

**REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT #16 SCHOOL BOARD
Mechanic Falls – Minot – Poland**

**The 3rd Special Meeting of the RSU #16 School Board
for 2010 – 2011 was held
Wednesday, May 11, 2011 at 6:30 P.M.
in the Minot Consolidated School Gym**

MINUTES

Present: Annette Annance, Terri Arsenault, Carl Beckett, Sue Callahan, Dave Griffiths,

Melissa Hodgkin, Steve Holbrook, Mary Ella Jones, Jeanne Manley,
Yvette Murray, Scott Sawyer, Martha Stone, Jack Wiseman

Absent: Norm Davis

1.0 CALL TO ORDER: Dave Griffiths, Chair

- Dennis Duquette called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM and nominated Colleen Quint as moderator.

Motion: by Steve Holbrook to appoint Colleen Quint as moderator

Seconded: by Yvette Murray

Vote: Passed

- Colleen Quint welcomed the community to the meeting, thanked everyone for coming and outlined the norms for the meeting.
- Dennis Duquette swore in Colleen Quint as moderator.
- Colleen Quint swore in the ballot clerks.
- Dave Griffiths recognized Mary Martin's retirement after 27 years of service, as well as Norm Davis and Martha Stone for their service on the school board.

ACTION ITEMS:

2.0 NEW BUSINESS:

Public Presentation of the 2011–2012 School Budget for public approval/vote.

Dennis presented the proposed 2011–2012 school budget with a PowerPoint presentation. He talked about the total budget, the challenges of this budget, new positions that are needed, cuts that have been made in the last three years, per pupil costs, class sizes and each town's tax impact.

Norm Beauparlant, Poland, explained the relationship of all the articles and asked the moderator if his understanding was correct. Articles 1 through 11 add up to the aggregate total budget. Article 12 contains the

housekeeping items, and it looks like Article 13 (by secret ballot) covers the over foundation amount (over EPS). Tonight we vote article by article, but next week it is yay or nay on the entire budget as a whole. Colleen Quint confirmed this was correct.

ARTICLES 1 THROUGH 11 AUTHORIZE EXPENDITURES IN COST CENTER CATEGORIES

ARTICLE 1: Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$6,866,659.34 for **Regular Instruction?**

Motion: by Darren Littlefield to approve Article 1 as read

Seconded: by Jack Conway

Vote: Motion passed by paper ballot. 128 in favor and 124 opposed, with one ballot unreadable.

Article 1 Discussion:

- Steve Robinson, Poland – Regarding the \$500,000 vs. \$1M dollar increase. It is presented as \$500,000 because we have additional revenue covering the other half. Next year, it will be the full amount as a tax increase. We will not have the revenue carry-over.

Motion: by Steve Robinson to amend and change the amount to \$6,516,659.00

Seconded: by George Sanborn

Vote: Motion failed

Discussion on amendment:

- Dennis explained the revenue issue and the budget cliff.
- Curt Becker, Poland – Why can't we hold the budget where it is? Dennis explained the process of equalizing salaries across the district due to consolidation.
- Sue Callahan – Requested information on how the number Steve Robinson proposed was reached. Steve said he figured about a \$350,000 dollar decrease would make the net increase relatively flat.
- Nancy Frasier, Poland – Regarding the PreK program. It is not state mandated and how does the money work out in our favor? Why are we adding an unmandated program?
- Dennis –The PreK program is not a state mandate. It is a sound academic and social program for 4 year olds and national research spells that out. It increases children's success through all the grades right up through high school. After the first year costs, we receive annual tuition subsidy on these students, which is revenue for our district.
- George Sanborn, Poland –We put our kids through preschool and paid for it.

Motion: by George Sanborn to move the amendment and close debate
Seconded: from the floor (this person did not give name)
Vote: Motion failed

- Laura Shaw, Minot – Thanked Dennis and the school board for coming up with the budget that they did and for providing clarification about the PreK finances. This will bring in income moving forward, as long as we maintain the program. Also, school isn't mandated until age seven so we aren't mandated for kindergarten or first grade either. The state formula EPS is the floor (bare minimum) not the ceiling. It is the barest minimum you would need to stay open.
- Dave Griffiths – Stated he is in favor of the 4-year old program. He reviewed some of the tax increases that have been incurred in each of the towns in the last few years. He gave a monthly breakdown of the tax increases for next year with this budget, if it passes.
- Brian Thomas, Minot – If this is a non-mandated program and the state is willing to give us \$300,000 and it only cost us \$150,000 what are we doing with the rest of the money? Dennis explained it goes into the general fund to help fund other programs and expenses.
- George Sanborn, Poland – We have to start somewhere in cutting the budget. The money coming from the state for the 4-year old program comes from us too.
- Bernice Frasier – Doesn't approve of the 4-year old class. The program makes no difference in the kid's success; their success is up to them.
- Bonnie Payette, Mechanic Falls, – Doing some forecasting. The economy is getting worse and people are seeing harder times. We have to do more work with less money. We have huge inequities in benefits that need to be equalized when negotiating, including sick days that we pay if they aren't used. The board cut their stipends by 50%, which created an \$11,500 decrease in the budget. The high school stipends are \$164,000. Cut 50% of those stipends too.
- Faye Luppi, Poland – Regarding the \$1M dollar increase, the \$17.1M budget figure is artificially low because of sacrifices the teachers and staff made with furlough days, etc. Next year we are trying not to use furlough days to balance our budget. She doesn't see how Steve Robinson's proposal could not mean loss of programs or teachers. We have cut 74 positions in the last three years. There is no more we can cut without cutting teachers and programs.
- Joan Houston, Poland – Her granddaughter goes to PreK and her parent's pay for it.
- Hope Becker, Poland – The benefit package seems high. Mr. Robinsons' proposal could come out of teacher's benefits. Teachers at the high

school used to teach two classes per day, when the extra class was put in we paid them more. Dennis explained that teachers no longer get paid extra to teach a 5th class and they also now have an academic support. The teacher's benefits were different in all three towns prior to consolidation. We are currently working on a new single contract for everything. He also explained that this year we budgeted for a 10% increase in health insurance, but it came in at 6.5% so there is a savings.

- Bob Small, Mechanic Falls – In Mechanic Falls we work very hard on our budget to keep it even. We deal with essentials and move ahead slowly. We try to increase revenues other than taxation. What is the school department's stance? Dennis said we do reach out for additional funds outside of taxation. We always seek grants. We got a \$600,000 grant for our new wood chip boiler, which reduced our oil costs significantly. If we reduce more, we will have to reduce staff and class sizes will go up, there is no other way. We are always attempting to reduce our transportation costs with reduced stops.
- Jack Conway, Poland – No good deed goes unpunished. Last year the school district reduced the budget significantly by asking a lot of people to make sacrifices including four furlough days for employees. As Ms. Luppi said, you can't compare the current budget with the year of sacrifices. We do not know the future in terms of revenue streams, but we do know if we don't educate our children well they will be affected for the rest of their lives. These are great communities to raise and educate children in. We need to stop looking at "me" and look at how "we" can do this well as a community.

Motion: by George Sanborn to move the motion

Seconded: by Steve Holbrook

Vote: Motion passed.

Motion: by Norm Beauparlant for the Article 1 vote to be done by paper ballot

Seconded: by Steve Holbrook

Vote: Motion passed.

ARTICLE 2: Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$2,903,879.59 for Special Education?

Motion: by Norm Beauparlant to approve Article 2 as read

Seconded: by Darren Littlefield

Vote: Motion passed.

Article 2 Discussion:

- Larry Moreau, Poland – A comment on the process. You can see because of the turnout that the school board hasn't done an adequate job of building this budget with public input. Vote the budget down and have the board bring all the communities along in the process.
- Tammy English, Poland – We had two very public meetings in the past month and I was one of ten parents there. The school board has solicited public input with these public meetings.

ARTICLE 3: Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$0.00 for Career and Technical Education?

Motion: by Dan Blanchard to approve Article 3 as read

Seconded: by Sue Callahan

Vote: Motion passed.

ARTICLE 4: Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$654,244.08 for Other Instruction?

Motion: by Terri Arsenault to approve Article 4 as read

Seconded: by Jack Conway

Vote: Motion passed.

Article 4 Discussion:

- George Sanborn, Poland – What is included in Article 4? Dennis explained that it includes Co-curricular, Extra-curricular and Gifted & Talented services.
- Jeanne Manley – What is the tuition transfer? Dennis explained it was the adult education transfer.
- Hope Becker, Poland – Encourages people to get the figures on the stipends.

Motion: by Bonnie Payette to amend the amount of Article 4 to \$574,244 to cut half of the high school level stipends

Seconded: by Sharon Campbell

Vote: Motion failed.

ARTICLE 5: Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$1,424,251.35 for Student and Staff Support?

Motion: by Sue Callahan to approve Article 5 as read

Seconded: by Darren Littlefield

Vote: Motion passed.

Article 5 Discussion:

- A request from the floor asking what is covered in Article 5. Dennis explained that Article 5 includes guidance and health services, instructional technology, library services and social workers.

ARTICLE 6: Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$665,981.04 for System Administration?

Motion: by Jack Wiseman to approve Article 6 as read

Seconded: by Chris Woodford

Vote: Motion passed. 123 in favor and 96 opposed as counted by the ballot clerks.

Article 6 Discussion:

- Dennis explained that this line is for the school board, legal fees, auditing fees, central office staff and the business office.
- Larry Moreau, Poland – Addressing the moderator; we saw one of the closest votes in history tonight. You are using your opinion on whether the votes carry. Every vote should have a count and not be a judgment call by the moderator. Colleen Quint said that was not a problem if it appeared close.
- Jack Conway, Poland – Suggested having one person for each side to count votes.

ARTICLE 7: Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$1,085,539.42 for School Administration?

Motion: by Norm Beauparlant to approve Article 7 as read

Seconded: by Jean Wallingford

Vote: Motion passed.

Article 7 Discussion:

- Dennis explained that Article 7 covers all school administration. All administrators and secretaries in all buildings plus supplies, accreditation costs and fees.
- Nancy Walker, Poland – How are we replacing Mary Martin's position?
- Dennis – Arthur Reed will become the principal at Minot and we are advertising for a principal at Elm Street School. The cost will be a couple thousand dollars difference.
Mr. Reed will not make as much money as Mrs. Martin does, nor will the new person because of her years of service.

ARTICLE 8: Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$1,323,114.22 for Transportation and Buses?

Motion: by Sue Callahan to approve Article 8 as read

Seconded: by Yvette Murray

Vote: Motion passed.

Article 8 Discussion:

- Paula Stocks, Mechanic Falls – What about Raymond transportation? Dennis explained the Raymond finances and how they work. We pick up and deliver all the Raymond students at Jordan Small Middle School. The cost is under \$5,000 for that run. The tuition offsets the costs because we already have teachers in classrooms with the lights on.
- Nancy Frasier, Poland – We are collecting a little over \$8,000 per pupil from Raymond, but our per pupil costs are over \$10,000. How are we making money on this?
- Dennis – The state says that the sending schools can only pay the per pupil cost in their district. We are already paying for the teachers and the school, so it doesn't make sense to stop that revenue coming in.
- Jack Conway, Poland – Even if we stopped Raymond students from coming and didn't take in the income, the effect on the per pupil cost is that it would go up. This is extra money coming in that pushes the per pupil cost down a little bit because we are already paying the fixed costs. Dennis said that was correct.

ARTICLE 9: Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$1,940,103.67 for Facilities Maintenance?

Motion: by Sue Callahan to approve Article 9 as read

Seconded: by Darren Littlefield

Vote: Motion passes.

ARTICLE 10: Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$1,231,010.62 for Debt Service and Other Commitments?

Motion: by Norm Beauparlant to approve Article 10 as read

Seconded: by Chris Willer

Vote: Motion passed.

Article 10 Discussion:

Dennis – PRHS was built with bonds from the state. The state sends us the money and we then write a check to the debt service. This article is no cost to us; we just act as a liaison.

ARTICLE 11: Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$40,000.00 for All Other Expenditures?

Motion: by Chris Willer to approve Article 11 as read

Seconded: by Annette Annance

Vote: Motion passed.

Article 11 Discussion:

This is for Food Service. It should be neutral based. Right now we have to put this in the food service budget. We are moving from prepackaged foods to

healthier foods and there is a higher cost to that and we have not raised our cost to students. In the past when we were a School Union, the individual towns put money into the food service budget for different items such as equipment failure.

ARTICLES 12 THROUGH 14 RAISE FUNDS FOR THE PROPOSED SCHOOL BUDGET

ARTICLE 12: Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) appropriate \$16,468,809.18 for the total cost of funding public education from pre-kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act and shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) raise \$8,121,384.00 and assess the amounts set forth below as each municipality’s contribution to the total cost of funding public education from pre-kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act in accordance with the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15688? (Recommend amounts set forth below):

<u>Total appropriated (by municipality)</u> <u>by municipality)</u>	<u>Total raised (district assessments)</u>
Poland (\$8,401,918.62)	Poland
(\$5,369,436.00)	
Mechanic Falls (\$4,577,434.69)	Mechanic Falls
(\$1,241,140.50)	
Minot (\$3,489,455.87)	
Minot (\$1,510,807.50)	
<u>RSU 16 Total Appropriated (\$16,468,809.18)</u>	<u>RSU 16 Total Raised</u>
<u>(\$8,121,384.00)</u>	

Explanation: Regional School Unit Sixteen (16)’s contribution to the total cost of funding public education from pre-kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act is the amount of money determined by state law to be the minimum amount that the district must raise and assess in order to receive the full amount of state dollars. These amounts are set forth on page 4 of Computation of Unit Allocation to Fund Public Schools – Form ED279, under 'Local Contribution'.

Motion: by Norm Beauparlant to approve Article 12 as read
 Seconded: by Jack Conway
 Vote: Motion passed.

Article 12 Discussion:

- Rosemary Roy, Poland – Regarding the school board stipends; Poland selectmen have done away with their stipend and school board members should give up theirs. Just because you give people a tax bill doesn’t mean they are able to pay it.

- George Buker, Minot – We’ve already voted on the budget. Now we have to raise the money to pay for it.

ARTICLE 13: (Written ballot required) Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) raise and appropriate \$1,061,353.05 in additional local funds, which exceeds the State’s Essential Programs and Services allocation model by \$689,640.50 as required to fund the budget recommended by the RSU 16 Board of Directors?

The RSU 16 Board of Directors recommends \$1,061,353.05 for additional local funds and gives the following reasons for exceeding the State’s Essential Programs and Services funding model by \$689,640.50: This amount is needed to cover costs of RSU 16 schools that the State’s funding model does not recognize, namely, 1) costs of maintaining locally desired student–teacher ratios and/or student–teacher ratios in advanced placement and/or specialty classes, 2) costs of special education programming, 3) actual costs of extra– and co–curricular programs, 4) adult education, 5) food service costs, and 6) actual transportation costs.

Explanation: The additional local funds are those locally raised funds over and above Regional School Unit Sixteen (16)’s local contribution to the total cost of funding public education from pre–kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act that will help achieve RSU 16’s budget for educational programs.

Motion: by Karen Nichols to approve Article 13 as read
 Seconded: by Chris Woodford
 Vote: Motion passed by paper ballot. 118 in favor and 92 opposed with one ballot unreadable

ARTICLE 14 SUMMARIZES THE PROPOSED SCHOOL BUDGET

ARTICLE 14: Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) authorize the RSU 16 Board of Directors to expend \$18,134,783.33 for the fiscal year beginning and ending June 30, 2012 from Regional School Unit Sixteen contribution to the total cost of funding public education from kindergarten to grade 12 as described in the Essential Programs and Services Funding Act, non-state-funded school construction projects, additional local funds for school purposes under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, unexpended balances, tuition receipts, state subsidy and other receipts for the support of schools?

Explanation: A school administrative unit must include a summary article indicating the total annual budget for funding public education from pre–kindergarten to grade 12 in Regional School Unit Sixteen (16). The amount

must be the gross budget of the school system. This article does not provide money unless the other articles are approved.

Motion: by Norm Beauparlant to approve Article 14 as read
Seconded: by Chris Willer
Vote: Motion passed.

ARTICLE 15 AUTHORIZES THE ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM AND RAISES THE LOCAL SHARE

ARTICLE 15: To see if Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) will appropriate \$291,341.00 for Adult Education and raise \$47,049.00 as the local share for the year beginning 1 July, 2011 and ending 30 June, 2012; with authorization to expend any additional, incidental, or miscellaneous receipts in the interest and well being of the Adult Education Program.

Motion: by Norm Beauparlant to approve Article 15 as read
Seconded: by Arthur Montana
Vote: Motion passed.

ARTICLES 16 AUTHORIZES APPROPRIATIONS TO RESERVE FUNDS

ARTICLE 16: Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) transfer \$150,000.00 from the ending balance of Fiscal Year 2010 school general operating funds to the Capital Improvements Reserve Fund previously established by the voters?

Motion: by Darren Littlefield to approve Article 16 as read
Seconded: by Mr. Murphy
Vote: Motion passed.

Article 16 Discussion:

- Norm Beauparlant asked what the existing fund balance was. Dennis answered that it is \$99,000. This will bring it up to \$249,000.

ARTICLES 17 AND 18 AUTHORIZE EXPENDITURES FROM RESERVE FUNDS

ARTICLE 17: Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$150,000.00 from the Capital Improvements Reserve Fund previously established by the voters for the purposes of boiler plant upgrades, paving, window replacement, ceiling replacement, electrical work, resolution of problem drainage issues and for correcting safety and code issues?

Motion: by Arthur Montana to approve Article 17 as read
Seconded: by Steve Robinson
Vote: Motion passed.

ARTICLE 18: Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend up to \$27,283.00 from the Technology Reserve Fund previously established by the voters for the purposes of server and computer replacement, wireless network installation, hardware and software purchases and infrastructure upgrades?

Motion: by Laurie Callahan to approve Article 18 as read
Seconded: by Dan Blanchard
Vote: Motion passed.

Article 18 Discussion:

Norm Beauparlant asked what the existing fund balance was. Dennis answered that the balance now is the same amount as this article, \$27,283.00.

ARTICLE 19 AUTHORIZES EXPENDITURES OF GRANTS AND OTHER RECEIPTS

ARTICLE 19: In addition to amounts approved in the preceding articles, shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend federal funds and such other sums as may be received from federal or state grants or programs or other sources during the fiscal year for school purposes, provided that such grants, programs or other sources do not require the expenditure of other funds not previously appropriated?

Motion: by Mr. Murphy to approve Article 19 as read
Seconded: by Chris Willer
Vote: Motion passed.

3.0 AGENDA ADJUSTMENT:

4.0 REMINDER:

5.0 ADJOURNMENT:

- Colleen Quint reviewed that we have just approved the budget that will go forward again next Tuesday by referendum vote in each town. Polls are open from 4 PM to 8 PM and absentee ballots will be available tomorrow morning.
- Jack Conway thanked the moderator, Colleen Quint.

Motion: by Steve Holbrook to adjourn at 9:25 PM.
Seconded: by Arthur Montana
Vote: Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis J. Duquette