



**DOVER SCHOOL
DISTRICT**

DOVER SCHOOL BOARD – MINUTES

Meeting Type:	Special Session #5
Meeting Location:	McConnell Center, Superintendent's Conference Room
Meeting Date:	Monday, March 26, 2012
Meeting Time:	6:30 P.M.

- A. ROLL CALL:** Present were Rocky D'Andrea, Kathy Baker, Paul Butler, Doris Grady, Ken Appel, Betsey Andrews Parker and Amanda Russell.

Also present were Superintendent Jean Briggs Badger; Woodman Park School Principal Patrick Boodey; DMS Co-Principals Mike McKenney and Kim Lyndes, CIA Director Gary Tirone, DHS Principal Christine Boston; Horne Street Principal Mal Forsman; Garrison School Principal Dustin Gray, DALC Executive Director Deanna Strand, Special Education Director Sandie Crosson, Federal Projects Director Paula Glynn, CTC Director Jim Amara, Athletic Director Peter Wotton, City Councilors Karen Weston and Michael Weeden, Fosters and citizens of Dover.

- B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Mr. D'Andrea led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

- C. CITIZEN'S FORUM (LIMITED TO AGENDA ITEMS ONLY):** The following people addressed the Board.

Fran Meffen, 16 Benjamin Way, DMS School Counselor, Dover, spoke in support of the budget without reductions.

Michael Weeden, 365 Sixth St, Dover City Councilor, attended to obtain more information about the budget. Thanked the Board for their hard work.

D. OLD BUSINESS:

1. FY2013 Budget

Mr. Limanni discussed handouts relating to the budget and gave an overview on why they were meeting again. At the previous meeting, there had been some errors, including Career Technology Center cuts (\$60,000) which had already been made. In addition, a Cosmetology teacher had not been included in the budget proposal, even though the revenue that the position would generate had been included in the budget. Mr. Limanni continued to say that there could potentially be a major reduction in revenue due to decrease in enrollment from Barrington and Nottingham and a reduction in state building aide of \$13,000.

Ms. Briggs Badger stated that the Board has two items to discuss. The first is the revision of the budget sheet that was voted on 3/12/12. The bottom line was incorrect with the difference being \$87,014 from what was voted on to the new, revised sheet. She continued to say that they can cut this amount only or the Board can approve a budget where the amount over the tax cap amount (\$573,760) is cut. The other part of the budget discussion has to do with the loss of revenue. At the March 12 meeting, Barrington and Nottingham had not sent their enrollment numbers. There is an actual reduction of \$800,000 in tuition, instead of the estimated \$447,000. Ms. Briggs Badger continued to say that this budget is a fluid document until June. There is time to get public input on the budget. In the past, revenue has not been



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adjusted after the budget was submitted to the City since there hadn't been this kind of swing in revenue. In the past the District used to, "rob Peter to pay Paul". Now, "Peter's broke and so is Paul". She said they can longer afford to be inaccurate in predicting revenue so they will be addressing it in an open and transparent manner.

Mrs. Grady asked if Barrington was always charged \$11,000 per student. She had thought that the rate was \$10,000. Mr. Limanni stated that it was an estimate based on the budget that was given in August. They will receive a firm number when the district gets one. Mrs. Grady continued to say that Barrington and Nottingham should have told us by March 10th was their enrollment would be. Mr. Limanni responded that they have been sent to the District in the last week. Mrs. Grady commented that something should have been done earlier about reduced enrollments since it was known in March 2010 that the numbers would be reducing. She continued to ask, "What planning have we done to alleviate the problem we know have?" Mr. D'Andrea responded that this Board is making a commitment to do something about it. There has been meetings in the past few weeks and have discussed changes that could be made to increase enrollment from Barrington and Nottingham.

Mrs. Grady stated that it is no reflection on the current School Board, but something should have happened at the main office and there should have been earlier movements on the Board.

Both Mr. D'Andrea and Ms. Briggs Badger agreed that they shouldn't look back, but should look forward to find a way to make changes.

Ms. Briggs Badger stated that the last time the Board met with Barrington was 2009. At that time, Oyster River capped their number of students from Barrington at 10. After that time, they increased their cap to 200. She states that she believes the former superintendent had no knowledge of this change. In addition, Oyster River started actively recruiting students from Barrington to choose Oyster River. She provided a summary of meetings with Barrington and Nottingham and stated they are actively trying to determine how to proceed in the future.

Ms. Baker stated her option would be to find a way to make up an additional \$87,000 in reductions. She asked if eliminating a DHS guidance counselor would be an option. Ms. Boston responded that they could most likely legally eliminate one guidance counselor, but it would affect the students in a substantial way.

Ms. Andrews Parker stated that she would not be in favor of revisiting previous recommended reductions that had been voted against in earlier meetings. She recommended looking at reducing the pay for substitute teachers. She does not want to discuss fees at this time because of the complexity of the issue. She would need more time to investigate further and receive additional information.



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Mrs. Grady stated that this would need to be changed in the Board policy before a vote could be taken against the present policy.

Ms. Briggs Badger responded that the policy for substitutes could be brought to the Board at the April 9 meeting for a first reading.

Ms. Briggs Badger summarized the proposed policy:

	<u>Current</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
NH Certified Teacher Subs	95.00	80.00
Non certified subs	75.00	75.00
Paras-Class 2	11.70/hr	70.00
Long term subs	95.00-181.56	95.00

Ms. Briggs Badger also added that the number of substitutes would be limited at each school per day.

Ms. Baker stated that she likes the proposal, but doesn’t know how the schools will function with fewer subs if more teachers are absent. Ms. Briggs Badger responded that they will try to have teachers fill in and the schools will act like a community.

Dr. Butler asked what surrounding towns are paying for substitutes. Ms. Briggs Badger responded that Dover would still be competitive since area schools have similar pay scales.

With the revision of the policy and the limit of numbers, there should be a savings of approximately \$100,000.

In addition, the reduction to the 177 day calendar, should keep substitute costs lower.

The administrators are supportive of the idea and it can always be amended next year if it doesn’t work.

Mrs. Grady stated that she would have liked to have this information shared earlier since the Board needs to make the final decisions.

Ms. Briggs Badger commented that an email was sent the previous Thursday with this information.

Mrs. Grady asked about the meeting with the DTU. Ms. Briggs Badger stated that it was an informal meeting with no agenda. These meetings have occurred over the years with superintendents.

Mr. Limanni stated that he tried to communicate the information as fast as possible.



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Mrs. Grady stated that all fees on proposed reduction list would need policies written.

Ms. Andrews Parker commented that she appreciates the work that has been done to provide the list of possible reductions, but feels the Board is unable to discuss fees of any kind at this time without public information.

Betsey Andrews Parker moved, Kathy Baker seconded to change the Board policy on substitute pay in order to achieve \$100,000 in the next school year budget. This can be reflected on the budget that goes to the City Council and in the next two scheduled meetings; the policy would be up for hearings. The policy would be adopted before June with this time frame. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0.**

Ms. Andrews Parkers commented that the revenue discussion should take place prior to the next budget season, but would not be touched at this meeting. For example, any possible fees should be discussed in May, June, etc.

Ms. Briggs Badger stated that they could approve this, but the loss of revenue would not be addressed at this meeting. The City Manager confirmed to her that they had time to discuss revenue options before the final deadline.

Mrs. Grady stated she has major trouble sending the budget to the Council with \$440,000 loss of revenue that will have to be found after the fact. She doesn't feel the public understands the costs of some of these proposals.

Amanda Russell moved, Betsey Andrews Parker seconded to vote on \$46,923,286 as the bottom line number for the budget. A roll call **VOTE PASSED 5/2 (Grady, Butler opposed).**

Mrs. Grady questioned the legality of the vote, without approval of the policy. Mr. D'Andrea explained the process, stating they were voting on a bottom line only.

Dr. Appel asked if there would be an option for going to kindergarten half day and not paying a fee. Ms. Briggs Badger responded that there would be that option.

Ms. Russell reiterated her view that she is strongly opposed to half day and full day program. The students in the half day program would miss content areas. She would not support a program where 200 families bear the brunt of the budget. She added that if there were going to be a fee for the program, it should have been implemented when the program started.

Mrs. Grady asked how the district could live by the mission statement when there are so many fees to parents. There is no attention given to the needs of students. She continued to say that families will be paying an extra tax.



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Mr. D'Andrea asked Mr. Wotton to discuss the athletic fees. Mr. Wotton stated that at DHS it is \$75/student/sport with a cap on two sports. If they are on free lunch, there is no fee. If they are on reduced lunch, they pay half price. At DMS, the fees are \$40 and \$20.

Relating to creating revenue, Mrs. Grady asked that the top five items on the list be explained.

Resource fee—the school attorney stated that it is ok to charge a fee if it is for anything above and beyond what is mandated for an adequate education. Other states are doing the same thing. The fee would be \$50 per student and approximately \$123,000 could be raised.

Ms. Russell asked what elementary school students would be getting above and beyond. Ms. Briggs Badger responded that it could be for art supplies, paint, etc, agreeing that it is ludicrous and not a great idea. She and administrators are just trying to come up with ideas.

Ms. Russell asked for clarification on the transportation fee. Ms. Briggs Badger summarized the costs which would be \$100/student with a cap of \$250/family (just for transportation)

Ms. Russell asked if the fee is tax deductible. Ms. Briggs Badger and Mr. Limanni stated that they are unsure, but it is doubtful that it is deductible.

Ms. Andrews Parker added that families would lose out on flex savings plan benefits and deductions if this fee were instated.

Ms. Andrews Parker used her family as example. When they are high school students, the costs to her could be as much as \$625, which would include sports and other fees. She added that they are not state mandated to plow sidewalks, to have public libraries, dog licenses, but are mandated to educate children. The Board needs to advocate for the students and send message to the Council. She stated that she believes people are leaving Dover because of this. Other communities are paying more per student. Mr. D'Andrea added that the percentage of school shares of community budgets is typically higher than Dover's also.

Ms. Russell stated that her costs could exceed \$3,400 with a kindergarten student, 2 high school transportation and access fees for all of her children. She added that it would be approximately \$200 per student to close the gap.

Mr. Limanni commented that the budget, at a 3% increase, is not unreasonable.

Ms. Briggs Badger added that the 10-year budget average is 5.7% increase. 41% of tax dollars go to schools in Dover. 10 years ago, there were 47 communities with a lower cost per pupil, now there are 2 communities that spend less than Dover.



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Mrs. Grady stated that there was a resolution brought in by the mayor in March stating the expectation would be that the School Board would bring in a budget that is below the tax cap. She recommends that the Board go to the City Council with a tax cap budget and a list of priorities that they would like added.

Mr. D'Andrea stated that they could submit a budget with more than the tax cap and they could get it back. He feels the City Council would make decisions on what should be added back. He believes that the mayor stated that the Board should do what they have to in order to provide a budget.

Mrs. Grady asked Mr. Limanni what the affect on the tax rate would be with this budget. He responded that an estimate would be .60/1,000.

Ms. Russell attended the March 14 City Council meeting and the RSA says that the City Manager can present a budget that is appropriate for the city.

Mr. D'Andrea came in to office believing that he could achieve a tax cap budget. After receiving all the information, he is unable to do so.

Ms. Briggs Badger stated that at the March 14 City Council meeting there was language proposed that stated they had to bring in a tax cap budget. The motion failed 6/2.

Mr. Limanni commented that the tax cap is meant to keep the district frugal.

Ms. Russell clarified that the NJROTC program was approved, but doesn't provide revenue until FY14.

Ms. Russell questioned the advertising proposal. Ms. Briggs Badger responded that this would provide advertising on lockers, fields, busses, games, etc.

Mrs. Grady believes that there was another time when there was a deal with Pepsi and Coca-Cola. Mr. D'Andrea feels that this could be a slippery slope.

Ms. Briggs Badger stated that finding revenue sources is not a quick fix. There needs to be more investigation. She doesn't feel that FY14 will be much better for budgeting and could be equally challenging. The District will not have the use of impact fees next year.

Ms. Andrews Parker suggested a committee be formed to deal with "revenue generation". Ms. Briggs Badger stated that it would be placed on the April 9th School Board agenda.

Ms. Briggs Badger stated that the committees within the district included SEED and SOS should all be coordinated so that there is no overlap.



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E. SCHOOL BOARD MATTERS OF INTEREST

Mrs. Grady made the following statement:

“This evening, I would like to extend the condolences of this city and Board in the passing of John Sullivan, a past Physical Education teacher at Woodman Park. John wore many hats when he was here. He was always the crossing guard so that the children would head home safely. There are many, many young, and older people who carry in their hearts to this day, many pleasant thoughts for the many kind deeds he did for children. He really knew how to relate to young students and I hear many of them talk kindly of him today. I for one, have many thanks to him for kindness extended to a family member when in need. To most all children, he was a dad figure. Our heartfelt sympathy extended to his family in the passing of a man much too young to have left his home. John lived where his happiness lies, with old cars and motorcycles and it is a shame that the motorcycles claimed his life. The Dover School Board this evening sends condolences to the family of John Sullivan and thanks him for his many kind efforts for kids.”

F. ADJOURNMENT

Kathy Baker moved, Amanda Russell seconded to adjourn at 8:15. An oral **VOTE PASSED 7/0.**

Respectfully submitted,
Rocky D'Andrea, Chairperson
RD/ral