

MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD JOINT MEETING WITH THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: December 7, 2023
Date of Transcription: December 12, 2023
Transcribed by: Karen Wilfert

1. CALL TO ORDER BY CHAIR

2. ROLL CALL

Select Board members present: Jared Chadwick, Clerk
Alan Slavin
Ronald S. Besse
Absent Judith Whiteside, Chair

School Committee: All members present

Finance Committee: 3 members present

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

5. TOWN BUSINESS

School Committee all members present a quorum. Only 3 members present for the Finance Committee - no quorum. Select Board Jared Chadwick, Ron Besse, Alan Slavin members provide the quorum.

The School Committee made a presentation, supplying a print out of presentation. Looking for a 10% + increase in the budget for FY 2025. Explanations provided by the School Superintendent.

School Committee members each gave their reasons for support of the budget requested. Superintendent stated that 12 positions would need to be eliminated but as much as 20 more if proposed budget not provided.

Finance Committee chair commented as a citizen that money availability is the issue and the town should consider an override. Select Board member Mr. Slavin reminded the group that the last override attempt was defeated by a vote of 30% yes and 70% no.

Select Board member Mr. Chadwick talked about the kids and services needed for the same. Select Board member Mr. Besse had questions on staffing, expenses, and payrolls.

Select Board member Mr. Slavin went through a litany of issues. First, the School Administration knowingly added recurring expenses that had no funding available in the following year over the last 2 years. The 3 different funds would be gone for 2025. At a school meeting, a board member warned the committee this would create a serious financial impact and issue. The warning was ignored.

Select Board member Mr. Slavin stated 'they kicked the can down the road.' Mr. Slavin then asked (challenged) the School Committee to stop doing the same things and find ways to be more efficient and increase education performance.

Town Administrator Sullivan asked a question about Union salary increases. Was the COLA included in the budget requests? The answer was no, so even more funds are needed. If the 2025 budget added \$1 million to the 2024 School budget, there would be no funds for any other town department. The result would be cuts throughout all other departments.

The Select Board felt it was **not** necessary to increase the 2025 budget for the School Department.

6. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Chadwick moved to close the meeting. Seconded. Roll Call: Mr. Chadwick-yes, Mr. Besse-yes, Mr. Slavin-yes. Meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

VOTE: 3-0-0

7. SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS APPROVED BY THE BOARD

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Wilfert

Department Assistant

The foregoing minutes were submitted to the Select Board:

Ms. Whiteside stated that she was going to 'ramp up' the communications to WCTV by sending a communication outlining the 'material breaches of the contract.'

The Board directed that WCTV be given until February 15, 2024 to cure the breaches, and to copy each director in the communication.

MOTION: Mr. Slavin moved to adjourn Seconded. **VOTE: 4-0-0 (Unanimous)**

Meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Wilfert

Department Assistant

The foregoing minutes were submitted to the Select Board:

Attest:


Jared Chadwick, Clerk

Date Signed:

01/02/2024

The foregoing minutes were submitted to the Board of Selectmen on: 12/19/23

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AND/OR USED IN MEETING

1. Latest copy of the agreement between the Select Board, and WCTV