

**Milton School Committee  
Meeting Prior to Town Meeting  
Superintendent's Conference Room  
May 8, 2008**

**Meeting called to order at 6:10 p.m.**

**Committee Present:** Beirne Lovely, Chair, Lynda Lee Sheridan, Vice Chair, Mary Kelly, Glenn Pavlicek and Kristan Bagley-Jones

**Staff Present:** Mary Gormley, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Personnel; Paul Hilton, Assistant Superintendent for Business, John Phelan, Principal

Mr. Lovely asked Committee members to discuss their views regarding an override in an effort to reach a consensus before tonight's Town Meeting. All Committee members were in agreement that the schools need more money; however, concerns were expressed as to whether or not an override vote would pass and, if so, what impact would that have on next year when another override is requested. Members felt if the schools received an additional \$200,000 from the Town this would add some relief for upcoming school year. In speaking with community members, Ms. Bagley-Jones stated one serious concern has been the elimination of the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Science at the High School. She asked if this \$200,000 would add back that 4<sup>th</sup> year of Science. Ms. Gormley replied that if the schools were to receive \$200,000, two positions could be added back to both the High School and the Middle School. At the High School this would allow for the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Science to continue. Mr. Phelan stated adding 2 positions to the Middle School would eliminate the need for directed study periods.

Ms. Kelly feels it will be important for the School Committee to be clear with the public during the upcoming school year as to the impact the non-contingent budget is having on the school system. This should be discussed at School Committee meetings throughout the year. Ms. Sheridan suggested the School Committee have representation at PTO meetings in the upcoming year also.

The Board of Selectmen joined the meeting. Ms. Fagan stated the Selectmen have been working hard to come up with additional money for the non-contingent budget. Through corrections in retirement calculations, \$73,000 is available. They are also looking at the Reserve Fund as an option since the Warrant Committee added significant money in anticipation of unemployment costs associated with the expected lay-offs. The Warrant Committee also included extra money for the legal line items which could be another option. Giving these three options (unemployment, legal, and Reserve Fund), Ms. Fagan feels there is a good argument to go to the Warrant Committee for the additional \$200,000 for the schools. She stated the School Committee may want to take a vote on the contingent budget vs. non-contingent budget. Mr. Lovely said this was what the School Committee had been discussing and there had been a strong feeling from members that this \$200,000 is critical for their decision making. The group continued to discuss other matters including the Fire Dept. medical costs and possible revenues next year. Both Committees agreed to join the Warrant Committee tonight at their meeting to discuss the above options.

Prior to joining the Warrant Committee, the following motion was made:

Motion was made for the School Committee to support a non-contingent budget to the extent we receive an additional \$200,000.

Move: G. Pavlicek

Second: M. Kelly

Vote: 5-0-0

### **Meeting between the Warrant Committee, Board of Selectmen, and School Committee**

Ms. Fagan reviewed what had been previously discussed with the School Committee regarding the areas where the Selectmen felt additional funds could be found in an effort to raise \$200,000 for the schools.

- \$73,000 in recalculation of retirements
- Reserve Fund - the money added by the Warrant Committee for anticipated lay-offs included two positions that are actually retirements
- Legal service line item

As a result of their research, the Selectmen feel these options could afford the schools an additional \$200,000. Ms. Fagan went on to explain these additional funds would add back the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Science at the High School and allow the School Department to direct more attention to the corrective action status at the Middle School.

Ms. Conlon, Chair of the Warrant Committee, discussed the status of the Reserve Fund. Several other members also expressed their concern with the use of Reserve Fund monies. Town Administrator, Kevin Mearns, feels there may be other legislative options with regard to the Fire Dept. health care line (Firefighter Pickens). Ms. Conlon is waiting to hear back from Senator Brian Joyce regarding recent legislation. Ms. Fagan feels the Home Rule Petition could be another option. If the Warrant Committee supports going for a Home Rule Petition, it would have to be done at a special Town Meeting in the fall. Mr. Shields agreed it would be in everyone's best interest to show a united front in trying to get some additional money from the Fire Dept. health care line (Firefighter Pickens) rather than a Reserve Fund transfer.

This meeting ended at 7:25 so all Committees could attend Town Meeting.

Motion was made to temporarily adjourn the School Committee meeting to attend Town Meeting.