

# May 1, 2012

Chairman Michal Jackson called the meeting to order at 5 p.m.

**Present:** Board: Michael Jackson (Chair), Jack Boyer, Barbara Brown, Gary Fitzherbert, Rex Swain, Craig Schoon,  
Alternate: Ted Bent  
Selectmen: Mark Lyon, Tony Bedini, Richard Carey  
Treasurer: Linda McGarr  
Building & Property Committee: Nicholas Solley

## **Budget Forecast:**

### Education:

The Board discussed the proposed Education budget. Michael suggested it would be in the best interest of all three towns to share their concerns regarding future plans and education expenditures, especially with respect to the primary schools. While he recognized there would be various outlooks on the future of the primary schools, he felt it would be a useful discussion and would be used as a planning tool for the future. It was noted the Board of Ed has not recently discussed the declining population or the merging of schools.

It was agreed Michael Jackson and Mark Lyon would talk with the other towns and the Region regarding the future of the schools, including the probable decline in the population. It was suggested each town voice their concerns to the new Superintendent, who has agreed to be available. Michael noted this year's Education proposal holds the expenditures constant. With these particular assumptions, he felt a modest tax increase could be held. Tony Bedini reported the Board of Education has received bids for an assessment of the high school, which will take 2-3 months. The assessment will include moving the septic fields to the upper fields, add a pumping stations, plus code work, etc., which most likely will prove very costly. Michael voiced his concern that all projects concerning the future of the school buildings be fully discussed prior to putting significant amounts of money into these projects. Decisions must be made in order to plan for the future. We are at a point where the Region's demographics need to be addressed and difficult decisions made. It is difficult to maintain a school district where the population has declined over 50% over the past five years. We need a vote. The Board will participate in coming to a resolution.

### Town:

Mark Lyon reported the Town's budget assumptions are proposed at an overall 3.27% increase, which includes general expenses, capital expenses and education expenses.

The need for more significant work on the roads was discussed. It will cost the Town more money each year that road projects are delayed. The pros and cons of whether to bond or assess funds for road repairs were discussed. Following discussion, Rex Swain suggested this important issue be addressed now rather than waiting for a decision regarding the school district's level of taxation.

It was suggested a special fund for road replacement be established in the amount of \$600,000 for

consideration on the town meeting agenda for this purpose only. It was agreed borrowing did not make sense in the long run and this proposal would require approximately ½ mil increase for the 2012-2013 budget, as well as for years following.

It was agreed to add this additional issue to the town meeting agenda with the proposal that it become an additional item annually for future budgets if approved at the forthcoming meeting. The plan would be to continue over a 20-year period at ½ mil/year. It would not require an annual vote, but would be a five-year vote and would be reviewed after five years. The agenda for the town meeting will be modified.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathy Gollow, Finance Secretary