

Joint Meeting
Board of Selectmen, School Committee, Appropriation Committee
July 11, 2007

A joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen, School Committee, and Appropriation Committee was held on Wednesday, July 11, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. in Estabrook Hall of the Cary Memorial Building. Chairman Krieger, Mr. Kelley, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Manz, Mr. Burnell; Mr. Valente, Town Manager; Mr. Addelson, Comptroller; and Ms. Chabot, Assistant to the Executive Clerk, were present. Dr. Ash, Superintendent, Ms. Dunn Assistant Superintendent, all members of the School Committee, and all members of the Appropriation Committee were present, with the exception of Mr. Eurich and Ms. McLeish.

Post Override Discussion

Timing and Frequency of Overrides

The group discussed the possibility of voting on an override earlier in the budgeting process so that it has less of an effect on hiring by the Schools. Mr. Diaz suggested getting an interested group of people to look at this issue and see what might be done. Mrs. Krieger recommended that the group consist of a Selectman, a member of the School Committee, a member of the Appropriation Committee, and a couple of people from the TMMA Executive Board. Hopefully a recommendation from the committee could come back in the Fall. Mr. Cohen reported that the Town of Acton has their override before Town Meeting. If that were the case in Lexington, there would be a lot of pressure on the School Committee to have their budgets done earlier. Mr. Ash said to make a significant impact the override should be at the end of April. Ms. Battin suggested putting the budget at the beginning of Town Meeting and meeting three nights a week instead of two. Mrs. Krieger asked anyone interested in serving on this committee to let her know.

Special Reserve Funds – School Department

Mr. Griffiths feels that we need to have approximately \$1.5 million set aside for issues that arise in connection with the Special Education program. He and Mr. Valente have spoken with town officials in Burlington where out of district SPED placements are handled as a special budget component by the town. Mr. Griffiths also stated that if we decide to space overrides every two or three years, we would need an elastic fund of a couple of million dollars to help tide us over in the years when there isn't an override. Mrs. Krieger noted that the Schools are asking not only for a reserve, but to sustain it as well, since these funds would be for ongoing expenses. Mr. Michelson suggested creating a separate line item in the budget for out of district SPED expenses as a way to protect the regular education program. Mr. Griffiths thought this sounded a lot like what Burlington is doing already and would be interested in finding out more.

Executive Session

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was voted by roll call vote 5-0 to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining under Exemption 3, with no intent to return to open session.

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Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to adjourn at 6:55 p.m.

A true record; Attest:

Diana B. Chabot
Assistant to the Executive Clerk