

**HADLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS  
February 13, 2012**

**6:30 PM Special Meeting**

**Hopkins Academy Music Room**

**PRESENT:** Chair: Ms. Robie Grant, Vice Chair, Mr. James Michalak. Members Present: Mr. Thomas Waskiewicz, Ms. Linda Dunlavy and Ms. Molly Keegan. Student Representatives: None.  
Also present: Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Nicholas Young,  
Carol Trane, Administrative Assistant, Chris Garand of TV5  
Others Present: Christine Pipczynski, Terri Earle and Humera Fasihuddin.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chair, Ms. Robie Grant called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS – NONE**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Grant announced that at the February 27, 2012, Regular Meeting, the School Committee will have an academic presentation on Hadley's Special Education Program.

**FY'13 SCHOOL DEPARTMENT BUDGET**

Dr. Young offered an update on the Hopkins Roof Replacement Project, noting that it relates to the budget figures. Members received a breakdown sheet with estimate comparisons. The latest replacement figures have increased, but Dr. Young said he hopes these figures will go down once the project goes out to bid and the cost per square foot is more in line with other similar bids in the area. The MSBA process had Hadley selecting for a pre-selected list of project managers and architects who are more geared to projects at the other end of the state and used much high planning factors. As an example, the cost per sq. ft. of a roof in this area is \$18.00 on the high side, but Blackstone Valley just came at \$15.00 per sq. ft. Our architect planned for \$24 and some change per sq. ft. Since these are just estimates, Hadley hopes to see lower bid prices.

However, Dr. Young did report on a new development, with a price tag of \$93,800. This relates to having a raised roof with brick siding and an inside wall with a throughway plastic flashing that's in between those two walls. The architect had several sections cut, had the bricks removed to see if the flashing behind it were deteriorated. Right now there are no leaks and the question remains is this part of the roofing project. Dr. Young reported that he had a conversation with MSBA and they have offered to look at the documents and decide if it's possible to expand the roof project to include flashings or can Hadley apply for separate funding for flashings? He has asked the architect to complete the bid specs and make the flashings an alternate. This will keep the project moving forward. Dr. Young also noted there were other ways to address the flashing project and has asked the architect to get prices.

Dr. Young addressed the budget that was forwarded to the town as perhaps the ceiling and would now attempt to present the floor.

The starting point in this level services budget has no COLAs, no new positions other than a couple of minor adjustments, one being a sped paraprofessional and an athletic trainer, for FY13 is \$6,439,501. No "add-on" positions have been factored into this figure.

If the town could contribute \$5.7 M, the school would be looking at a difference of \$739,000. The pre-purchase money of \$144,500 has been accounted for in reducing the FY13 Budget.

The assumption of using grants in the \$316,000 range in terms of what impacts the actual budget, the negative balance is now at \$400,000 and would come out of school choice. Reminding the Committee that somewhere between \$60,000 to \$212,000 has been earmarked from Choice Funds to apply to the roof project; again adding, the cost of the roof project could come in less.

For budget considerations, Dr. Young referred members to his memo of 2/13/12, focusing attention on the need for a World Language teacher, either fulltime or part-time. Are any other new

positions essential in this fiscal environment and lastly, should COLA's be included in this version of the budget or should future negotiated raises come out of the school choice account or from a direct request from the Town.

Ms. Keegan asked how the Committee should explain the increase from of \$300,000 plus from FY12 to FY13. Dr. Young listed a number of factors: increase in vocational costs, some increases in special ed costs, a significant reduction in AARA funding. While Hadley raises over \$500,000 in grants, we only talk about using \$316,000 related to the budget because there are a number of situations where grants are required to be spent for specific programs, like preschool and nurse leader that are positive for the district and for students, but don't have a direct impact on the operating budget.

Prior COLA's that were given become carryover costs. At the same time the local budget has not kept pace over the last few years. The fiscal challenge is more costs to maintain level services that have been going up at a cost that has exceeded the amount of money that has been received from the town. The Committee dealt with that by going into School Choice funds and relying heavily on grants over about a three-year period. There is now a pent-up financial need at a time when we have more students and vocational costs do stand out. There are influx changes this year, like the after school program, the new website, field development, the need for long-term subs in first grade, the need for a long-term sub in second grade, to name a few, all of which are listed on page 13 of the draft FY13 budget.

There are items that had been previously discussed that are not included in the budget. They are: no colas, reverse 911 at approx. \$6 a student, maintenance is not sufficiently funded, no after school program at Hopkins, no additional paraprofessionals, except the sped aide that was required and added this year.

Dr. Young also noted the Committee had a running list of wishes that includes an Elem. Media Specialist, Secondary World Language Teacher, additional 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher, General Ed Para, .5 Math Remedial Teacher and .5 Math Coordinator.

Ms. Keegan focused her discussion on increase costs for vocational school and special ed as the only variables from year to year, suggesting that these areas could perhaps be negotiated if they should decrease. She suggested that the Committee should be asking for more money because she said she was very uncomfortable with the things that are not in the budget and doesn't believe we are doing enough to advance the Hadley schools. If sped costs came in lower and if there's a decrease in the number of students attending Smith Voke, then there could possibly be an agreement to say if the school is funded up front and costs go down the school will give it back to the town. Dr. Young agreed that these could potentially be large enough variances to warrant further discussion, adding you're not out anything by having that agreement.

Members did rough calculations on the balance in the Choice account, deducting obligations of vacation liability, the roofing project, the FY12 budget deficit, leaving a balance of approx. \$550,000 (worse case) to \$600-700,000 if the roof project comes in lower.

Ms. Keegan said if the Committee agrees on what they need to spend, and agree that the grant monies are effectively fixed and somewhat at risk, then there is only the town and the choice money, the Committee needs to ask the town for more funding, not wanting to spend the choice account down to nothing to cover operating costs.

Dr. Young ran the numbers for the Committee again. Assuming there is another school choice payment of \$270,000, bringing the account to \$1,558,828, with \$750,000 in expenditures, bringing it to \$808,828. The roof repair must come out of that balance. Mr. Waskiewicz shared with the members the intent of the Committee when Choice was first voted in was never to use the money for operating costs and feels we are now headed down a slippery slope.

Members agreed to ask the town for more funding, with Ms. Dunlavy offering a figure of \$5.8 million. Ms. Keegan suggested sharing with the Selectmen and Finance Committee the list of positions under consideration that are not yet in the budget, but the decision on what to fund will be up to the School Committee.

Dr. Young said as each week and month passes leading up to town meeting the Committee will have more information. We will know how many students get accepted to the vocational school; there could be some sped changes for the better or for the worse.

Members discussed asking for \$5.7, agreeing this will be tight. Ms. Keegan said she had previously discussed a sped stabilization account if there are any sped funds remaining at the end of the year. This will require more investigation into how to carryover funds in a specific identified stabilization account under the school's control.

Ms. Dunlavy felt strongly that we should be investing in our schools, adding, it's a very important year with Amherst opening Choice slots in their elementary school. Dr. Young also noted that Virtual Schooling is about to open up a whole new set of concerns for keeping students.

Ms. Dunlavy again proposed asking the town for \$5.8 million; however, the members all agreed the schools need more and will convey that message when they meet with the Selectmen on Wednesday.

**OTHER**

Ms. Keegan reported that WMECO has a fair amount of grant money available and Hopkins may qualify for new lighting the gymnasium. The person to contact is Barry Higgins of Collins Electric.

**NEXT MEETING**

February 27, 2012, 6:30PM.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION: (Waskiewicz/Keegan) move to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 PM. VOTE: Unanimous.**