

Chairman Reil, Schofield and Burke and Town Administrator Newman are in attendance at the Town Hall, Mendon.

Chairman Reil opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. and led the pledge.

Selectman Schofield explained the approach to discussing the school recertification request within 45 days through a Town meeting. There are two approaches: raise more revenue or make more cuts. Sixteen percent of the Town's operating budget would have to be cut.

Selectman Schofield presented a beginning point to start discussion which included a five-article approach. First would be similar to Article Two on prior warrants which requires the budget to be balanced. Second would be to transfer \$1.2 million from Town departments to the school district. This would allow residents to make amendments to that motion. If that is defeated, Article three would be same as Article 14 on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant contingent on a Proposition 2 1/2 override. Article Four would ask if the voters want to restore Town reductions. Article Five would ask if the Community Preservation Act (CPA) should be rescinded. This would equate to 30 percent of that override.

Anne Mazar presented six reasons to not have rescinding of the CPA on the Town Meeting Warrant.

Mr. Rudden, resident, commented that Town departments have nothing to do with this issue. His personal opinion is that it was arrogant to certify the same amount after Mendon voters voted it down. He feels it would be a louder no if put on a warrant and ballot.

Selectman Burke said the school department would have the option of recertifying a lower budget or have a joint Town meeting if another Mendon override fails. Mendon would have to decide how to fund that budget.

Mr. Rudden threatened a lawsuit if anyone dies because the Town has to reduce Public Safety. Selectman Schofield said that Mr. Rudden gave him the idea to present both the cuts and a second override and let the people decide. Mr. Rudden disagreed. Selectman Schofield said he was asking for procedural guidance.

Selectman Burke clarified that at this point the Town is not forced to make any cuts.

Mr. Shaheen, resident, said the School cannot ransack Town departments for their budget.

Mr. Byer said we do not have to do another Town Meeting vote per the State.

Selectman Schofield does not want to see any cuts made to the Town budgets. He wants the budget to be sustainable for five years.

Chairman Reil said he would like residents to know what potentially would be cut--complete defunding of Library, COA, Parks & Recreation, Engineering Consulting, Emergency Management, Historical Commission, Memorial Day Expenses, elimination of Selectmen's stipends, small reduction in the reserve for salary negotiations, transition to call Fire Department, change of the Public Safety Director to Police Chief, do not fill vacancies in Police Department, change building inspector from part-time to

per-permit payment plan, layoff of one Highway Department laborer and reduce by half of all Town street lights.

Chief Horn approached the Board saying he voted for the override. He recommends putting the vote back on the ballot and informing residents of ramifications. He doesn't think a joint Town Meeting is bad as it opens up discussion. He feels the process should be followed and simplified.

Kathleen Nicholson, Metcalf Road resident, agreed with Chief Horn and feels it is a Town issue. She recommends having a ballot vote as soon as possible.

Selectman Schofield said there will be a ballot vote June 30.

Mr. Goddard, resident, asked the for the board's position. Selectman Burke said the Town has worked to restore the school budget and Town budgets. He said if this goes to a joint Town Meeting, it will decimate the Town. He said we have to respect the voters' voice. Selectman Burke said he supports the override.

Mr. De Zutter, Upton School Committee Member, explained that we are at a crossroad and need to collectively make a decision. The School Committee is not looking to decimate the school or the Town and appreciates the collaboration.

Mr. Shaheen, resident, said he recollects that the school can recertify the budget for anything they want. He hasn't heard what the schools can cut, only what the Town can.

Mrs. Lowell, resident, said she voted for the override but doesn't have children in the system. Not funding an override is short sighted.

Mr. Jay Byer mentioned five years ago the school and Town had cutbacks. He said 30 full-time employees and programming would be cut (this year). The parents are requesting funding.

Diane Duncan, School Committee member, said the school district is in the bottom 28 percent of schools for funding in the State. Schools need to be funded to produce quality students. The School is another Town department.

Selectman Schofield said discussion should be about process not validity of funding. He added that he voted for the override, would vote again for it and admits he has financial stability to support overrides. He has worked hard with the Financial Committee and has personal pride in what has been built back up.

Selectman Reil said he voted against the override and wasn't pleased that the School Committee certified the same number. If they had voted a level-service budget, he would have supported that.

Selectman Burke recommends a ballot vote right away, see the results and have the School Committee vote again. Chairman Reil agrees.

Mr. Goddard asked if the Board considered a smaller override amount. Selectman Schofield replied that would delay the process. They would need another a Town Meeting for a lower amount. Mr. Byer said the process is that you need to act on the amount certified. If not, you're rejecting that amount.

Mr. Scharnagle, resident, said there are a lot of people who are against it. We need to keep it simple the second time.


Selectman Burke said if the override doesn't pass again this time, funds will still be needed in two years to fund the school budget.

Mr. Merolli, Finance Committee Chairman, did research and due diligence. He said that the target share and the fact that we are in the bottom 25 percent in the State for school funding, we don't have a choice. We are going to have a problem in the future because the State will be funding less if we don't fund the override.

Selectman Schofield made and Selectman Burke seconded a motion to call a special election on June 30th, 2015 for the purpose of a ballot vote for a Proposition 2 ½ override to fund the regional school district in the amount of \$1,133,827. The motion carried unanimously.

Selectman Schofield made and Selectman Burke seconded motion to adjourn at 8:03 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane Willoughby
Administrative Assistant

Documents Discussed located in 'Administrative Secretary's' Office:
Town of Mendon Starting Point for School Budget Discussion