

Town of Raymond
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Budget/Finance Committee and School Committee Meeting Minutes
2005-2006 School Budget
Monday, March 14, 2005

Budget/Finance Committee present: Rolf Olsen, Chairman; Frank McDermott; Suzie Brockelbank; Jean Carter; Dennis Cole; Louise Murray; David Rowe; and Ralph Bartholomew.

Budget/Finance Committee member absent: Coleen Laprise.

School Committee present: Brenda Stevenson, School Committee Chairman; Lisa Friedlander; Deborah Adams, and Jeraldine Keane.

School Committee absent: Frank Dexter.

Staff present: Sandra Caldwell, Superintendent; Meg Waters, Director Special Education; Charles Miller, Principal Jordan-Small Middle School; Norma Richard, Raymond Elementary School Principal; and Dorothy Mowatt, School Department Business Manager.

Others present; Charles Leavitt; Betty McDermott; Eileen Stiles, and several others.

1. Call to order. Rolf Olsen called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm at the Town Office.
2. Discussion of the 2005-2006 Raymond School Department Budget.

DISCUSSION: Mrs. Caldwell gave an overview of the budget philosophy. She said there were some changes because of discussion from the public hearing last week. The board was looking for ways to consolidate. K-2 is targeted for literacy emphasis. The K-8 mathematics program is coming to the end of the induction. There are some maintenance priorities at RES i.e. a retaining wall in the playground; magnetic doors in gym to meet Fire Department requirements, expanded snow removal equipment, JSMS uniform heating in all classrooms, and lighting in gym. There is training for teachers for the new mathematics program. This is the second year of Power School implementation. Mrs. Caldwell explained the consolidation of the principal's office, the position of the vice principal and associated aid positions. The Early Intervention Home School Coordinator is a reduction to .3 educational technician. The social worker position will be a 1.3 position social workers so that there can be two people available for high priority times in the two schools. They want to join the Sebago Alliance which is Windham, Westbrook, Gorham, Scarborough, Cape Elizabeth and SAD #6 (Bonney Eagle) which will cost share budgetary items i.e. a grant writer and negotiate oil purchases. Grade Cluster Team Leadership to coordinate with Learning Results Facilitators. Tonight's

draft shows a 4.5% increase with a town share of 3.8%. Last year was 7.1% of \$8,184,068; town share 8.3%.

Norma Richard said the major addition in Raymond Elementary School was the instruction line 24 for 5 days of summer math training for teachers and also line 34 \$17,500 for technical supplies, and \$10,000 for math book purchase. This program was budgeted over two years, this being the second year. She noted that two systems are being used which coincides with our area high school programs. The FICA is not there because one person has moved to another program. The Title 1 is being done by two teachers which shows a shift instead of a move. Mrs. Carter suggested showing parents what they will be doing in the new math program. Ms. Richard said that they plan to do that. There are field trips budgeted of one per grade level. No change in guidance services which will be 4 days a week. Health Services have one full time and a four-hour person. No change in library service.

ADMINISTRATION There will be a structure change to K-8 principal and a K-8 assistant principal. Because of this, the development of curriculum will be more cohesive. Line 81 reduced for conference expenses. Operation and maintenance has added magnetic door closers on the gym to upgrade for Fire Department requirements. Line 97 is planning for free labor from a local prison to work on the playground retaining wall. Mrs. Stevenson asked if the cooperative purchasing through the Sebago Alliance would be available for this budget year. Mrs. Caldwell replied yes and would be reflected in the budget as soon as amounts are known. Mr. Olsen asked if enrichment would be a one-time cost. Ms. Richard yes. He felt it should be an independent line because it is in math but not continuing in future budgets. Mr. McDermott felt that this would go into other areas in the future. Mr. Olsen had interest in what the learning results are costing the town. Ms. Richard said that this would be there regardless of what area the teachers were being trained in. She said that the initial training was intensive and would be continued throughout the year. Mrs. Caldwell informed them that the schools were getting \$50 per student credit in the EPS model. Mr. McDermott wanted everyone to understand that this would be imperative in the future for training in all areas of the school's program. Mr. Bartholomew questioned the salary increases. Mrs. Caldwell said they were in negotiations now. Ms. Richard said there were no new staff positions in this budget.

Mr. Miller noted line 111 and 114 represented the biggest increase in insurance, and step increases with new contracts. Line 125 transportation with field trips; one for each grade. Guidance will be the same. Health about the same. Line 149 library decrease; line 156 is to build collections in the classroom libraries. Maintenance increase is electricity and fuel, and looking to add lights to the gym. Prisoner labor was used to rebuild the ball fields and track, finished brickwork on playground, painted outbuildings, outside of buildings and inside gym and cafeteria last year. Mrs. Stevenson thanked the school organization for coordinating 60 prisoners in this work. Line 194 is to maintained a co-curricular program. Mr. Miller noted that the recreation director had done some of the officiating himself to save money. Dave McGowan officiated as well. Supplies and equipment were confused in last year's budget and they are now organized in this budget. The total budget is down because all tuition for high school was included in the middle school budget, it will now be separated. Mrs. Carter asked about lines 184, 185, and 186 for equipment. Mr. Miller estimated 12 new lights in the gym at

\$14,800. Heating needs to be updated and equalized throughout the school which is \$15,000 for each. Mr. Bartholomew asked about the medical and dental line because it had a substantial increase. Mrs. Mowatt informed them that it's 13% for medical and 10% for dental which shows changes in actual benefits and not estimated. Mrs. Carter asked what percentage the teachers pay. Mrs. Mowatt replied 15% of the family plan; for single or two person the school pays 100% and 70% of dental. Mrs. Cater felt that everyone should pay something toward their health insurance. Mrs. Friedlander asked the cost. Mrs. Mowatt replied \$11,000 for family and dental about \$945; \$450 for single dental. Mrs. Stevenson said for the future One Raymond discussion there should be dialogue as to what Raymond wants for benefits for school or town employees. She said that currently the negotiations with support staff and teachers would include this item. She added they need to discuss a cost share structure because this cost isn't going to go down. Mrs. Carter felt that there might be a dollar limit and the employee can pick what that amount will cover. Mr. McDermott noted that beyond what the town wants you have to have a program which employees will accept. Mrs. Stevenson said we do have to stay competitive, but we also must know what the taxpayers are willing to support. Mr. McDermott reiterated that negotiations are hard and that's why they take so long. Mrs. Friedlander asked how many classrooms were used. Ms. Richard replied 14 rooms in JSMS and 17 in RES. The middle school also has allowed for special class trips for i.e. Spanish class. Mr. Miller said that the JSMS also do fund raisers to help support the class trips as well as parental contributions. Mrs. Brockelbank asked why the library at RES had a higher level of funding than JSMS. Mr. Miller said that they set a target for the middle school which has been reached and also the priority this year was for the classroom libraries. This is a way to bring the budget in as requested. Ms. Richard said that this amount is what is necessary to cover new books for new programs which will be added to the classroom teaching. This will supplement the classroom work. Mr. Miller added that the addition of the laptop program in the 7 & 8th grades helped as reference material and lessened the demand on the library. He wanted everyone to know that there are hard cover sources available. He added that parents do give personal donations to the library for the addition of books.

SPECIAL EDUCATION Mrs. Waters noted changes include a .5 for her position. An analysis had been done of exactly what we are doing including where our graduates will be attending. There may be some shifts in lines because of student needs as they occur. Mr. Bartholomew asked about the private/public tuition. Mrs. Waters explained that one is in local entitlement but needs may require shifts. She indicated contracted transportation of transported students to their schools. Line 7 was for a new mini-bus which may influence two other line items. She said they try to contract with other districts or private schools when possible. They are able to track every student and where they are going which makes budgeting more effective. There are very few special runs but safety and schedule dictate what we do. Mr. Olsen asked if Administration professional salaries represented a replacement position. Mr. Olsen questioned paying this position at the same level of salary for the new employee. Mrs. Caldwell said that .5 might bring in a very qualified professional at that rate. Mr. Bartholomew questioned whether this should be in years in education or in our school system. Mr. McDermott said that you need to hire the most qualified person you can and hiring the position for half time will show a saving. Mrs. Brockelbank asked about benefits.

Mrs. Mowatt said it hadn't been discussed. Mrs. Brockelbank said the full benefits were budgeted as well. Mrs. Caldwell felt that may allow a reduction.

IMPROVEMENT OF INSTRUCTION Mrs. Caldwell indicated Professional line 269 reimbursement on actual survey of teacher's courses taken. Line 270 moved money in contract services into stipends. Line 267 will support teacher leadership positions. Travel & Conferences are broken down by school and teacher. She said they would account for them by schools instead of lumped together.

TECHNOLOGY Mrs. Caldwell line 288 represents sending two people to advanced training in Chicago for the Power School Program. This program will train Doris Horn and Dennis Dory to teach others to turn in reporting grades and testing with the state. Ms. Richard said this will be internet accessible and gives the staff the ability to run reports and use the information. Line 292 is nearing the completion of the wireless network project for RES. She said they took out the funding for the Roadrunner and would like to fund it through private contributions in cooperation with the town office.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS Mrs. Caldwell noted the amount of legal and auditing amounts. She added the fees include negotiations, personnel issues, auditing issues and the voucher suit. She felt this was money well spent and will be a cost savings over time. Mrs. Stevenson said that their first contract with the support staff must be very carefully done because it establishes a benchmark for the future. They felt that the legal support was well spent.

SUPERINTENDENT Mrs. Caldwell the support line represents the business manager, full and part time accounts payable, and payroll. Professional salaries represent pro-rated vacation time which was negotiated last year. Actual salary increase was a 2.7% or CPI. Line 220 printing represents the district and town calendar which goes out annually. Mrs. Friedlander thought that was going to be on-line. She said if the printed copy were done in black and white the cost would be considerably less. Mrs. Waters felt there was information sent with the calendar which was important for parents to get and return to the school prior to opening day.

DUES include the first time contribution to the Sebago Alliance of \$5,000. All five-school systems will have one common workday for professional development. It's intended to be a one-time contribution. The Alliance wants to get grant money to continue the consolidation. Question of medical and dental going down. Mrs. Mowatt said that the previous superintendent had this paid until he was 65 years old which stopped as of the 2004-2005 budget.

TRANSPORTATION Mrs. Caldwell said the amount on line 245 was exactly what they needed. Mr. Olsen asked about cooperative fuel purchase with town. She replied that they are looking at ways to save including through the Sebago Alliance.

CONTINGENCY Mrs. Caldwell explained that this was for the district for things not planned for i.e. septic system problems. Mrs. Mowatt concurred it was for unanticipated problems. She said that if this money isn't used it is moved forward in the account to the next year.

HIGH SCHOOL TUITION Mrs. Mowatt reported that \$6,879 per student was the rate this year and will probably be to up \$200/\$300 per year annually more in the future. They estimated 288 students for 2005-2006. Mr. Olsen asked if they knew why the schools and Raymond's EPS was only \$6,100. Why should we pay more than what they will allow for the EPS. This should be the state tuition level. Mrs. Mowatt said that we have to make up approximately \$300,000 locally. Discussion about the state level set and the EPS model. Mr. McDermott said that the EPS is a state wide average. He added that the school can't educate a child for \$6,100. Mr. Olsen said that if we have to pay more than that, the EPS level should be equal to that amount. Mr. Olsen asked if we had an appeal right with the state as to the number of children we have in high school because the number is based on last year. Mrs. Adams noted that there are other amounts which are under other headings for each student i.e. technology which make up part of the difference.

DEBT SERVICE Mrs. Caldwell explained that the new vehicle is a mini-bus. She said this was the only new item of rolling equipment. The state has approved the purchase at a higher level of funding \$52,000. Mr. Olsen said that they would allow us only the \$40,000 which we would spend.

REVENUES - No comment.

Mrs. Carter read a message of confidence and thanks but questioned some lines of expenditures i.e. \$30,000 for contingency. She wanted to cut the budget by \$200,000 to \$250,000 and let the School Committee decide where the cuts would come from. Mr. Olsen said that the \$100,000 in line 9 is a surplus and not a cost. Mrs. Carter felt the vote of the people said that they wanted tax help and hoped that the school would bring in a budget as low as possible. Mr. Bartholomew said that without tuition the cost is less that 4% increase. The new items should make it a better, more progressive school system. Mrs. Keane said that the student enrollment is increasing in high school students. The total in the K-8 isn't reducing enough to lose a whole classroom or other total expense. She felt that this was a barebones budget and that kind of cut would influence staff level which is necessary to keep. Our base here is adequate and not exorbitant. Mr. Olsen noted that any funding above the EPS level would have to be voted on in a separate warrant article.

ADJOURNED: Mr. Olsen adjourned the meeting at 9:24 pm.

Louise H. Lester
Town Clerk