

**Hopkinton Budget Committee  
Town Hall  
February 10, 2010  
Draft Minutes**

**Present:** Patrice Gerseny – Chair; Danny Coen; Cameron Ford; David Lancaster; Karen Irwin; George Langwasser – Selectmen; Bob Carpenter – Contoocook Village Precinct; Tom O’Donnell – Hopkinton Village Precinct; David Luneau – School Board

**Absent:** None

**Minutes Review**

**January 27, 2010** minutes were discussed and amended. David Luneau moved to accept the amended minutes. George Langwasser seconded. A vote was taken.

<b>Yes</b>	<b>7</b>	Danny Coen, Cameron Ford, Karen Irwin, George Langwasser, Bob Carpenter, Tom O’Donnell, David Luneau
<b>No</b>	<b>1</b>	David Lancaster

**Motion passed**

**February 2, 2010** minutes were discussed. George Langwasser moved to accept the minutes. Cameron Ford seconded. A vote was taken.

<b>Yes</b>	<b>6</b>	Danny Coen, Cameron Ford, Karen Irwin, George Langwasser, Bob Carpenter, Tom O’Donnell
<b>No</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Abstain</b>	<b>2</b>	David Lancaster, David Luneau

**Motion passed**

**February 3, 2010** minutes were discussed and amended. Karen Irwin moved to accept the amended minutes. Danny Coen seconded. A vote was taken.

<b>Yes</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>0</b>

**Motion passed**

**Deliberations on Public Hearing**

Karen Irwin asked if the School Board would be proposing any changes based on what they heard at the Public Hearing.

David Luneau responded with a ‘No’. He said the Public Comment was glad to see the benefits reductions in the prescription plan that would be applied to non-union as well as the unions. Savings would be about \$62,000 for HEA, \$8,000 for HESS, and \$14,000 for non-union employees. The Flex Savings Plan and the COLA go toward mitigating employee costs.

Michelle Clark said the amount to be raised through taxes originally did not include the State Property Tax. The new amount is \$10,552,629 is a \$247,337 difference.

Karen Irwin stated that she heard loud and clear concerning personnel and pay raises.

Danny Coen said the public was not interested in pay raises to anyone, Town or School if it raised their taxes.

David Luneau stated the public heard the rationale behind the pay raises with the reduction in health benefits and he didn’t hear anyone against the budget.

Cameron Ford said that by extension the rationale in this climate was no raises.

## **School Warrant Articles**

### **Article 2 – HEA Contract \$61,209 estimated cost**

David Luneau explained that this amount is well below any previous year and would hate to lose out on the gains in the contract: the extra 2 days; the health benefit reduction; and the COLA since the teachers have taken \$0.00 this year. Mr. Luneau stated he would like the Committee to acknowledge the School Board bargained in good faith and would like their support.

Karen Irwin asked about the 2<sup>nd</sup> year.

David Luneau said it is 0.4% over the 1<sup>st</sup> year and the step increases have been tightened.

Karen Irwin stated that the steps were favorable – 25% at the max step.

Steve Chamberlin, Superintendent, stated that steps are given only once in 3 three years.

David Luneau said that there was no step this year and no step next year. The step increase would be in 2<sup>nd</sup> year.

Steve Chamberlin said the steps were mitigated and never a full step. In the past teachers could have received at least 18%.

David Luneau said the School Board used the COLA because it's not in Evergreen.

Cameron Ford asked what the School Board position is on Evergreen.

David Luneau stated the School Board was fully aware of Evergreen when negotiating the contract.

Tom O'Donnell asked if at the termination of this contract will Evergreen come into play.

David Luneau responded by saying 'Yes',

Karen Irwin asked what the end date is for the COLAs.

David Luneau explained the COLAs are given on specific dates during the 1<sup>st</sup> year and 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Only 25% of HEA will get Evergreen.

George Langwasser commented that the biggest problem is the Evergreen. The only voter challenge is to not pass the contract, since Evergreen takes away the power of the people.

David Luneau suggested taking a look at the agreement as whole consists of: 25% will get Evergreen; 75% get nothing and this encourages the teachers to get a contract.

Cameron Ford commented that Evergreen is an unfortunate part but does it make it a mistake.

David Lancaster stated the Budget Committee should determine if this is a good contract. The Evergreen part should be left up to the residents of Hopkinton.

Danny Coen indicated that saying 'No' to Evergreen sends a message to Concord. It has taken away the control of the voters. The town needs to look at the long term effects.

Chair Gerseny mentioned the Teamsters are covered by Evergreen.

David Luneau stated he would hate to lose 'on principle' and would hate to lose out on the gains made just because of Evergreen.

George Langwasser agreed that he cost this year is negligible, however once Evergreen is in, it's in until the Legislature repeals it. Evergreen takes away any good work that has been done.

David Luneau asked the Committee to be practical and pragmatic and take a stand on the actual cost rather than a stand on principle.

David Lancaster moved to recommend to accept Article 2. David Luneau seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 5** David Lancaster, Karen Irwin, David Luneau, George Langwasser, Chair Gerseny

**No 4** Cameron Ford, Danny Coen, Tom O'Donnell, Bob Carpenter

**Motion passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

David Lancaster if the Committee vote would go in the Town Report.

Karen Irwin said she'd checked with Michelle Clark, SAU Business Administrator, and a Warrant Article addressing this has to come from the School.

#### **Article 4 - Operating Budget \$16,103,592**

The Committee discussed the 2.75% raise, \$40,473 inclusive, for non-union employees as being a higher than the national average of 1.4%. David Luneau felt it was answered at the Public Hearing. When asked what 2.5% raise would cost, Michelle Clark calculated about \$37,000 inclusive. Steve Chamberlin explained if the 2.75% goes away, then \$13,000 will have to go back in. George Langwasser felt it cost effective at 2.75% to reduce it to 2.5% which is a \$3,600 savings versus \$13,000 for health care. The Committee then discussed the \$450,000 Federal Grant and why it is included in the budget. Michelle Clark explained the funds.

David Luneau asked if the town has had any reduction in benefits if given raises.

George Langwasser responded 'No'.

Chair Gerseny commented that basically all increases in the Operating Budget are in the Superintendents Office.

Karen Irwin asked if the Committee was looking to reduce it in any way, not the 0.25%.

George Langwasser has calculated the amount of the surpluses over 9 years to be roughly \$340,000 per year. He asked the Committee to consider reducing the budget by \$100,000 in the projected surplus amount. He feels the raises can be absorbed by the surplus.

David Luneau responded by saying he hopes that in a \$16M budget some surplus feels good especially to be within \$340,000. Money cannot be taken out of the contracts. They can change programs and materials.

David Lancaster commented that the surplus is smoke and mirrors and no effect on tax rate. George Langwasser believes it will affect the tax rate after the Town Meeting; however, the effect won't be felt for another year and reviewed line items where there was a savings. Mr. Langwasser believes that taking \$100,000 out of the surplus will not close school down and that change occurs throughout the year naturally. David Luneau does not think that it is good budgeting to remove \$100,000 from the program budget and does agree with underfunded programs.

George Langwasser stated that no one in the Budget Committee questions the integrity of the School Board.

Chair Gerseny reminded everyone that if the Committee recommends reductions, specific lines have to be targeted.

David Luneau moved to recommend to accept Article 4. David Lancaster seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 6** David Lancaster, Cameron Ford, David Luneau, Tom O'Donnell, Bob Carpenter, George Langwasser

**No 2** Danny Coen, Karen Irwin

**Motion passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

**Article 5 – HESS Contract \$2,259 estimated cost**

The Committee was reminded that HESS is covered by Evergreen since the Town voted to pass the contract at the September Special Meeting.

David Luneau moved to recommend to accept Article 5. David Lancaster seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 6** David Lancaster, Karen Irwin, David Luneau, Tom O'Donnell, Bob Carpenter, George Langwasser  
**No 2** Cameron Ford, Danny Coen

**Motion passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

**Article 7 – Contingency Fund \$50,000**

The discussion centered on what the Contingency Fund was/is used for. The past year it was used for fuel. It cannot be transferred to a budget line that doesn't exist. If the money is not used then it lapses.

David Luneau moved to recommend to accept Article 7. Bob Carpenter seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 8**  
**No 0**

**Motion passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

**Article 8 - School Building Repair & Maintenance Fund \$75,000**

When asked the balance, Michelle Clark stated it was \$135,000 and the District was looking at replacing the boiler at Harold Martin School in the future. When asked about an Energy Audit, Michelle Clark stated they have asked the Facilities Director to look into it. Danny Coen suggested looking into alternative heating like Bio Mass. David Luneau said the District addressed the lighting this year. When asked if the School Board considered a generator, David Luneau said the Board felt it was Town business not the Schools'.

David Luneau moved to recommend to accept Article 8, Cameron Ford seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 4** Bob Carpenter, David Luneau, Danny Coen, David Lancaster  
**No 5** Tom O'Donnell, Karen Irwin, Cameron Ford, George Langwasser, Chair Gerseny

**Motion failed – Budget Committee does not recommend the Article**

The Committee disagreed on what they heard at the Public Hearing. David Luneau wondered what happened since the Public Hearing and asked if there was specific feedback. Cameron Ford said it was just general feedback that the public wants it, the budget, reduced somewhere. Karen Irwin stated the public didn't want a tax impact.

**Article 9 – Create a Vehicle Repair & Maintenance Trust Fund \$25,000**

The Committee discussed lease versus purchasing vehicles. The District wants this fund so they'll have more flexibility with their vehicles – 2 small buses and a van. The current lease on one bus is \$11,000 per year.

Cameron Ford moved to recommend to accept Article 9. David Luneau seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 7** Bob Carpenter, Tom O'Donnell, David Luneau, Karen Irwin, David Lancaster, George Langwasser

**No 1** Danny Coen

**Motion passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

**Article 10 – Create a Health Insurance Trust Fund \$25,000**

The Committee discussed why the District didn't use the Contingency fund to cover the volatility in Health Insurance, when the voters will be able to see a positive result. The School Board that the budget will be able to stay within reason rather than being funded at maximum cost. David Lancaster would like to see the fund used the 1<sup>st</sup> year rather than wait until it has built up.

David Luneau moved to recommend to accept Article 10. Cameron Ford seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 6** Bob Carpenter, David Luneau, Karen Irwin, Cameron Ford, David Lancaster, George Langwasser

**No 2** Tom O'Donnell, Danny Coen

**Motion passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

Bob Carpenter & the rest of the Committee commended the School Board and SAU representatives for their budget.

**Town Warrant Articles**

**Article 4 – Community Well on east Penacook Rd \$350,000**

The Committee discussed this Article as both expense and revenue, advising that the Selectmen need to thoroughly explain the reason for the well and how they arrived at the \$350,000 amount.

Karen Irwin moved to recommend to accept Article 4. George Langwasser seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 6** George Langwasser, David Lancaster, Karen Irwin, Tom O'Donnell, Bob Carpenter

**No 2** Cameron Ford, Danny Coen

**Motion Passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

**Article 5 – Operating Budget/General Government Functions \$1,041,158**

The Committee discussed the money they added to the Personnel Administration intended for Town Employee raises and removed all but roughly \$10,000 from Public Works. David Lancaster spoke that he couldn't support of it meant taking away from Public Works. Danny Coen reminded all that this is a Gross Budget and Selectmen use gross amount for what they deem important.

Chair Gerseny advised the Committee that the amount needed to be raised by taxes is down by about \$200,000 with the Budget Committee adjustments. Even without adjustments in the Public Works and just adding the amount for raises, Chair Gerseny said there would still be a reduction in the tax rate.

Bob Carpenter moved to recommend to accept Article 5. Karen Irwin seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 5** Bob Carpenter, Tom O'Donnell, David Luneau, Karen Irwin,  
George Langwasser

**No 3** Danny Coen, Cameron Ford, David Lancaster

**Motion passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

**Article 7 – Public Safety Operations \$1,420,141**

The Committee discussed the ramifications of Article 6 – Fire Chief with respect to this Article. There is no financial impact by having a Full-Time Chief. It was decided a few years ago that we needed a FT Deputy and a PT Chief. George Langwasser stated that if Article 6 does not pass, then there won't be a Full-Time chief, we will have a Part Time Chief.

Danny Coen moved to remove \$67,000 from the Fire Department total. Cameron Ford seconded. Danny Coen explained that by taking the amount of the salary out and Article 6 fails it will force someone to add the money back in and the Selectmen will have to explain. A vote was taken.

**Yes 3** David Lancaster, Cameron Ford, Danny Coen  
George Langwasser

**Amendment Failed**

Karen Irwin moved to recommend to accept Article 7. Bob Carpenter seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 5** Bob Carpenter, Tom O'Donnell, Karen Irwin, David Luneau,  
George Langwasser

**No 2** Danny Coen, Cameron Ford

**Abstain 1** David Lancaster

**Motion passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

Cameron Ford asked whether there was to be an Article to change the Part-time Police Chief position to a Full-time Police Chief position. George Langwasser stated it was unnecessary.

**Article 8 – Public Safety Operations \$1,420,141**

The Committee discussed David Lancaster's reasoning behind wanting to replace the monies taken from the Highways & Streets, Building & Grounds and Transfer Station Operations. Some members thought without more of an accounting of how and where the monies are spent, they couldn't rationalize reinstating the Selectmen amounts.

David Luneau moved to add \$50,000 back into the respective accounts: Highways & Streets - \$30,000; Building & Grounds - \$10,000; and Transfer Station Operations - \$10,000. David Lancaster seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 2** George Langwasser, David Luneau

**No 6** David Lancaster, Cameron Ford, Danny Coen, Karen Irwin, Tom  
O'Donnell, Bob Carpenter

**Amendment Failed**

David Lancaster moved to add \$30,000 back into Highway & Streets. Bob Carpenter seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 4** Bob Carpenter, Tom O'Donnell, David Luneau, David Lancaster  
**No 5** Karen Irwin, Danny Coen, Cameron Ford, George Langwasser,  
Chair Gerseny

**Amendment Failed**

Karen Irwin moved to recommend to accept Article 8. Bob Carpenter seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 5** Cameron Ford, Karen Irwin, Tom O'Donnell, Bob Carpenter,  
Chair Gerseny  
**No 4** George Langwasser, David Lancaster, Danny Coen,  
David Luneau

**Motion passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

**Article 9 – Health & Human Services Operations \$124,699**

Karen Irwin moved to recommend to accept the Article. Danny Coen seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 8** Cameron Ford, Karen Irwin, Tom O'Donnell, Bob Carpenter,  
George Langwasser, David Lancaster, Danny Coen,  
David Luneau

**No 0**

**Motion passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

**Article 10 – Recreation Department \$125,421**

The Committee discussed the Slusser Center and where it was funded. Neal Cass advised that Slusser Center is funded through various accounts.

Karen Irwin moved to recommend to accept the Article. Bob Carpenter seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 6** Karen Irwin, Tom O'Donnell, Bob Carpenter, George Langwasser,  
David Lancaster, David Luneau  
**No 2** Cameron Ford, Danny Coen

**Motion Passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article.**

**Article 11 – Library Operations \$277,906**

David Luneau moved to recommend to accept the Article. Danny Coen seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 8** Cameron Ford, Karen Irwin, Tom O'Donnell, Bob Carpenter,  
George Langwasser, David Lancaster, Danny Coen,  
David Luneau

**No 0**

**Motion Passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

**Article 12 - Conservation \$1.00**

Karen Irwin moved to recommend to accept the Article. Cameron Ford seconded. A vote

**Yes 8** Cameron Ford, Karen Irwin, Tom O'Donnell, Bob Carpenter,  
George Langwasser, David Lancaster, Danny Coen,  
David Luneau

**No 0**

**Motion Passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

**Article 13 – Long-Term Debt & TAN Interest \$359,902**

Bob Carpenter moved to recommend the Article. David Lancaster seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 8** Cameron Ford, Karen Irwin, Tom O'Donnell, Bob Carpenter,  
George Langwasser, David Lancaster, Danny Coen,  
David Luneau

**No 0**

**Motion Passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

**Article 14 – Capital Reserve Accounts \$209,500**

David Lancaster wanted to go on the record saying 2 lines are underfunded. He would like to see +\$35,000 in Fire Department Vehicles & Equipment and + \$40,000 in Public Works Vehicles & Equipment feeling this would decreased the proposed future bump. Next year he will propose bumping Fire Department Vehicles & Equipment to \$110,000 and Public Works Vehicles & Equipment to \$115,000. He believes the Selectmen are shortsighted by not doing it this year.

Karen Irwin moved to recommend the Article. Cameron Ford seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 5** Cameron Ford, Karen Irwin, Bob Carpenter, George Langwasser,  
David Luneau

**No 3** David Lancaster, Danny Coen, Tom O'Donnell

**Motion Passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

**Article 15 – Establish Capital Reserve Fund \$16,500**

The reason for this fund is to create a fund to build an addition on either side of the Highway Garage. There will be another Article in the same amount next year. If both pass then work will begin on the garage.

Gorge Langwasser moved to recommend the Article. Bob Carpenter seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 7** Cameron Ford, Karen Irwin, bob Carpenter, George Langwasser,  
David Luneau, David Lancaster, Tom O'Donnell

**No 1** Danny Coen

**Motion Passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

**Article 17 – Discontinuance of Non Capital Hardware/Software Fund \$400.00**

Karen Irwin moved o recommend the Article. Cameron Ford seconded. A vote was taken.

**Yes 8** Cameron Ford, Karen Irwin, Tom O'Donnell, Bob Carpenter,  
George Langwasser, David Lancaster, Danny Coen,  
David Luneau

**No 0**

**Motion Passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

**Article 18 – Petition Warrant for Private Road Plowing \$4,000**

The Committee discussed whether Public Funds should be spent on private roads. Karen Irwin told the Committee that the Local Business Center does not recommend the Budget Committee endorse this warrant.

David Lancaster moved to recommend the Article. Bob Carpenter seconded. A vote was taken.

- Yes 1** George Langwasser
- No 6** David Lancaster, Cameron Ford, Danny Coen, Karen Irwin, David Luneau, Tom O'Donnell
- Abstain 1** Bob Carpenter

**Motion Passed – Budget Committee recommends the Article**

**Article 23 – Petition Warrant to rescind Authority granted in 2003 Article 7**

Tom O'Donnell advised that Article 7 in 2003 precluded the Budget Committee from voting on Bohanon Farm.

David Lancaster believes if large amounts of money require a bond then it should require more than a simple majority.

David Luneau commented that it allowed the Selectmen to act in a timely fashion and doubted a court would determine a purchase of a property.

Cameron Ford advised that it had been manipulated in the past for 1 property, but feels it has been good.

Karen Irwin moved to recommend the Article. David Lancaster seconded. A vote was taken.

- Yes 4** Cameron Ford, David Lancaster, Karen Irwin, Tom O'Donnell
- No 5** George Langwasser, Danny Coen, David Luneau, Bob Carpenter, Chair Geseny

**Motion Failed – Budget Committee does not recommend the Article**

**Contoocook Village Precinct**

David Lancaster moved to recommend to accept the Budget. Bob Carpenter seconded. A vote was taken.

- Yes 8** Cameron Ford, Karen Irwin, Tom O'Donnell, Bob Carpenter, George Langwasser, David Lancaster, Danny Coen, David Luneau

**No 0**

**Motion Passed – Budget Committee recommends the Budget**

**Hopkinton Village Precinct**

Tom O'Donnell moved to recommend the Budget. Danny Coen seconded. A vote was taken.

- Yes 8** Cameron Ford, Karen Irwin, Tom O'Donnell, Bob Carpenter, George Langwasser, David Lancaster, Danny Coen, David Luneau

**No 0**

**Motion Passed – Budget Committee recommends the Budget**

The meeting adjourned at 10:26pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Beth Clark