



**TOWN OF COLCHESTER
ANNUAL SCHOOL MEETING MINUTES**

**COLCHESTER HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
MARCH 4, 2013**

Moderator Jerry Flanagan called the Meeting to order at 8:34 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), Amy Minor (Colchester High School), as well as School Board Directors Dirk Reith (Chair), Dick Pecor (Vice Chair), Mike Rogers, Christine Shepard, Lincoln White and Student Member of the School Board, Jordan Isham.

ARTICLE 7

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

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

ARTICLE 8

To act on reports of the School District Officers.

Mr. Flanagan asked School Board Members and Staff to introduce themselves.

ARTICLE 9

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 Kathrine Niquette and SECONDED by Eben Wolcott to set a stipend of \$1,100 each for compensation to the School Board for the coming year.

Discussion included creating equity between the Town Selectboard and School Board stipends.

VOTING: the Ayes carried the Motion. Article 9 is passed.

ARTICLE 10

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. A safety assessment was done and money has been allocated to make changes to improve security.

MOTION was made by Malcolm Severance and SECONDED by Dan Carver to adopt Article 10 as read. VOTING: the Ayes carried the motion. Article 10 is passed.

ARTICLE 11

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

Larry Waters explained they had developed a strategic plan and action plan associated with the schools, with goals to ensure achieving high standards, comprehensive learning experiences, and regular assessments. A safety assessment was completed and it was found the buildings are not

secure. They are looking at the areas not secure and will make recommendations to the Board. The Police Force works with the schools regularly.

Eben Wolcott asked if the two Police Officers who regularly work with the schools are funded by the School. Mr. Waters replied no.

George Trieb reviewed the budget. The current budget for FY'13 is \$32,722,712 and the Selectboard Approved budget for FY'14 is \$34,913,512, a 6.7% increase. The results of this increase will be that some residents will see a 10% increase in their educational tax rate. Per pupil spending in Colchester is one of the lowest in the State and annual percentage increases have been lenient in the past few years.

Each Principal reported on recent activities, projects and implementations at their individual schools. The Director of Special Education reported on their continued effort on inclusion and the Director of Curriculum Development reported on the above average scores on NECAP tests throughout the school district.

Amy Minor spoke to the Science Lab renovation project. A video was shown reporting on why it's imperative that Colchester have updated science labs including having outdated labs (40 years old) and needing new technology to allow students to apply knowledge and develop skills for technological and scientific employment needs. The labs were shown in disrepair with outdated equipment. The total Bond amount would be \$5,000,000 for 20 years with a bond rate at 3.145%.

Brian Grenon encouraged people to support the Bond issue. He felt the kids should not be working in that environment and hands on lab experience will have a payback in the future. It will be an investment in the future of the kids.

Joni Pecor reported on the Next Generation National Standards that are incredibly rigorous. The State will need children that are problem solvers and teachers to teach 21st century learners.

Marie Lavalley voiced her concern on the school salaries being too high. She also wanted to know how many students were in each school. Mr. Waters responded that they have 312 students in special education, 720 at the High School, 507 at the Middle School, 435 at Malletts Bay School, 233 at Union Memorial and 246 at Porters Point. Ms. Lavalley asked what happened to the previous Education Funds. Ms. Carmolli explained that the funds dried up and reductions are happening in Title 1. They have planned those reductions into the budget.

Carol Woods asked about the Science Lab Bond and if the other schools in the county had up-to-date science labs. She suggested that there be a cooperative effort with those schools. Amy Minor replied that Milton and So. Burlington are the only local schools with updated science labs and their mods are full. Mr. Waters stated students will have High School choice in the future and they don't want to lose students to other High Schools because of outdated facilities.

Jennifer Bergeron asked when the teacher's contract would be re-negotiated. Dirk Reith replied that would be next November.

Dana Rushford questioned where the figure of \$5 million came from for the Science Lab Bond and questioned why they didn't go out for bid. Mr. Waters explained they had an architect design the labs and that design has to be done before the project can go out for bid.

Robert Martin asked if they have looked at starting piece-meal updates now instead of doing everything at once. Amy Minor replied that it was recommended not to do the HVAC system in pieces and because that's the most expensive part of the project, they decided to do the project all at once.

Steve Miller asked if they had a timeline for the project. Amy Minor replied they would want to minimize the school interruption so they would do the bulk of it in the summer. It would take almost a year to do bidding and they would start construction in April 2014 and complete the project in October 2014.

Tom Raub asked what would happen if the bid came in lower. George Trieb replied they would only borrow the cost of the lab.

Jeff Bartley requested that in the future they break down the cost per pupil by percentages of expenditures.

Eben Wolcott noted that the Town changed its format in salaries to include all forms of compensation including overtime, mileage and other wages. He also noted that the hard copy report did not list all School employee salaries. Mr. Voegele stated corrections in missing salaries were made on the web site and an a handout was available at the door. Mr. Wolcott complimented the school for the low per pupil spending.

Dana Rushford asked how much the cost per pupil would go up with the \$5 Million bond. George Trieb explained if the bond were approved and the money borrowed, the interest only part of it would increase per pupil spending by 1/4 %. Once they start paying principal and interest, it would go up 3/4%.

Jerry Allyn asked how the school enrollment has changed in the past five years and projections for the next 5 years. Larry Waters replied they've lost 20-30 students per year and 276 over the past 10 years. Kindergarten enrollment spiked this year. They are projecting an upward trend in the future. They also have students coming in from outside the area that brings in revenue.

Tim Stetson stated he felt the bond issue was important and they may lose students to other districts if the labs aren't updated.

Paul Smith asked what the was left on the current bond. Mr. Trieb responded when the \$188,000 reaches maturity, the new bond will come on.

Brian Grenon asked if the school was still offering other transportation for those having behavioral problems on the bus. Mr. Waters explained it was but only for those in special education.

ARTICLE 12

To adjourn said meeting and to reconvene at the Colchester Meeting House, Main Street, in said Town on Tuesday, March 5, 2013, 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 5, 2013, 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 Jackie Murphy and SECONDED by Eben Wolcott to adopt Article 12, as read and adjourn the meeting. VOTING: unanimous; motion carried. Article 12 is passed.

Moderator Flanagan adjourned the meeting at 10:15 p.m.

ARTICLE 13


Shall the voters of the Colchester School District appropriate thirty four million, nine hundred thirteen thousand, five hundred and twelve dollars (\$34,913,512) necessary for the support of schools for the year beginning July 1, 2013?

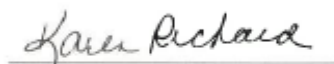
ARTICLE 14

Shall general obligation bonds of the Colchester Town School District in an amount not to exceed Five Million Dollars (\$5,000,000) be issued for the purpose of financing the cost of making improvements to the Colchester High School, namely, renovation of ten science laboratories, the estimated cost of such improvements being Five Million Dollars (\$5,000,000)?

State funds may not be available at the time this project is otherwise eligible to receive state school construction aid. The District is responsible for all costs incurred in connection with any borrowing done in anticipation of state school construction aid.

Respectfully Submitted,


June Campbell, Recording Secretary


Karen Richard, Town Clerk


Jerry Flanagan, Moderator