

6:30 PM
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

A. NON-PUBLIC SESSION RE: Legal Matters

MINUTES
JUNE 1, 1999
**SPECIAL MEETING/
SCHOOL BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING**
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7:00 PM

1. ROLL CALL

Councilors Present: Johnson, Landry, Perry, Rawding, Reese, Wilson, Berry and Schmidt.
Absent: Mayor Boc.

2. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Resolution RE: Transfer of Funds – School Management Information System.
Sponsored by Mayor Wil Boc, by Request.

Rawding moved to adopt, seconded by Johnson.

Reese asked where are the funds coming from and what will they be spent on?
Stephania Pearce, Business Administrator for the School Department, explained that the funds are unexpended bond anticipation notes with no allocations for expenditure which were offered to the School Department by the Finance Director. She stated at first they were going to go into the general fund, but are now being put in the CIP.

Motion passed on a 7-1 roll call vote, Berry opposed.

B. Ordinance #07-06/01/1999, Chapter 166, Vehicles and Traffic, Section 166-50,
Schedule C: Stop Intersections (various). Sponsored by Councilor David Landry,
Chairman, Parking and Traffic Committee.

Rawding moved to refer to a public hearing on 06/23/99, seconded by Reese.
Motion passed on an 8-0 vote.

C. Ordinance #08-06/01/1999, Chapter 3, Administrative Code, Article IV, Section 3-52D,
Establishment. Sponsored by Mayor Wil Boc, by Request.

Rawding moved to refer to a public hearing on 06/23/99, seconded by Reese.
Motion passed on an 8-0 vote.

D. Raffle Permit – Megathon

Rawding moved to grant, seconded by Landry.
Motion passed on an 8-0 vote.

E. Parade (Walk-a-thon) Permit – Megathon

Rawding moved to grant, seconded by Reese.
Motion passed on an 8-0 vote.

3. PUBLIC HEARING RE: School – FY2000 Budget Appropriations

Acting Mayor Perry opened the Public Hearing:

Marc Vaillancourt, 6 Hemlock Circle, School Board Chair – introduced the recently selected School Board Superintendent, Armand LaSelva who addressed the Council and stated he will begin on August 2nd.

Erv Sparkman, 232 Tolend Road – stated he feels that a 10% increase in the School budget is excessive. He then presented 5 areas which he feels could be reduced including:

- 1) Assistants and aids - he feels that with the increased technology and use of computers, some of these positions could be reduced.
- 2) Hall monitors – he feels that this is unnecessary and that we should not have to police our schools.
- 3) Extracurricular sports – he feels these are not an integral part of education and if anything, can detract from studies. He feels these activities should be fee based and not financed by the schools.
- 4) Special needs – he feels there is something wrong with having a ½ time aid for just one student.
- 5) Grants – he feels that once the grants are no longer available for certain programs, then they should be discontinued and not funded through the school budget.

He concluded by stated he is disappointed that there has been no public debate by the Council on the budget and asked that they resist the temptation to submit to the press

Barbara Visciano, 185 Locust Street – spoke in favor of the Library Media generalist positions stating she would like to see one in each school and presented a petition from Woodman Park School parents in support of the position.

Carol Finn, 10 Sunhawke Lane, 2nd grade teacher – also in favor of the Library Media specialists and also the research program called IIM (Independent Investigation Method) and then read a letter from the Woodman Park School staff members. (see meeting folder)

Debra Cheney, 7 Beech Road – Librarian in Dover School system – also spoke in favor of a library media specialist in each school.

Jan Hennessey – Applevale Drive – spoke in favor of curriculum funding which will allow the assessment of curriculum to continue for grades K-12 on a rotating basis.

Toni Shaheen, Music Teacher at Horne Street school – also spoke in support of the Library Media specialists and the curriculum funding. She then read a letter from Horne Street school faculty. (not on file)

Pat Brown – 9 Shady Lane, works at the Dover Middle School – stated that she feels that behavioral specialists are necessary in the middle school to continue the work done by the specialists in the elementary schools and allows them to stay in the school district. She stated if they have to be placed in another district, the school department has to pay for that placement.

Nora Pillar, works as a computer aid – stated she supports the budget as is and agrees that one on one support is necessary for some students. She stated she disagrees that technology and computers can replace people and would like to see more computers added to the classrooms and technology kept current.

John Krumm, 2 Whittier Street – stated he supports sports and other extra curricular activities in the school budget and feels they are an important part of the school experience as they teach teamwork, citizenship, etc. He stated he would also like to see the late bus reinstated as it allows kids to participate in activities that they wouldn't otherwise be able to. He next stated he supports one on one support as it was beneficial to his daughter when she needed it and she now attends college. He stated our schools are overcrowded and understaffed and we have been doing less with more for many years, and can no longer continue to do this.

Amy Lindsay, 35 Applevale Drive, curriculum committee member and assessment committee member – stated she supports the vertical program. She also supports the late bus and sports. She stated that many of the top students in the schools participate in sports and feels it does not detract from their studies. She stated she feels if anything, funding of sports should be more evenly distributed, but not eliminated.

Murray Ingraham, Curriculum Director, stated that we are in the 6th and final year of the CIP funding for Dovernet. He distributed a handout detailing the current number of computers in the schools and the amount needed to complete the project. (see meeting folder)

Ken Latchaw, 15 Reyner's Brook Drive, Director of Vocational Education – also spoke in favor of finishing the Dovernet project. He stated that Dovernet was greatly supported by the community in the beginning but feels that they stopped coming out to speak because they felt they weren't being heard. He stated the final phase is to supply the rest of the computers to all classrooms to allow for equal opportunity for all students in all classrooms.

Joe Covert, Reyner's Brook Drive – spoke in favor of the budget as presented and the Dovernet technology.

Betsy Fowler, 334 Washington Street – spoke in favor of the curriculum plan stated that money is necessary to make improvements. She stated that with all of the building going on in the city, the impact on the school system will be great. She stated that funding the budget as presented will only bring it back to its former status before cuts were made in past years.

Doris Grady, 42 Longhill Road, longtime teacher in Dover Schools – spoke regarding the importance of the curriculum program to ensure the continuity of the education process throughout the grades for every child. She explained the Scope and Sequence process and feels that in the past efforts were not followed because teachers didn't feel that the program was being followed by everyone. She stated that this curriculum assessment rotation program can be successful and urged the Council to adopt the budget as presented.

Marc Hiller, 10 Grady's Lane – faculty member at UNH, stated he supports the proposed budget for the following reasons:

- 1) Economic/building boom – he stated that having people want to move to Dover is both good and bad. He stated the impact on the school capacity means the Council needs to look into the future when deciding on the budget and not go backwards, but go forwards in making an investment in the schools.
- 2) Dovernet needs to have the big picture completed and if not, we will risk going backwards in regards to technology instead of forward. He stated that 15% of the jobs that kindergartners will hold have not even been thought of yet but most will require the ability to navigate the worldwide web.
- 3) We need to be seriously aware of continually upgrading curriculum especially books and materials being used by the students.

He concluded by stating that every dollar invested in education will only better the lives of everyone in the future.

Karen Morton-Clark, 56 Dunn's Bridge – president of Dover High School Parents Group- discussed a recent survey distributed to students regarding issues they are dealing with. She stated that ½ of the students responded and the results showed that Alcohol abuse, drug abuse and respect were the major concerns. She stated she happened to be working with the students during the week of the Columbine incident she was introducing a new program called "Why Not Make a Difference" which helps develop self esteem. She stated that she feels that the Counselors at the High School needs to have additional support staff to help with administrative duties as well as training for staff to look for signs violence in students.

Dennis Bentley, 30 Samuel Hanson Avenue, Vice Principal of Dover Middle School, Chairperson of DEEP – stated that the request for \$175,000 for the curriculum is the result of numerous workshop sessions and is a process which has been going on for 3-4 years and

had involved community members, school officials, teachers etc. He stated it is important to allow the monitoring of the curriculum in the schools to ensure consistency.

Stephania Pearce – Asst. Superintendent of Schools – stated she has the requested list for new positions and also stated that Dover will be seeing \$180,000 resulting from House Bill 300 which has passed.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Acting Mayor Perry closed the Public Hearing.

Wilson asked that the “experts” in the audience be asked to stay to answer questions from the Council during the Workshop.

4. Adjournment

Reese moved to adjourn, seconded by Landry.
Motion passed unanimously.

AFTER SPECIAL MEETING **COUNCIL WORKSHOP**

A. DISCUSSION RE: BUDGET

Councilor Wilson asked Murray Ingraham, Curriculum Director, what the additional \$175,000 will be used for? He stated it is his understanding that the Arts/Music curriculum has been completed, but literacy is 14 years old which means the pathway from kindergarten to 12th grade is not in place in his opinion. He stated he feels the focus should be on literacy first and foremost.

Mr. Ingraham stated that over the years the curriculums have been updated independently at all three levels but have never been followed through the levels. He stated that funding of materials to go along with the updated curriculums over the years has been cut, and therefore was not able to be completed. He then explained the 5 year cycle being used to update curriculum in various subjects.

Wilson expressed his concern with the fact that literacy was not made a priority. He stated that the computers are not any good if the students can't read or write. He stated the number of graduates below the reading and writing levels are too many.

Ingraham stated he agrees, but that the pathway vs. accountability are two different issues and that the pathway is in place, but the system has been lacking assessment and accountability.

Acting Mayor Perry stated that the Council is only responsible for passing the bottom line, and not individual line items in the School budget.

Berry concurred with Perry but stated that the Council has not taken a position on anything regarding the School budget publicly. He stated the majority of the increase in the budget

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is due to salary, transportation, debt services, etc. He stated he is confused as to which part of the budget Dovernet falls under?

Stephania Pearce stated that none of the general budget is for Dovernet except for money for repairs, but the remaining \$110,000 for the last phase of Dovernet is under the CIP.

Berry then asked why the MIS Director and late bus keep getting cut by the School Board? Pearce replied that due to extra bus routes being added, the late bus has not ever been brought forth for consideration. She stated that the MIS director was eliminated because the priority is to fund those services which directly affect the children.

Rawding asked why the windows have not been installed at the Woodman Park School yet? Tom Forbes, Facilities and Grounds Supervisor, stated that they will be installed by the next school year.

Schmidt discussed the Dovernet project stating that he feels it should be completed with the necessary purchase of computers rather than repairing old, outdated machines. He stated that currently some classes have computers and others do not, and would like to see consistency brought to the entire school system.

Wilson asked that the Councilors express their position on the school budget.

Berry stated that he would be looking for some adjustments, but feels that the request for behavioral specialists is a necessary one as the schools are experiencing large enrollments due to development.

Johnson stated he has attended most of the school board budget workshops and is not in favor of cutting the requested amount.

Perry stated he also does not favor cutting the budget as presented as it has been decreased over the last several years and needs to be funded fully to bring it back to current standards.

Rawding stated he would support a \$250,000 - \$300,000 reduction and leave it to the School Board to make the decision as to where to cut. He stated he feels decisions should not be made based on quality, but on affordability to the taxpayers.

Berry moved to adjourn, seconded unanimously.
Motion passed unanimously.

Valerie A. French
DEPUTY CITY CLERK