

Approved by the Rye School Board at its January 20, 2010 meeting.

**RYE SCHOOL DISTRICT
RYE, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

The meeting of the School Board of the Rye School District to set the 2010-11 school district budget was held at the Rye Town Safety Building on November 19, 2009 at 8:00 a.m.

PRESENT:

School Board Members: Ian Grant, Peggy Balboni, Michael Schwartz, and
Jeanne Moynahan, Betty Anderson

Administrators: Dr. George A. Cushing, Superintendent
James Katkin, Business Administrator
Mary Lyons, Director of Pupil Services
Chris Pollet, Principal, Rye Junior High
Patricia-Lane Richardson, Principal, Rye Elementary

Visitors: Kathy MacAlpine

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Grant called the meeting to order at 8:07 a.m.

Mr. Grant turned the meeting over to Jim Katkin to present the 2010-2011 Rye School District Budget.

Mr. Pollet took a moment to recognize Ms. Sheila Adams as the recipient of the 2009 Susan Janosz Technology Impact Award from the New Hampshire Affiliate of the International Society of Technology in Education. The award is presented to a teacher who incorporates new technology in the classroom. Ms. Adams will receive the award at the Christa McAuliffe Technology Conference on December 2nd.

Mr. Grant also complimented the achievement as did all board members.

Mr. Katkin then spoke to the 2010-2011 Rye School District Budget. He noted the revised budget reflect changes received late Tuesday from Portsmouth High School indicating an additional seven or eight Rye students attending PHS that were not on a previous report from the high school. This change reflects an additional \$100,000 - \$110,000 in tuition.

Mr. Katkin said the budget, with negotiation costs factored in, will be at true zero or slightly below.

Mr. Katkin then provided the following overview:

Table of Contents was followed by 5 – 6 questions from Rye School Board members relating to the budget.

Section 1 – Shows enrollment trends. For 2010-2011 we budgeted for 181.5 students to attend PHS. There are currently 67 students in 8th grade and 13 of them are from New Castle. We estimate 13 students will attend private high school.

In 2011-2012 PHS projected tuition drops (small incoming 9th grade class and a small 12th grade class). There is a related projected \$300,000 swing in the budget. There has been a good budget last year, this year, and next year. In 2011-2012 is when we have an anticipated drop in enrollments.

Enrollment at RES is projected in the 315 – 330 range, and at RJH the estimate is 190-210 students.

Ms. Anderson confirmed that for the 2010-2011 year there were 57 Rye students expected to attend PHS.

Mr. Schwartz asked if the Board could do a warrant article for use of reserve funds for PHS tuition costs. Mr. Katkin said that could be done.

Section 2A – This section looks at the budget in general. The bottom line is a 4.3% average increase in budget over the last five years. There was only one year in the last ten years when there was a double-digit increase.

Section 2B – Details the per pupil cost as projected on the state’s DOE-25 form.

Section 2C – Tax rate analysis; \$0.61 of every dollar goes to the schools

Section 2D – Comparison of tax rates

Section 3A - \$11,785,902 proposed district-wide expenses. Health insurance and retirement are major factors for the increase.

Section 3B – Per the Board’s request there are three budgets presented: a 0% budget, a 1% budget with Building Administrators’ requests incorporated, and a 2% budget with Building Administrators’ request incorporated as well as additional items from “wish list”.

Section 3C – The 0% budget presented creates a \$.07 decrease in the tax rate. The District assessment is \$125,000 less than what is there. The budget could go up .6 or .7% without affecting the tax rate.

Mr. Grant asked for an explanation regarding the change to the unreserved fund balance from the original budget to the revised budget. Mr. Katkin said the additional monies were used for the additional PHS students mentioned earlier.

Mr. Grant asked if there would be adjustments to 2010-2011 expenses as a result of the energy savings program. Mr. Katkin felt there could be an additional \$25,000 in savings.

Section 4A – Provides an overview of salaries. This line is down \$91,000 largely due to money saved hiring a replacement for a retiring teacher and guidance counselor.

Mr. Grant asked how comfortable we are with the estimated salary line. Mr. Katkin responded that the Step 10 masters with a family health plan is actually over-projected.

Section 4C – Para-educator position from the 2009-2010 year is not included for next year.

All teachers and the two building administrators are projected at 0% salary increase.

Section 4D – Shows an additional teacher, increase in the guidance counselor position from 80% to 100%, and a decrease in the assessment coordinator position from 40% to 20%.

The bottom of page four shows the RJH teacher sabbatical which is included in the 1% budget. The budget reflects a step 10 with masters and a family health insurance plan for the temporary replacement during the sabbatical. The teacher on sabbatical would receive half of her annual salary and no voluntary benefits.

Mr. Schwartz asked for explanation of the \$50,000 set aside for negotiations. Mr. Katkin said that is so we can come in at 0%: There is \$10,000 for professional development, salary increases, and 9% increase in NH retirement.

Mr. Grant said the concept is that in an out-of-contract year increases in salary should be added to the budget.

The bottom of page 4 and top of page 5 show top four additional requests at the schools.

- New and existing co-curricular positions (increase new positions, eliminate old positions, restore co-curricular positions to 2008-2009)
- Four (4) hours/day part time custodian
- Ten (10) hours/year to nine (9) paraprofessionals and secretaries to attend staff meetings
- Two (2) additional days for school secretary

Mr. Schwartz asked why co-curricular positions were increased. Ms. Richardson said it is a relatively small amount of money and shows we value them. Mr. Schwartz asked if there has been any difficulty getting people with the current co-curricular stipends. Ms. Richardson said Destination Imagination is the only area where they had difficulties getting help.

Ms. Anderson asked about the athletic director position. Mr. Pollet had asked Mr. Fortier to create a job description for the position. Last year Mr. Fortier logged about 273 hours as athletic director and Mr. Pollet based the stipend for this position on \$17/hr. Compared to area athletic directors (Hampton, North Hampton, Exeter) Rye's athletic director does more facility work. Ms. Anderson suggested we could get the facility work done for less than \$17/hr.

Section 4F-5 Special education is up \$27,000 which is a very slight increase. Mr. Schwartz noted we have not budgeted anything for pre-school. Mrs. Lyons acknowledged this is unusual

but in fact there are no pre-school students on the radar. It is possible to have one or two but we don't have any costs to project because we are not aware of any students at this time.

Mr. Schwartz noted this is another good reason to have an unreserved fund balance available for tuition. Mrs. Lyons indicated there is a special education unanticipated cost fund for this reason.

Section 7B – This section provides a historical view of the high school tuition account and includes the projected 181.5 enrollment at PHS for 2010-2011. Mr. Katkin noted there are a lot of students that are joint custody and the .5 comes from splitting a student's tuition between two districts.

Section 8A – Shows the state mandated warrant article.

Section 8C – This 31-page details the budget based on 0%. Health insurance (guaranteed 17.6% increase) and NH retirement system (up \$50,000) are driving increase.

Mr. Grant suggested the Board review Section 8C (0% budget) and ask questions. He stated it is his personal belief that our 0% budget when compared to last year's budget that included the library renovation and energy cost project is arguably really a 3-4% increase.

Board review of Section 8C – Rye Elementary School

Page 1

Ms. Anderson confirmed with Mr. Katkin that the substitute for the requested sabbatical is not included in the 0% budget.

Mr. Grant asked about the artist-in-residence. He noted the cost of \$15,800 is split evenly between the elementary and junior high and asked how that works based on school populations being different between the two schools.

Mr. Pollet said he wants to use RJH's share of the artist-in residence for drama stipends and toward drama productions. He said he sees three roles: after-school drama club, drama production, and enrichment coordinator (newscast, podcast, collaboration with teacher).

Mr. Katkin said the problem is the person is not a contracted service. There are three classifications of positions: administrator, teacher, and support staff and they fall into the collective bargaining agreement. Therefore you have to go with a stipend, but a stipend position cannot be a position within the school during the day.

Mr. Grant suggested creating two different funds for the schools as it appears the schools have different views on how to use the money.

Ms. Anderson suggested reducing the line to \$11,000; directing \$3,000 to RJH and the balance to RES.

Mr. Grant said he has been frustrated in the past with the amount of money designated for the school play and then the play coordinators seek related additional funding requests from PTA,

REF, and parents. He feels if there is a designated amount of money available it is important for the drama department to work within the budget.

Mr. Pollet agreed and said the requested amount is a figure they can work within.

Page 2

There were no questions.

Page 3

It was noted the assessment coordinator position was reduced by 20% and the RES guidance position was increased by 20%. Dr. Cushing noted that he would come back to the Board to address the need for extra time if additional responsibilities come up during the year for the assessment coordinator.

Mr. Grant asked if this reduction was a “wash” with the 20% increase to the guidance position. Mr. Katkin said there is a slight gain; about \$5,000 savings.

Mrs. Moynahan said she would like to revisit school board stipends when appropriate.

Mr. Grant noted NH School Board Association (NHSBA) membership was removed from the budget last year. Dr. Cushing had asked Mr. Katkin to put it back in the budget explaining the value of Rye’s membership to the NHSBA. He specifically mentioned the lobbying NHSBA does on behalf of the membership districts and the value of the legal counsel regarding policy (a cost shared among the four districts of SAU 50). Mrs. Moynahan said she usually attends the annual NHSBA delegate assembly and gets a lot of valuable information from the assembly. Mr. Schwartz feels there is somewhat of an obligation to be a member of NHSBA. He asked if we could apply as an SAU. Mrs. Balboni and Mrs. Moynahan both agreed there was value in NHSBA membership.

Page 4

Custodial Supervisor shows a salary increase of 2%; he is not part of RESPA.

Custodial software recently purchased is to work towards preventive maintenance. It is a yearly subscription service expense. It will help with building history as right now a lot of this information is from memory.

Page 8

Ms. Anderson asked if the money allowed for repairs within the music department will be enough so that bills for school-owned instrument repairs are not sent home to parents. She had received such a bill last year. She brought that to Mr. Pollet’s attention last year. Mr. Grant said we need to find out if any other parents received and paid such bills as they need to be reimbursed. It is not appropriate for parents to pay for this. The rest of the Board agreed. Mr. Pollet said that such repair costs are included in this budget.

Page 11

Ms. Anderson asked if psychological testing would be contracted out instead of done by the

school psychologist. Mrs. Lyons said the idea had been to get a supplemental person with both guidance counselor and school psychologist credentials to back up Mrs. Shaker. There have not been any requests for independent evaluations this year. The general rule is if there is a disagreement with the school's evaluation, or if there isn't a qualified examiner, the team considers an independent evaluation.

Ms. Anderson asked if there were other line items that would cover outside testing. As an example, Ms. Anderson mentioned neuropsychological evaluations. She feels there are kids who would benefit from greater testing than what is currently offered.

Mrs. Lyons said that would be based on history and perceived needs.

Ms. Anderson said some parents feel their child needs more help, but the staff feels they don't qualify for special education services. She feels that higher-level psychological testing could help to resolve those disagreements.

Ms. Lyons said there are some years the school psychologist is inundated with student needs. It is a difficult need to project, but they are doing a better job of pacing the psychologist with case managers picking up responsibilities as appropriate.

Ms. Anderson said she appreciates that Mrs. Lyons' has worked hard to get much done within the law and with a very tight budget, but feels if we provide more money, the evaluation process could be even faster. Mrs. Lyons stated the danger is that testing can be overwhelming to a child and trying to do an evaluation over the course of 20 days instead of 45 would likely be less effective. Ms. Anderson respectfully disagreed and said that parents would appreciate information and services as soon as possible when their child is experiencing academic, social, or emotional difficulties.

Mr. Grant said it would be helpful if the Board could see the special education purchases made with the stimulus grant to have more knowledge for a greater understanding.

Page 12

Mrs. Balboni noted the number of televisions being purchased. Ms. Richardson said they are trying to get a wall-mounted TV with a DVD for each classroom. Mrs. Balboni and Mr. Schwartz both asked if it would be better to go with computers instead of TV's. Mr. Grant asked if the number of TV's being purchased could be reduced.

Mr. Grant noted the large increase in the internet access subscription line. He asked for detail of the subscriptions and how they are used.

Page 13

Mr. Katkin noted the secretary hours increasing from 7.5 hours to 8 hours.

Mrs. Balboni spoke to flexibility in teachers' funds. The teachers found it difficult to anticipate the needs of classroom within the budget process. Mr. Katkin said there was flexibility now with the transfer of funds form used by the principals.

Ms. Anderson said if the Board had a history of transfers requested they could increase funds to allow for future transfers.

Mr. Grant noted the number of long distance telephone charges as part of telephone services and suggested Google Voice phone might be an option as the calls are free and still use regular phone. Mr. Katkin said most of the costs were from the landline at RES.

Page 14

Mr. Grant asked if the custodial salary line reflected an increase in staff. Mr. Katkin said it did not.

Mr. Grant asked about the custodial travel line. Mr. Katkin explained it covers the RJH secretary's trips to the SAU 50 office for mail as well as travel by the custodial staff.

Mr. Schwartz asked for the reasoning behind the \$10,000 increase to the electricity line. Mr. Katkin said he based it on a projected kilowatt cost increase of \$0.17.

This ended review of the elementary school budget.

Mrs. Balboni made a general observation that there had been a reduction in professional development. Mr. Katkin said it was his understanding professional development was being increased as part of negotiations.

Mr. Grant had a general question about curriculum costs saying those costs look low in the grand scheme of an \$11 million dollar budget. Mrs. Balboni said the amount spent on curriculum materials varies according to need each year. Materials are important to support the curriculum but teacher instruction plays a greater role. The school board should trust that the teachers and administrators will request the appropriate materials in the budget to support our curriculum. Mr. Grant said he just wants to be sure needs are being met. While he is passionate about the budget; he doesn't want to overlook anything for improved curriculum.

There was a break at 10:35 a.m. The meeting reconvened at 10:43 a.m.

Board review of Section 8C – Rye Junior High School

Page 17

Mrs. Balboni asked if the schools have noticed a drop in paper costs since the implementation of sending notices via email. Both principals responded to the affirmative.

Page 21

Mrs. Balboni said the athletic uniforms were originally in the 2008-2009 budget but were not purchased. She questioned the need for four baseball hit-aways in the budget if baseball was being cut as a school sport. Mr. Grant said the uniforms should have been purchased in 2008-2009 when the funds were allotted but not spent. Mr. Pollet will do some follow up as he believes that there was a mistake in the budget book and baseball is not being cut.

Page 22

Professional Growth fund line has \$20,000; only \$10,000 was spent and then additional monies were requested. Mr. Katkin explained if a teachers signs up for a course, but does not take the course, that money is carried as unencumbered funds unless the teacher notifies the business office they didn't take the course.

Page 24

Mr. Grant asked for detail of software purchase.

Page 27

Ms. Anderson said in 2008-2009 we fully funded field trips allowing \$8,000 in that line which was not fully expended. In 2009-2010 we allowed \$9,000 but parents have had to pay for trips. Mr. Katkin said the line on page 27 is for bus services only. Page 21 shows admissions related to field trips. Mr. Schwartz asked the principals if they believe parents are comfortable asking for financial aid for field trips if the need arises. Both principals replied to the affirmative.

Mr. Grant asked Mr. Pollet if he felt the curriculum needs of RJH were being met with this budget. Mr. Pollet responded the only cut was the cost of graphing calculators at the school and one microscope. He did not feel these cuts were creating a problem.

Page 29

Mr. Grant noted the food service line is not breaking even. Mr. Katkin said it is set up as an enterprise fund and provides reserves for 3-4 years. In response to an inquiry, he confirmed that an increase was not necessary at this time.

This ended review of the junior high school budget.

Mr. Grant asked if there were other items for discussion by the Board members or public.

Mrs. MacAlpine commented on the ineffective hand dryers in the restrooms at RJH and asked the Board to consider spending \$400-\$500 on installing accelerated hand dryers.

Mrs. Moynahan asked to put school board stipends back in the budget. She feels the \$6,000 is a relatively small cost given the amount of work the board member does.

Mr. Schwartz asked what was removed from the 2% budget. Mr. Katkin said maintenance objectives came out: painting at RJH, carpeting at RJH, painting of halls are RES, replacement of gym lights (both schools), and the ENO boards.

Mr. Grant asked if at future board meetings they could get a snapshot of the unreserved fund balance to consider use of those funds. Mr. Katkin said he is hesitant to provide any numbers because he has not yet received an actual tuition bill from PHS.

Mrs. MacAlpine asked if the proposed sabbatical was for this year. Dr. Cushing said the request specifically spoke to a one-year sabbatical for the 2010-2011 school year. He clarified that Ms.

Ellwood would like a two-year sabbatical but can only apply for one year at a time.

Mrs. MacAlpine asked if the diploma cost was for the diploma only. Mr. Pollet said yes, it was just for the diplomas.

Mrs. MacAlpine asked if cable costs increase if there is a TV in every classroom. Ms. Richardson said no, the costs do not increase.

On a motion by Mr. Schwartz, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan, and on a unanimous roll call vote the Board entered nonpublic session at 11:25 a.m. in accordance with RSA 91:A3 to discuss negotiations and personnel.

The Board returned to public session at 11:57 a.m.

There was a break at 11:57 a.m. The meeting reconvened at 12:06 p.m.

Mr. Grant suggested taking time to review of the additional requests from the 1% and 2% budgets and ask questions.

Review of 1% budget

Mr. Schwartz confirmed that the increase to field trip admissions on page 3B was to eliminate parent costs.

Mrs. Moynahan asked if replacement of the server at RES was critical. Ms. Richardson said it was not.

Mrs. Moynahan asked if the 4 hr./day custodian would work during the day or at night. Mr. Pollet said he proposed a 12 noon – 4:00 p.m. shift.

Review of 2% budget

Mr. Grant made a general comment that there was some confusion around the maintenance objective. He noted the budget committee felt that was sacrificed in favor of the library renovation. He wanted to clarify again that the library was paid out of the 2008/09 budget and not out of the current 2009/10 budget that has a reduced maintenance budget line.

The \$140,000 expendable trust fund must be approved and voted on prior to use. It must be posted as a Board meeting with a public hearing session.

Motions

Mr. Schwartz made a motion to reduce two new staffing positions from step 10 to step 5. Mrs. Moynahan seconded the motion for discussion. Mr. Katkin cautioned there would be no place for him to find the money to hire a new teacher at step 10 if they ended up finding someone at that level.

Mrs. Moynahan withdrew her second and Mr. Schwartz amended his motion to reduce one new staffing position from step 10 to step 5. Mrs. Moynahan seconded the motion for discussion. Mr.

Katkin said, with benefits, there would be a savings of \$8,200.

Vote in favor: Mr. Grant, and Mr. Schwartz; Opposed: Mrs. Balboni, Ms. Anderson, and Mrs. Moynahan. Motion failed.

Ms. Anderson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan, to reduce the Artist in Residence line (10-1410-321-00-00) by \$4,700. Vote: Unanimously approved. Motion passed.

Ms. Anderson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Grant, to eliminate NHSBA membership. Vote in favor: Mr. Grant, Ms. Anderson, and Mrs. Moynahan; Opposed: Mr. Schwartz and Mrs. Balboni. Motion passed.

Mr. Schwartz made a motion to reduce the electricity budget line at RES by \$10,000. The motion was seconded by Ms. Anderson for discussion. Mr. Grant said he could support a \$5,000 reduction but not a \$10,000 reduction. Mrs. Balboni asked Mr. Katkin for his input; Mr. Katkin stated that his budgeted number is based on data that is available.

The motion on the table was for a \$10,000 reduction to RES electricity budget line. In favor: Mr. Schwartz; Opposed: Mr. Grant, Mrs. Balboni, Ms. Anderson, and Mrs. Moynahan.

Mr. Schwartz made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan, to reduce the RES electricity budget line by \$5,000. Vote: unanimously approved.

Mr. Schwartz made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan, to reduce the RJH electricity budget line by \$5,000. Vote: unanimously approved.

Ms. Anderson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan to remove \$2,116.00 from the Library furniture-replacement line. Vote: unanimously approved.

Mr. Grant if there were any other reductions to the 0% budget. There were none.

The Board made a total of \$20,349 approved reductions to the budget.

Ms. Anderson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan to give the principals a \$3,000 annuity or cash. Mr. Schwartz said he values their work, but given the economy, it doesn't feel like the right time for this. He stated that we could bring up this motion again in the spring when the budget and economy were clearer. Mrs. Balboni said all the Board members value the principals but she isn't sure it's the best time for this either. It was pointed out that administrators from the SAU 50 office also received a 0% increase. Vote in favor: Ms. Anderson; Opposed: Mr. Schwartz, Mr. Grant, Mrs. Moynahan, and Mrs. Balboni. Motion failed.

Ms. Anderson made a motion to give the SAU 50 office administrators a \$1,000 annuity. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Moynahan for discussion.

Vote in favor: Ms. Anderson; Opposed: Mr. Grant, Mr. Schwartz, Mrs. Balboni, and Mrs. Moynahan. Motion failed.

Ms. Anderson made a motion to offer a bonus to the principals as a priority out of this year's budget if there are surplus funds available in the spring. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Moynahan. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Ms. Anderson said she would encourage the Board to consider bonuses at the SAU-level in the spring as well.

Mrs. Moynahan made a motion to put back the Rye School Board stipends into the budget. Ms. Anderson suggested this motion be tabled for now. Mrs. Moynahan agreed.

Mr. Schwartz made a motion to reduce the track/x-country (Fall) (II) at RJH stipend by \$270 and eliminate the baseball coach and baseball coach (II) stipends at RJH. There was discussion regarding the baseball program at RJH and it was determined that program was still in place and the stipends should not be eliminated.

Mr. Schwartz amended his motion, seconded by Mrs. Balboni, to reduce the track/x-country (Fall) (II) at RJH stipend by \$270. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Mr. Schwartz made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Balboni, to increase the Athletic Director stipend by \$1,000.

After discussion, Mrs. Balboni withdrew her second and Mr. Schwartz withdrew his motion.

Dr. Cushing said the Athletic Director position had been reduced by 10% last year and that this is a big position within Rye. He feels it is short money for this position.

Mrs. Balboni made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan for discussion, to restore the Athletic Director stipend to \$5,000. Vote: In favor - Mrs. Balboni; Opposed – Mr. Grant, Ms. Anderson, Mrs. Moynahan, and Mr. Schwartz. Motion failed.

Mr. Schwartz made a motion, seconded by Ms. Anderson, to have Performance Art Director stipend at \$5,000.

After discussion, Ms. Anderson withdrew her second and Mr. Schwartz amended the motion, seconded by Ms. Anderson, to provide a \$4,500 stipend for the Performance Art Director and a \$1,080 stipend for the Drama coach. Vote: In favor – Mr. Schwartz, Ms. Anderson, and Mr. Grant; Opposed – Mrs. Balboni; Abstained – Mrs. Moynahan.

Ms. Anderson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Balboni, to add ten (10) hours/year to paraprofessionals and secretary positions at RES. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Ms. Anderson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Balboni, to add five (5) additional and .5 hours/day for the secretarial assistant position at RES. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Ms. Anderson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Balboni, to add ten (10) hours/year to paraprofessionals and secretary positions at RJH. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Ms. Anderson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Balboni, to add two (2) additional days to the RJH secretary position. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Mrs. Balboni made a motion, seconded by Ms. Anderson, to add RES maintenance objectives (\$10,000) back into the budget. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Mrs. Balboni made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan, to add a four (4) hour part-time custodian to serve both RES and RJH (\$16,587) into the budget.

Discussion followed. Mr. Grant is concerned about adding staff with declining numbers. Mr. Grant stated we have invested in additional equipment and he would rather allow for hiring someone up to four times per year for projects as they come up.

Mr. Schwartz said once a position has been added to the budget, it is difficult to eliminate it. He asked Mr. Katkin if Mr. Grant's proposal would work.

Mr. Katkin stated that creating the part-time position would allow Mr. Gordon to supervise and train all custodial staff and, in the process, spend a second day at RES weekly.

Mr. Grant asked if there was anything that could be reduced such as painting during the summer that would be done by the new part-time position person instead. Mr. Katkin said each building has \$6,000 for additional building needs and could be done by the new person. It was determined that the positions could be added and paid for almost entirely by a reduction in other lines for 3rd party work.

The motion on the table was to add a four (4) hour part-time custodian to serve both RES and RJH (\$16,587) into the budget. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Mrs. Moynahan made a motion, seconded by Mr. Schwartz, to reduce line 10-2620-110-90-10 at RES (Custodial Salaries/Additional labor cleaning & maintenance) by \$6,000. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Mr. Schwartz made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan, to reduce line 10-2620-110-90-20 at RJH (Custodial Salaries/Additional labor cleaning & maintenance) by \$6,000. Vote: Unanimously approved.

Mrs. Moynahan made a motion, seconded by Mr. Grant, to reduce line 10-2620-110-92-20 at RJH (Painting salaries) by \$2,000. Vote: In favor- Mr. Grant, Mrs. Moynahan, Mr. Schwartz, and Mrs. Balboni; Opposed – Ms. Anderson.

Mr. Schwartz made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Balboni, to continue with the 1:1 laptop program for 8th graders (\$41,700).

Discussion followed. Mr. Grant said it seems more like a 'laptop at school' program and thinks the program is still in its infancy and supports a greater use to be a true 1:1 laptop program seen

in other schools.

Mr. Pollet said his feeling is other schools with this program probably felt the same way at this point. Does the computer go home? What about insurance? What about warranty programs? Mr. Pollet said he will be doing further research this spring to get quantifiable data about the success of this program.

Mr. Grant suggested an evaluation in May to make sure the program is maximized.

The motion on the table was to continue with the 1:1 laptop program for 8th graders (\$41,700).
Vote: Unanimously approved.

Dr. Cushing spoke to Ms. Ellwood's request for sabbatical. Dr. Cushing acknowledged the difficult economic times but said he sees enormous long-term value in granting the requested sabbatical. Ms. Elwood is requesting a two-year sabbatical to complete her doctoral program and would receive half her salary with no benefits the first year.

Dr. Cushing said the Collective Bargaining Agreement has had language regarding sabbatical leave for a very long time and to-date no teacher has requested one. If granted the leave, the teacher must agree in writing to continue working in the system for at least two (2) years following the sabbatical leave or by signing a promissory note before being granted the leave, remit to the Board the monetary amount equal to the time not served.

Dr. Cushing said that when he was principal at RJH he hired Ms. Elwood. Thirteen years ago she came forward with the Adventure Based Learning (ABL) Program. She is an extremely intelligent, gifted, unique, non-traditional teacher who has taken kids rock-climbing, x-country skiing, and scuba diving. She connects with kids in a very special way. As part of the first year of sabbatical Ms. Ellwood has written a grant that, if funded, will bring \$60,000 of ABL equipment to RJH.

Dr. Cushing then asked Mr. Pollet to speak further of Ms. Ellwood's request.

Mr. Pollet said he was struck by Ms. Ellwood's comment that "Rye Junior High School is where I belong". He said that despite all of the accomplishments of the ABL program, due to time constraints and a space shortage, it fell short of Ms. Ellwood's dream of making it an inquiry-based and science-based program.

Mr. Pollet said granting the sabbatical will create incredible support for Ms. Ellwood and the students of RJH. Ms. Ellwood will take students way beyond where they are today and her knowledge will supplant the technology programs within the school. Mr. Pollet said he is truly struck by what this can bring out of RJH students.

Mr. Grant said he was confused and baffled by the overemphasis on the ABL program as part of the sabbatical request presentation. He said it was determined by the administration in the spring to keep ABL and the sabbatical separate and yet now in the presentation they are linked together. Mrs. Balboni and Mr. Schwartz suggested, and the Board requested, a special Board meeting for all to understand the ABL program and to ask questions and that the administration asked not have the meeting.

Mrs. Balboni pointed out that the sabbatical request has to reference usefulness to students as part of the request.

Ms. Anderson said valid, basic questions, like how will this program impact other programs like language arts and math, that were brought up at the spring presentation have not been answered.

Mrs. Balboni made a motion, seconded by Mr. Schwartz, to grant Ms. Ellwood's sabbatical for an increase of \$28,871 to the budget.

Discussion followed. Mr. Schwartz said he wants to know the plan aligns with curriculum and the principal's vision. He had additional questions about the parameters of the proposal. He suggested we table the decision until the next budget meeting.

Mr. Grant said fundamentally we cannot afford this sabbatical, and granting it sends the wrong message when employees are receiving a 0% salary increase. He said Ms. Ellwood is a very gifted teacher but she has had already been granted leaves to allow for four trips to Antarctica. He feels granting the sabbatical is not fair to the students and not the right thing to do in this economy.

Mr. Katkin noted that, if the budget meeting continues beyond today, he will not be able to make changes for the December 2nd budget meeting.

Mr. Schwartz withdrew his second, and Mrs. Balboni withdrew her motion to grant Ms. Ellwood's sabbatical to allow more time for questions and discussions at the second part of the budget meeting scheduled for November 24th.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business, on a motion by Mrs. Balboni, seconded by Mrs. Moynahan and voted unanimously, the meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

School Board Secretary