

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

The 5<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting of the RSU #16 School Board  
for 2010 – 2011 was held  
Monday, June 13, 2011 at 6:30 P.M.  
in the Poland Regional High School Auditorium

MINUTES

**RSU #16 DISTRICT BUDGET MEETING  
2011–2012 SCHOOL BUDGET  
PUBLIC VOTE**

**Present:** Terri Arsenault, Carl Beckett, Sue Callahan, Norm Davis, Melissa Hodgkin, Steve Holbrook,

Mary Ella Jones, Jeanne Manley, Martha Stone, Jack Wiseman

**Absent:** Annette Annance, Dave Griffiths, Yvette Murray, Scott Sawyer

**1.0 CALL TO ORDER:** Dave Griffiths, Chair  
Dennis Duquette called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM.

**ARTICLE 1A:** To choose a Moderator to preside at said meeting.

Motion: by Steve Holbrook to nominate Colleen Quint as meeting moderator

Seconded: by Terri Arsenault

Vote: Passed

- Dennis Duquette swore in Colleen Quint as meeting moderator
- Colleen Quint led the pledge of allegiance.
- Colleen walked the group through the process of the meeting and swore in the ballot clerks.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**2.0 NEW BUSINESS:** Public Presentation of the 2011–2012 School Budget for public approval/vote

- Dennis – The budget being presented is \$17,872,765 – That reflects a \$270,000 decrease since last meeting
- An overall 2.87% increase or \$248,689
- Dennis reviewed the fund balance, CIP and reserve funds, past budget freezes. Review of current proposed budget including new positions and the reductions made since last meeting.

## ARTICLES 1 THROUGH 11 AUTHORIZE EXPENDITURES IN COST CENTER CATEGORIES

**ARTICLE 1:** Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$6,699,159.50 for **Regular Instruction?**

Motion: by Mr. Rabasco to approve Article 1 as written

Seconded: by Steve Holbrook

Vote: Motion carries

Motion: by Steve Robinson to amend the amount to \$6,399,159.50.

Seconded: from the floor (did not see who seconded and a vote was called immediately)

Vote: Motion failed

Steve explained the reason is due to the discussion over the last few months about this budget. The town's people are not interested in getting a tax increase. The board reduced this year's budget from \$17.1M to 16.8M. Remove the increase of \$300,000 that is being asked for and raise that money from this year's reduction. This would result in no tax increase and give the RSU what they need.

### Article 1 Discussion

- Dennis – We are projecting \$300,000 in budget savings for this year, but this is an unaudited amount. We cannot apply an unaudited number to next year's budget. The money we have saved via furlough days is already gone. That was money given back by our staff members to help the budget. We have responded to address the issues. There is no fluff. Everyone is being asked to do more with less.
- George Sanborn – If it is about the children, we need to set the example at the local level. This is a “lucky you have a job year”, hold the raises, this is a terrible economy. How do raises help the children?
- Dennis – It is about the children. We have been addressing these issues and we do need to address the needs of the children, and that is what we are doing.
- Terri requested that Dennis explain what cutting the \$300,000 out would mean? Everything we do is for the children. Foreign language and music has been drastically reduced. I will not support any further cuts to this budget. Dennis responded that we would have to increase class sizes K-4 and cut athletics.
- Hope Becker – When the new contracts are completed, will the benefit package be in the medium of surrounding towns? Reduce sick days, benefits are on the high end and the cash in lieu of insurance is way too high. Cost per diem for the average teacher is \$44,000, that rate is \$241 per day. The average Mainer makes less than \$35,000 per diem and \$145 per day. We are asking the board to reduce benefits and have a zero tax increase.
- Mary Martin – We have experienced significant cuts. Sick days are rarely used. She calls the subs. The sick days we have are not costing us money. They are not being abused. Our teachers often come in sick. In 27 years at ESS, this is the first year the K-2 kids have not had music, same at PCS. PE used to be K-6 twice a week, it is now twice a week for 1/3 of the year. The Art teacher travels between two schools. G/T has three schools. They are stretched. It impacts our schools because there are fewer

people in all our schools. Technology reductions, textbooks and supplies have been reduced to only essentials. Parents and fund raising are covering a lot of costs we previously had in the budget. Staff have stepped up and are doing what is best for kids and families in our communities. Further cuts will begin a downward slide that will be devastating to our students and families. We understand the hardships in our communities as we see it in the young faces.

- Carl – Still confused about what’s going on. What caused it? Looking at the numbers, we have reduced the budget each year since we were a school union.
- Colleen Walker – Insulted with the budget increases that have been presented. First \$1M now down to \$300,000 increase. There is no reason why we can’t increase class sizes. A dose of reality is needed. People are being laid off, people are taking pay cuts and contributing to their benefits and paying large deductibles. That is not happening here.
- George Sanborn – Reality is we are in a bad economy. People aren’t here because they are going to vote it down at referendum.
- Rosemary Roy – Her three children have been through the schools in Poland. Under different circumstances I would probably be for this. Prior to being an RSU we spent many years raising the school budget. We have been in a recession for 3.5 years. 75% of our tax bills go to the school system. There are people who will continue to support sports. At the Poland town office, we see increased bank foreclosures and tax foreclosures on people’s homes in the last three years.
- Sue Callahan – Schools cannot be run like they were 30 years ago. We can’t have 30 kids in a classroom and educate them.
- Terri A – All the school board members are taxpayers too. This is the generation that is going to get us out of this recession. We need to give them an education that allows them to be competitive.
- Bill Hiss – For over 20 years I ran the admissions office at Bates College. There is a return on investment for education. Young people are competing for college admission and financial aid. It is a disadvantage to pay for sports and not have music or foreign language. All the kids in China know how to speak English. Try to think ahead to the world our young people will live in. A higher level of education is the only thing that predicts higher levels of success.
- Fred Walter – One of the disadvantages our kids have is their test scores when applying to schools. Why are we discussing cuts when they are asking for an increase tonight? We have five full time new hires. The \$248,000 tax increase is just for this year, not next year.
- Steve Robinson – Understands the comments on both sides. The amendment he proposed does not cut anything. Use this year’s expenditure; add the proposed increase and that is a fair budget with no cuts.
- Geri Cook spoke on behalf of the budget and supporting the children of the RSU. We need to give them the resources they need to succeed in the future.
- Erik Peterson – No matter how you feel about how funding is paid, mandated, etc., after last month’s vote it seems you didn’t hear us loud and clear. You need to make it a flat budget or it is not going to pass.

Motion:               by George Sanborn to move the motion  
Seconded:            by Steve Holbrook

Vote: Motion passes

**ARTICLE 2:** Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$2,877,700.48 for **Special Education?**

Motion: by Terri Arsenault to approve Article 2 as written  
Seconded: by Kim Moody  
Vote: Motion carries

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

Motion: by Steve Holbrook to approve Article 3 as written  
Seconded: by Mary Ella Jones  
Vote: Motion carries

**ARTICLE 4:** Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$625,885.70 for **Other Instruction?**

Motion: by Terri Arsenault to approve Article 4 as written  
Seconded: by Steve Holbrook  
Vote: Motion carries

**ARTICLE 5:** Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$1,417,124.95 for **Student and Staff Support?**

Motion: by Mr. Rabasco to approve Article 5 as written  
Seconded: by Kim Moody  
Vote: Motion carries

**ARTICLE 6:** Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$664,562.81 for **System Administration?**

Motion: by Steve Holbrook to approve Article 6 as written  
Seconded: by Kim Moody  
Vote: Motion carries

**ARTICLE 7:** Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$1,070,245.89 for **School Administration?**

Motion: by Steve Holbrook to approve Article 7 as written  
Seconded: by Terri Arsenault  
Vote: Motion carries

**ARTICLE 8:** Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$1,311,734.16 for **Transportation and Buses?**

Motion: by Mr. Rabasco to approve Article 8 as written  
Seconded: by Steve Holbrook  
Vote: Motion carries

**ARTICLE 9:** Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) be authorized to expend \$1,935,341.04 for **Facilities Maintenance?**

Motion: by Terri Arsenault to approve Article 9 as written  
Seconded: by Steve Holbrook  
Vote: Motion carries

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

Motion: by Terri Arsenault to approve Article 10 as written  
Seconded: by Steve Holbrook  
Vote: Motion carries

#### Article 10 Discussion

Norm Davis asked Dennis to explain that the debt service isn't necessarily a local cost. It is paid for by the state. The high school has no debt.

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

Motion: by Mr. Rabasco to approve Article 11 as written  
Seconded: by Kim Moody  
Vote: Motion carries

### **ARTICLES 12 THROUGH 14 RAISE FUNDS FOR THE PROPOSED SCHOOL BUDGET**

**ARTICLE 12:** Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) appropriate \$16,433,256.74 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>
<b>Poland</b>	(\$8,385,187.64)	<b>Poland</b>
(\$5,369,436.00)		
<b>Mechanic Falls</b>	(\$4,566,754.73)	<b>Mechanic Falls</b>
(\$1,241,140.50)		
<b>Minot</b>	(\$3,481,314.36)	
<b>Minot</b>	(\$1,510,807.50)	
<b><u>RSU 16 Total Appropriated (\$16,433,256.73)</u></b>		<b><u>RSU 16 Total Raised</u></b>
<b><u>(\$8,121,384.00)</u></b>		

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 Steve Holbrook to approve Article 12 as written

Seconded: by Mr. Rabasco

Vote: Motion carries

#### Article 12 Discussion

- Terri reminded everybody to go vote on June 21<sup>st</sup> and get as many people out to vote as possible. Regarding waving the sports card, we will be waving every card if we have to cut more. People who are unsure about the school budget, go to the schools, visit, walk around and talk to the kids. Get a better idea of what's going on.
- Mary Ella – When the budget was voted down the first time, we compromised with this new budget proposal. We are trying to meet the needs of everyone in the community. Voting it down last time is not a vote for a no tax increase, it is a vote for a different budget.
- Laurie Callahan – If we adopt this tonight and it doesn't get voted through next Tuesday, what budget do we use? Whatever budget is approved tonight is what we will operate on until we have another vote.

**ARTICLE 13:** (Written ballot required) Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) raise and appropriate \$791,353.05 in additional local funds, which exceeds the State's Essential Programs and Services allocation model by \$420,740.06 as required to fund the budget recommended by the RSU 16 Board of Directors?

The RSU 16 Board of Directors recommends \$791,353.05 for additional local funds and gives the following reasons for exceeding the State's Essential Programs and Services funding model by \$420,740.06: 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) food service costs, and 5) 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 Steve Holbrook to approve Article 13 as written

Seconded: by Jack Wiseman

Vote: Motion carries by written ballot with 115 in favor and 13 opposed

#### Article 13 Discussion

- Tammy English – asked if it were rejected at referendum we would use tonight's budget until the next referendum vote. This is a state mandated process.

- Bonnie Payette – Several people called the state and they said we would not work off this unapproved budget. It would be the last approved budget.

- Brian Gagnon – The last voter approved budget would be the one we are passing tonight. **ARTICLE 14 SUMMARIZES THE PROPOSED SCHOOL BUDGET**

**ARTICLE 14:** Shall Regional School Unit Sixteen (16) authorize the RSU 16 Board of Directors to expend \$17,872,765.15 for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2011 and ending June 30, 2012 from 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, non-state-funded school construction projects, additional local funds for school purposes under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 15690, 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 Terri Arsenault to approve Article 14 as written  
Seconded: by Steve Holbrook  
Vote: Motion carries

### **ARTICLES 15 AUTHORIZES APPROPRIATIONS TO RESERVE FUNDS**

**ARTICLE 15:** 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 Mr. Rabasco to approve Article 15 as written  
Seconded: by Jack Wiseman  
Vote: Motion carries

### **ARTICLES 16 AND 17 AUTHORIZE EXPENDITURES FROM RESERVE FUNDS**

**ARTICLE 16:** 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 Terri Arsenault to approve Article 16 as written  
Seconded: by Steve Holbrook  
Vote: Motion carries

**ARTICLE 17:** 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 Terri Arsenault to approve Article 17 as written

Seconded: by Steve Holbrook

Vote: Motion carries

## **ARTICLE 18 AUTHORIZES EXPENDITURES OF GRANTS AND OTHER RECEIPTS**

**ARTICLE 18:** 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 Martha Stone to approve Article 18 as written

Seconded: by Jeanne Manley

Vote: Motion carries

**3.0 AGENDA ADJUSTMENT:**

**4.0 REMINDER:**

**5.0 ADJOURNMENT:**

- Colleen reminded everyone of the June 21<sup>st</sup> referendum vote from 4 to 8 pm at each town office

Motion: by Steve Holbrook to adjourn at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis J. Duquette