

**BOARD OF FINANCE MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2011
TOWN HALL**

Members Present: David Hosmer, Glenn Converse, Ronald Cabana; Alternate Michael Dougherty; Excused Richard Cass, Elizabeth Murphy; Absent George McCoy and Alternates Craig Powers and Tim Young

Others Present: Allan Walker, Donna Stefanik, Anthony Walker, Francis Baran, Karen Munroe, Lindsay Paul, Kevin Ford, Viktor Toth, Avis Spalding, Preston Shultz, Frances Geer, Everett Cowley, and several other citizens

The meeting was called to order by Chairman David Hosmer at 7:30 p.m.

Motion by Converse/Cabana to seat alternate Michael Dougherty as a voting member. Unanimous.

#1. Approve Minutes of February 22, 2011 Meeting

Motion by Cabana/Dougherty to approve the minutes of the February 22, 2011 meeting as presented. Hosmer, Cabana, Dougherty voted yes; Converse abstained.

#2. Review 2011-2012 Board of Education Budget Request

Anthony Walker, Chairman of the Board of Education, reviewed the proposed 2011-12 budget request. The budget increase over the previous year totals \$893,087 minus a new categorical grant of \$315,160 for a net increase of \$577,927 or 3.72%. This increase is mainly attributable to the addition of 3 new teachers plus benefits and supplies; 2 new buses, fuel oil, insurance, increases in contractual obligations and electricity.

Walker explained that the request for additional teachers is due to the closing of St. Mary's School in Putnam and new families moving in which has increased class sizes at the elementary school. There will be a reduction of eleven students going to Woodstock Academy next year.

Walker stated that the board had discussed reductions to their budget request but felt that further cuts would have an impact on students. Finance members questioned whether the board had considered moving existing teachers vs hiring new staff and if the employees had been asked to take no increase for the upcoming year, etc. Walker responded that they had looked at many options but that no formal request had been made for a pay freeze at this time.

#3. Review Board of Education 5-yr Capital Plan

Motion by Converse/Cabana to approve the Board of Education 5-yr Capital Plan as presented. Unanimous.

#4. Discuss Non-Lapsing Education Fund

Finance members advised Mr. Walker that they were looking for a more definitive policy on the use of the funds in this account. Walker replied that he had not been at the previous meeting and was not sure what the Board of Finance wanted. He promised to take the issue back to the policy subcommittee for further discussion and development of guidelines. It was suggested that this fund might be used for items appearing on the capital plan.

#5. Citizens Participation

Preston Shultz pointed out that there was a higher student enrollment in 2004-05 and yet no additional teachers were hired. He contended that research is showing that smaller class sizes are not producing better results.

Avis Spalding was disappointed at the poor attendance of board members and the public at these meetings.

#6. Correspondence/Announcements

Hosmer read a letter he had written to the Joint Committee on Education regarding the calculation of the MBR.

Hosmer also reported on items that he feels the board should take into consideration in these economic times – information obtained from TEEG shows an additional fourteen families in Woodstock seeking assistance; approximately ten percent of Woodstock taxpayers are unable to pay their taxes in full and are now making monthly payments; and the usual number of year-end donations made to the fire dept where he is treasurer did not come in this year.

Motion by Converse/Dougherty to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Submitted,
Barbara P. Rich