

**IPSWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUDGET MEETING
FEBRUARY 12, 2009
MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL ENSEMBLE ROOM**

CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Arsenault called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. with the following members present: E. Traverso, H. O’Flynn, N. Sheppard, B. Hopping, J. Loeb, and D. Ross. Also present were Matt Roberts, Student Representative; Superintendent Richard Korb; and Principals S. McAdams, K. Cooper, C. Forster-Cahill, and B. Cahill.

CITIZENS’ QUESTIONS

RULE OF NECESSITY

Mrs. Ross moved, seconded by Mr. Traverso, to invoke the Rule of Necessity so that five members of the School Committee would not be disqualified to discuss matters pertaining to collective bargaining. UNANIMOUS.

I. MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL FY10 BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

A. MIDDLE SCHOOL BUDGET

Mrs. Forster-Cahill, Principal, began by comparing her ’08, ’09, and ’10 budgets, showing a negative 2.14% in FY10. Her budget shows a decrease of 2 Spanish teachers (the whole Spanish program), 1 teaching assistant, a library assistant, a .3 adjustment counselor, and the School Resource Officer, shared with the High School. She showed enrollment figures of around 515 and program changes necessitated by the loss of world language, larger classes in specialist areas, and a new schedule to be created. Also gone are after-school and summer activities, professional development, and technology as well as a custodian. She revealed the “plus” areas: intramural activities, high standing in MCAS, and Trends in International Math and Science Study (TIMMS). Board members discussed the consequences of losing Spanish at the Middle School level, substitute teacher physical and monetary numbers, need for custodial services nights and weekends, and the possible loss of a library assistant with a Master’s Degree in library studies. Dr. O’Flynn, once again, commented that Choice makes Ipswich schools better and brings in a tremendous amount of money to save positions.

Mr. Korb spoke about his need to let the Committee and the community know how long and hard the administration has worked on these proposed reductions. He and the administrators respect the feedback and input from the School Committee, but the reality is that school buildings have to run without these things to lessen the impact on students. While financial people in the private sector will be getting billions in bailouts, he said, Ipswich will lose almost 20 full-time equivalent staff in this budget. Mr. Loeb commented that the School Committee, in time, has to make the budget theirs and be able to stand behind it when they meet with the Finance Committee. Mr. Hopping felt frustrated, having asked the same questions every year. Referring to SPED he asked, “Their clerical support is up to \$38,000 which is almost the salary of a teacher—why?”

Dr. O’Flynn commented that he thinks the principals have presented well-crafted budgets and questions will come about the SRO, custodial help, and the second Middle School administrative person when presentations are made to the Finance Committee. Mrs. Forster-Cahill defended her need for an assistant principal. Mr. Hopping asked the question of the Committee: “Do you want an educational leader or a building manager?” Categories discussed involved the stipends/athletics revolving account, a possible participation fee for Middle School drama, and a need to rethink overnight trips (chaperones). Mr. Traverso moved, seconded by Mr. Hopping, to take the Middle School FY10 budget under advisement. UNANIMOUS.

Building Operations of the High/Middle School

Mr. Cahill, Principal, began his budget presentation with the Building Operations aspect of the High/Middle School. The \$67,869 reduction from the ’09 budget is because of the custodial reduction. He suggested having a later discussion on the community use of the facility with a fee structure or how personnel is used during the week. Mr. Loeb advised discussing it in Policy Subcommittee for some kind of decision before Town Meeting.

B. HIGH SCHOOL BUDGET

Mr. Cahill presented the High School overview with losses of 1 FTE from English/Social Studies, 1 FTE technology, .58 Library Assistant and increase of 1.25 FTE SPED moving up from the Middle School. He expects that enrollment will be at a maximum through 2011 and reviewed increases/decreases by category throughout the curriculum and related areas. A reduction of \$100,000 will come in athletics, but fees, gifts and gate receipts can be expected to keep the program going for FY10.

He mentioned the 53 functioning desktop computers in 28 academic classrooms with 36 laptops in 3 carts which will result in 15 – 20% failure over the next year, all of which cause a step back in technological learning. Professional Development will also not move forward. The Board and Mr. Cahill discussed philosophical changes due to Choice (maxed out now at 74), no technology courses, and the need to pick up the foreign language which will have been eliminated at the Middle School. Mrs. Ross moved, seconded by Mr. Sheppard, to take the High School FY10 budget under advisement. UNANIMOUS.

II. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hopping moved, seconded by Mrs. Ross, to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 p.m. UNANIMOUS.