



**TOWN OF COLCHESTER  
ANNUAL SCHOOL MEETING MINUTES**

**COLCHESTER HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM  
MARCH 5, 2012**

Moderator Jerry Flanagan called the 90<sup>TH</sup> Annual Town Meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. In attendance were Larry Waters (Superintendent), George Trieb (Business Manager), Gwendolyn Carmolli (Director of Curriculum & Instruction), Carrie Lutz (Director of Special Education), Dawn Gruss (Colchester Middle School Principal), Chris Antonicci (Union Memorial School Principal), Jim Marshall (Porters Point School Principal), Julie Benay (Malletts Bay School Principal), as well as School Board Directors Dirk Reith (Chair), Dick Pecor (Vice Chair), Paul Smith, Christine Shepard, Steve Cormier and Emily Berry (Student Member of School Board).

**ARTICLE 1**

**To choose a Moderator, if elected moderator is not present.**

Elected moderator, Jerry Flanagan, was present. No action required.

**ARTICLE 2**

**To act on reports of the School District Officers.**

**MOTION was made by Jim Condon and SECONDED by Roger Bourassa, to accept the reports. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried. Article 2 is passed.**

**ARTICLE 3**

**To determine what stipends, if any shall be paid its School Directors for the coming year for their service and attendance at meetings.**

Mr. Flanagan stated the compensation is currently set at \$1,300 for each School Board member.

**MOTION was made by David Coates and SECONDED by Ursel Danielson to set a stipend of \$1,300 each for compensation to the School Board for the coming year.**

Jeff Giel asked if the School Board expected to meet the same amount of time. Mr. Reith replied business was expected to be as normal.

**VOTING: unanimous; motion carried. Article 3 is passed.**

**ARTICLE 4**

**To determine whether the District will vote to authorize the School Directors to borrow money for current and necessary expenses by issuance of notes not in excess of anticipated revenue for this school year.**

**MOTION was made by Tom Berry and SECONDED by David Coates to adopt Article 4 as read. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried. Article 4 is passed.**

## ARTICLE 5

### **To transact any other business proper to come before said meeting.**

School Staff and Board Members introduced themselves. Dirk Reith recognized Paul Smith as serving 13 years as a Board Member.

Larry Waters presented information on the School District. He reported the new Strategic Plan for 2012-2017 was complete and the booklets were available. He gave a Power Point presentation, also available on the School's Website, explaining the good news in the School District, important factors considered when developing the budget, the Mission of the Colchester School District, the Vision for the Future, Seven Pathways to Success, enrollment projections showing above 2,000 students, an increase in free/reduced lunches and special education eligibility, tuition enrollments, Tech. Center's enrollments being more selective, special education cost being 21% of the budget, total full-time teachers, history of budget increases, 3 new positions added to the Budget, Fall 2011 NECAP testing results showing above or near State averages, comparison of per-pupil spending compared with NECAP results, and area high school comparison showing Colchester as #1.

Jeff Giel questioned if there was any indication of other schools consolidating with Colchester. Mr. Reith responded there was no indication of any consolidation with Winooski or any other school district. Mr. Giel also asked if the Breakfast Program was included in the free/reduced lunch figures. Mr. Trieb replied it was.

Eben Wolcott questioned if No Child Left Behind was part of the Special Education numbers. Mr. Waters stated that Special Education testing was included in the number and the Special Education Budget accounted for \$6.1 million of the total budget. He clarified that Vermont has petitioned for relief from the Federal Government from the No Child Left Behind Act.

Bob Bouchard requested figures for the Technical Education Student tuition. Mr. Trieb responded \$12,000 for Burlington and \$14,000 for Essex.

Henry Kopeck asked for the Special Education number for Elementary students vs. Secondary students in the budget. Mr. Waters did not have those numbers, but reported that 11-12% of students are eligible for Special Education. Mr. Kopeck also noticed that per-pupil spending costs showed the same across the board for Elementary, Middle and High School students in the graph and he didn't believe they were comparing apples to apples.

George Trieb took the floor to explain the FY'13 Budget with a figure of \$33,037,580, a 3.46% increase from FY'12. The major reason for increases in the budget comes from compensation and benefits. He reviewed revenue from General State Aid, Special Education and local revenues. He showed a graph of state aid being sent to the school district and to level fund the budget they would need to cut \$1,177,087 million from the budget. He showed an annual percentage increase graph, per-pupil spending, and Education Property Tax showing a home paying \$200,000 would have an increase of \$165.00. He also showed a graph on property tax assistance.

Eben Wolcott asked if part of the reason for the tax rate increase was because Gov. Shumlin reduced the amount transferring from the Vt. General Fund to the Vt. School Fund. Bob Bouchard agreed that was part of the reason for the increase, and the reduction equaled 1 cent of

the school tax rate. Jim Condon said it would be great if the State could do it, but the money would have to come from another place because the State didn't have the money.

Mr. Wolcott questioned why the School Librarians were making more than the Town Librarians while they work fewer hours. The response was it was because they were under contract and steps.

David Coates asked what the effect was from the increase in the base amount per-pupil and homestead tax base rate. The response was they equaled each other out.

Joe Purvis questioned why the number of students was going down while the number of teachers was going up. The response was that the new positions were to teach the new technology to teachers.

Tim Moran asked if there were comparisons available with other communities regarding tax assistance. The response was 67% is the State average and Colchester is at 63%.

Maureen Dakin asked how the district would know if any progress was being made in the Middle School. Larry Waters explained they've made changes in leadership and measurements are done through assessments, surveys, looking at student climate, and changes in teacher evaluation process.

#### ARTICLE 6

**To adjourn said meeting and to reconvene at the Colchester Meeting House, Main Street, in said Town on Tuesday, March 6, 2012, for voters in District 7-1 to vote for School Directors and on the following propositions by Australian ballot with voting to begin at 7:00 a.m. and to close at 7:00 p.m.**

**To adjourn said meeting and to reconvene at the Colchester High School, Laker Lane (off Blakely Road), in said Town on Tuesday, March 6, 2012, for voters in District 7-2 to vote for School Directors and on the following propositions by Australian ballot with voting to begin at 7:00 a.m. and to close at 7:00 p.m.**


**MOTION was made by Eben Wolcott and SECONDED by Joyce Sweeney, to adopt Article 6, as read. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried. Article 6 is passed.**


Moderator Flanagan adjourned the meeting at 9:02 p.m.

#### ARTICLE 7

**Shall the voters of the Colchester School District appropriate thirty three million, thirty seven thousand, five hundred and eighty dollars, necessary for the support of schools for the year beginning July 1, 2012?**

Respectfully Submitted,

  
June Campbell, Recording Secretary

  
Karen Richard, Town Clerk

  
Jerry Flanagan, Moderator