandstrom said this was a transference of funds (it was not money they didn't expect that came from the general fund).

Ms. Sandstrom said that the audit cost less than expected so there was a savings of \$8,400.

Ms. Sandstrom said that in the back of the report there is a Control Deficiencies Report where it is noted that the Fremont School District will need to do its own preparation of financial statements eventually. Employee purchases has stopped and purchase orders will now be used unless it's an emergency. Student funds are in balance and will be reported to the School Board starting next month. Audit requirements have been met for the year-end.

Ms. Keane asked if \$944 will be returned to the general fund to offset taxes and Ms. Sandstrom said yes.

Mr. Rowell mentioned that Ms. Sandstrom, including food service and grants, sent out two budget worksheets. \$97,000 was in one column of the first set. Ms. Sandstrom said she took those items out in the second worksheet because it was too confusing. Mr. Rowell asked if the \$15,000 (change in revenue) is the difference between the revenue last year and this year. Ms. Girardi asked if the tax impact number is the difference between this year's operating budget and next year's operating budget plus the decrease in revenue. Ms. Sandstrom said no. She said food service and grants had to be in both sides (revenue and expense).

Ms. Keane said that the confusion was due to the fact that the revenue report in the budget report shows a shortfall of \$15,000 yet Ms. Sandstrom said that the revenue shortfall is about \$100,000 if they include food service and grants. Ms. Keane wanted to know what the \$15,000 shortfall was made up of. Mr. Rowell said the simple answer was that it is the difference between the revenue this year and the revenue last year. Ms. Keane suggested circling the operating revenue and totaling it up to figure the decreases. The DRA had Ms. Sandstrom put in a revenue of \$181,000 and they were expecting \$218,000 (for grant money). Ms. Pinkham said that it should have been lowered on the expense side then and Ms. Sandstrom agreed.

Ms. Keane said that it was important to know what is actually in the operating revenue (without grants and food service since it's not available for operating).

Mr. Lander said Ms. Sandstrom walked through the process last week and he felt comfortable with the number she came up with.

Ms. Girardi asked if this could be explained at the District Meeting since she was concerned about the confusion between a \$195,000 difference in tax impact vs. \$292,000. Ms. Pinkham agreed that this should be explained so people can understand and trust the numbers. Mr. Lander and Ms. Sandstrom said they would provide that for the District Meeting.

C. SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING PREPARATION

Mr. Lander reviewed a copy of his PowerPoint presentation for the District Meeting.

Warrant Article 1: Jeff Rowell will make motion; Sharon Girardi will second
 Warrant Article 2: Jeff Rowell will make motion; Sharon Girardi will second
 Warrant Article 3: Deb Genthner will make motion; Peg Pinkham will second
 Warrant Article 4: Deb Genthner will make motion; Peg Pinkham will second
 Warrant Article 5: Jeff Rowell will make motion; Sharon Girardi will second
 Warrant Article 6: Peg Pinkham will make motion; Jeff Rowell will second

Ms. Girardi asked if the total cost impact of School Board Requests for 2010-11 of \$10,836,828 is if everything passes. Mr. Lander said yes. Ms. Pinkham suggested adding to the slide that the bullets include passage of Warrant Articles.

Ms. Genthner asked what the cost was for a special meeting (Warrant Article 2). Ms. Pinkham said it would cost between \$2,000 and \$2,500. If the vote fails, the special meeting gives the right for the town to reconsider if they want to wait a full year or bring it back up.

For the highlights of the Support Staff Contract, Ms. Keane suggested writing “tax impact year 1: \$.06/\$1,000 and there will be for the second year a tax impact which we cannot figure at this time”.

Ms. Genthner asked how to get the information out on the \$1,000 that is only for one year and is not evergreened. Mr. Lander said that he could have a signed copy by the attorneys as a PDF in the PowerPoint slideshow.

Ms. Keane asked if the Fremont average salary amount was just teachers on contract. Mr. Lander said that he took the amount from the teacher average salaries on the DOE website. Ms. Pinkham suggested adding “teaching” to the Highlights of the Teacher Contract (FEA) slide. Mr. Rowell was comfortable just citing the DOE Website as the source of those numbers. Ms. Keane ran numbers and said she was comfortable with the numbers on the slide that were on the Website.

Warrant Article 5 asks voters to consider adding a late bus run. Mr. Rowell said parents were asked what time would be best. Ms. Pinkham said they would be asked what the average number of students is who take the late bus. Ms. Sandstrom said that a 6-week survey showed that between 4 and 15 students took the late bus. Ms. Girardi thought that it should be explained that the bus came before the programs let out.

Warrant Article 6, third bullet: Ms. Pinkham suggested writing “A reduction of \$81,056 from the administrative original request”.

Ms. Lewis was not comfortable with stating on the Warrant Article 6 Highlights slide that the Special Education tuition has risen \$44,219 because of an additional student because over the course of the year, there could be an increase or decrease of one or more students depending on where the placement changed. She suggested changing the slide to say it is “due to increase in out-of-district student services”.

Ms. Pinkham suggested adding to the third bullet of the Warrant Article 6 Highlights of School District Budget slide: “the FSB budget financially supports the goals of the School District”.

Ms. Pinkham and Ms. Girardi suggested changing a bullet item to read: “Two additional teachers, one in grade 1 and one in grade 2, based on educational needs”.

Ms. Pinkham asked if Ms. Sandstrom could get an exact student count of Fremont students at Sanborn Regional a few days before the District Meeting. Ms. Sandstrom said she could provide a number.

It was mentioned that the Board is still working on the Sanborn tuition issue (regular education cost includes Special Education and/or how the cost is calculated).

There was a discussion on how votes went last year (motions, amendment additions, etc.) It was suggested to take out of the PowerPoint the sentence stating: “A no vote would increase your tax base \$.68 per thousand or \$136.00 on a \$200,000.00 home.”

Ms. Keane said that someone voting for the School District Budget might misunderstand the ballot: a yes vote for Article 6 correlates with the Budget Committee’s number, not the School Board’s number. Mr. Lander suggested talking with Annmarie about how she will handle that. Ms. Pinkham said that the Moderator should explain what a yes vote would mean.

The Board recognized that Warrant Article 6 should be moved and seconded by the Budget Committee.

VIII. PUBLIC INPUT: N/A

IX. ACTION ITEMS

A. MANIFEST REPORT

Ida Keane made a motion to approve Manifest #17 in the amount of \$157,419.18, dated 2/23/10. Deb Genthner seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

Highlights included: insurance, tuition, repairs/maintenance, transportation (regular and Special Education), contracted services, professional development, auditor’s bill, rent and propane.

B. SAU OFFICE LEASE PROPOSAL

Mr. Lander said that he met with the Richs and that they would consider a two-year lease for the SAU. He said he had a phone call from Northriver Bank about another local property that is not faring well and could offer space to the SAU. Mr. Lander said that pulling out of the current location would put the Richs in the same position. Ms. Pinkham also noted that there would be a cost to relocate. Ms. Pinkham said that the Richs have taken the Town’s needs into consideration in renegotiating the lease.

Ms. Pinkham said that an addendum could be made for consideration of a possible formation of a Cooperative. Ms. Girardi asked if the Richs would be open to look at the lease again in that event. Mr. Lander said he could talk to the Richs about having it be a 2-year lease with the option for a third year and have a clause in the event of the formation of a Cooperative.

Sharon Girardi made a motion to approve the SAU 3-year lease renewal proposal and Mr. Lander will talk further to the Richs about adding a third year in the event of the formation of a Cooperative. Peg Pinkham seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

Regarding the transportation contract, Ms. Genthner thought Mr. McCarty said that the buses would be 2007 busses. She noted that the contract still notes 2005 busses. Mr. Rowell asked if Mr. Lander could confirm this before the contract gets signed.

Ms. Girardi said that she has had questions raised from parents about whom to contact about drivers and Mr. Lander said parents can contact him directly and he will forward them on.

X. FUTURE AND FOLLOW UP AGENDA ITEMS

Board Policies	Ongoing
Fremont Cooperative Planning Committee	Ongoing
Public Relations, Newsletter	Ongoing
Adult Education Program	TBD
Policy: Project Management Plan	TBD
Long Range Facilities Planning Committee	TBD
Strategic Plan	Ongoing
Fixed Asset Appraisal Company	Ongoing
Health Care Study Committee	TBD
Special Needs Overview	TBD
Grant Overview	TBD
Literacy Overview	TBD
Invitation to Kingston Charter School	TBD

XI. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: N/A

XII. NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 2010 at 6:30 PM

Ms. Keane suggested replying to emails/letters about action item recommendations from the School Board Association. Mr. Lander said that he would call and talk to them. He suggested there be a legislative update on the School Board agenda.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Deb Genthner made a motion to adjourn at 8:45 PM. Sharon Girardi seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

Respectfully submitted, Susan Perry, School Board Secretary

QUESTIONS

3/8/2010

1. Mr. Rowell asked if there would be cameras on buses used in Fremont. Mr. Lander said he would ask.

(answer given at 3/23/10 meeting: Ms. Sandstrom reported that some school buses will have cameras but can be moved when needed. Mr. Rowell said this will need to be addressed to the District. Mr. Lander said he will check the statute and if there will need to be a hearing to inform parents that there will be cameras. Mr. Rowell suggested checking Board policy regarding this.)