

Town of Raymond
401 Webbs Mills Road
Raymond, Maine 04071
207.655.4742

Selectmen Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 8, 2004
Continued from April 6, 2004

ATTENDANCE: Ada Brown, Chairman; Betty McDermott; Christine McClellan; Charles Leavitt; Dana Desjardins (6:06 pm), and Don Willard, Town Manager.

1. Call to order. Ada Brown called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm at the Town Office.
2. Review and Recommendation of Warrant for Annual Town Meeting.

MOTION: Ada Brown motioned to approve the warrant. Seconded by Christine McClellan.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Leavitt asked if they did not want to discuss the warrant article by article. Mrs. McDermott said that they had already been through the town budget. Mr. Leavitt asked about Articles 39 through 59. Mrs. Brown asked if he meant the school budget. Mr. Leavitt replied yes mostly. He added that the commitment will have a mil rate of \$\$.72 with just Articles 39 through 59, and he would like to continue the policy from last year that the Selectmen give their recommendation on the school budget. Mr. Willard verified that the school budget would be 72-75% of the budget. Mr. Leavitt felt that his responsibility was to understand the impact of the commitment. Mr. Willard noted that the school budget would be 74% of the total budget. Mr. Leavitt indicated that the estimated mil rate increase would be \$1.14 and primarily reflected a 7.7% operational school budget of \$531,897. The local share will be 6.9%. He asked that if they couldn't vote on this part of the budget than he would like to table it until they can. He said the question of the \$375,000 which the auditor says should be covered for school summer salaries and the \$170,000 school surplus needs to be discussed with the School Committee. He continued that this was a very complex relationship to the total budget and the warrant articles. Mrs. McDermott asked if the School Committee was invited to this meeting and did Mr. Leavitt attend very School Committee budget meeting to be able to discuss effectively these issues. She felt that the School Committee would effectively answer any questions at the town meeting as they always do. Mr. Leavitt added that he found that there was no direct correlation between the school budget and their warrant articles. He felt that it was very difficult to follow unlike the town budget and articles, which is very straightforward. Mrs. McDermott said that the elected School Committee should be allowed to recommend their budget and didn't feel the Selectmen should make a recommendation. Mrs. Brown noted that our form of government didn't intend for the Selectmen to have the right to tinker with

the school budget. Mr. Desjardins said that last year the town wanted more careful spending. He had faith in the school but took issue with their decision not to use some of their surplus this year to offset their budget. Mrs. McDermott indicated that they want to retain that money to be used for unforeseen expenses which couldn't be handled in any other way i.e. unexpected special education expenses and/or high school tuitions. Mrs. McDermott didn't feel that the Selectmen had the right to recommend the school budget without having a total understanding of their position. Mrs. McClellan felt that the School Committee does their job; however, she had a problem with the total budget percentages between the town and the school being so unbalanced. She wanted to see adjustments made to make it more equitable. Mr. Willard reminded them that through a study last year it was found that the Selectmen could recommend cuts to the school budget. Mrs. Brown noted that in most towns the school budget is more than the town's. Mr. Willard replied that not all towns have this scenario but that usually the difference is 40% to 60%. He added that Raymond is consistent with Cape Elizabeth in its ratio. He also said that he had informed the Superintendent that this meeting was being called. Leonard Adams felt that some of the line items of the school budget were "out of line", but that the town budget seemed to be acceptable. He said that if the Selectmen approve the school budget as it stands, he would be posting notices around Raymond that the school budget should be denied. He didn't want to threaten anyone but felt that the decision of the School Committee not to use any of their surplus to help the taxpayer was a mistake. He also wanted to be able to vote each line item in their budget and not by the warrant articles as they now appear. He also took issue with the school budget not showing what had been spent to date as the town budget does which would allow the public to see whether the school management is being done well. Mr. Leavitt noted that the beginning school budget would have demanded a mil rate of \$1.51 and with School Committee cuts; it's now \$1.14, which shows progress. He felt that volunteerism and personal donations for things like school trips and most recently the special edition of the Roadrunner had supplemented the cuts this year. There was further discussion about line items versus the warrant articles. Mr. Leavitt indicated that if \$100,000 of the school surplus was used it would bring the mil rate under \$1.00. If they reduced the budget by \$50,000 it would reduce the mil rate to about \$1.00. Mr. Willard reminded them that the \$1.14 mil rate was an estimate for the worst-case scenario and hopefully it will be even better at commitment time. Mr. Leavitt asked that they take the articles individually and make their recommendations. Mr. Adams noted that the only change in the school budget from February 11, 2004 to today was the \$60,000 which they found.

MOTION WITHDRAWN: Mrs. McDermott withdrew her motion.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Leavitt requested that they reduce Article 44 for the school contingency to \$15,000 because they still have reserve in the school surplus. In addition, Article 45, which is the Regular Elementary Instruction K-8, should be reduced by \$35,000. He felt they could once again depend on volunteerism and donations for the extras in this budget item. With these cuts, he said it would bring the mil rate to \$1.00.

MOTION: Ada Brown motioned to have no recommendation on the school budget.
Seconded by Betty McDermott.

VOTE: 2 for (Brown, McDermott) 3 opposed (Leavitt, Desjardins, McClellan)

MOTION: Charles Leavitt motioned to recommend Articles 39 through 43. Seconded by Dana Desjardins.

VOTE: 3 in favor (Leavitt, Desjardins, McClellan) 2 opposed (Brown, McDermott)

MOTION: Charles Leavitt motioned that Article 44 be recommended at the amount of \$15,000. Seconded by Christine McClellan.

VOTE: 3 in favor (Leavitt, Desjardins, McClellan) 2 opposed (Brown, McDermott)

MOTION: Christine McClellan motioned that Article 45 be recommended at the amount of \$2,329,718. Seconded by Dana Desjardins.

VOTE: 3 in favor (Leavitt, Desjardins, McClellan) 2 opposed (Brown, McDermott)

MOTION: Charles Leavitt motioned to recommend Articles 46 through 53 as written.
Seconded by Christine McClellan.

VOTE: Unanimous.

NOTE: For Articles 54 through 57 the Superintendent's office would have to supply the amounts needed to reflect the Selectmen changes to the School Budget.

MOTION: Charles Leavitt motioned to allow the School Finance Office to make the necessary calculations and to recommend Articles 54 through 57 at those values. Seconded by Christine McClellan.

VOTE: 3 in favor (Leavitt, Desjardins, McClellan) 2 opposed (Brown, McDermott)

DISCUSSION: Mr. Leavitt noted that as Article 58 allows the School Committee to distribute money within budget programs, he felt that possibly in the future there should be a cap as to how much could be transferred. He said that in the past he has always been given information freely from the school business office about these transfers but that last year a transfer of over \$100,000 was made. He said that the town has the same article for the same authority but felt that there should be some limit given.

MOTION: Charles Leavitt motioned to recommend Article 58 as written. Seconded by Christine McClellan.

VOTE: Unanimous.

MOTION: Charles Leavitt motioned to recommend Article 59 as written. Seconded by Christine McClellan.

VOTE: Unanimous.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Adams thanked Mr. Willard and Mrs. Lester for all their help and their work on the budget and warrant and thanked Mrs. Brown for her leadership at their

meeting on April 6, 2004 concerning Raymond Pond.

3. Communications and other business.

a. Rescue boat.

Mr. Willard reported that the 19' rescue boat was back from Sabre Yachts and looked brand new. He thanked them for their volunteerism and to Jack Cooper who will be maintaining the outboard motor. He said that the boat will be lettered and a newspaper story is expected when it is finished.

b. Letter to Raymond Pond owners.

Mrs. McClellan explained that she wanted to respond to all the people who had written to her concerning the Raymond Pond IF&W boat access. She read her letter, which will be sent to those people who wrote to her. (Attachment A) Mr. Desjardins said that he would be volunteering his time to help man the site most especially to prevent milfoil from gaining access to the pond. Mr. Adams also said that he would be volunteering. Mr. Willard said that the final Land for Maine's Future Board hearing would be April 13th at the Maine State Arboretum. Mrs. Brown said that she had received a call from the Commissioner Dan Martin with thanks for their endorsement. Mr. Willard said that Bob Williams asked him for the names and addresses of the Knapp Road abutters so that he could contact them. The IF&W are fully aware of their concerns and feel that a Raymond Citizens Committee might be formed to help with communication. Ernest Allen said that he was not against public access but that they must be watchful that milfoil doesn't get into Raymond Pond. He asked that the IF&W give more than "lip service" to the problem.

c. Land prohibited from hunting.

Mr. Adams noted that landowners often prohibit the public from hunting on their land because of the abuse by the public such as leaving litter behind them. He expressed that everyone who uses anyone's property should be held responsible for his or her actions.

d. School Budget meeting.

Mr. Leavitt announced that the Raymond PTA would be hosting a meeting at the Raymond Elementary School library April 13, 2004 at 6:30 pm to discuss/explain the budget. Anyone is invited to attend.

4. Adjourn.

MOTION: Dana Desjardins motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Charles Leavitt.

VOTE: Unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT: Ada Brown adjourned the meeting at 7:08 pm.

Louise H. Lester
Town Clerk