

**District Meeting- Public Hearing**  
**Regional School District 14**  
**Towns of Bethlehem and Woodbury**  
Date: Monday, April 4, 2011  
Time: 7:30 PM  
Place: Nonnewaug High School  
5 Minortown Road  
Woodbury, Connecticut

**Minutes**

**Present:** Stephen Sordi, George Bauer, Deborah Corsico, Charles Cosgriff, Scott Baider, Gary Suslavich; also, Greg Little, Ed Arum, Melinda McKenna, Alice Jones, MaryLou Torre, Lori Ferreira, Mike Molzon, 3 members of the press and approximately 35 community members.

**Absent:** Board members Linda Bulvanoski and Pamela Zmek

**I. Call to Order**

Mr. Sordi called the public hearing to order at 7:35 p.m.

**II. Appointment of Moderator**

Mr. Sordi appointed Louis DeLuca to serve as moderator

**III. Appointment of Meeting Clerk by the Moderator**

Mr. DeLuca appointed Debra Carlton to serve as meeting clerk

**IV. Call of the Meeting**

Mr. DeLuca read the following call of the meeting:

To present and receive questions about the Regional School District 14 Board of Education's proposed budget for 2011-2012

**V. Presentation of the Region 14 Budget for the 2011-2012 School Year**

Dr. Little said it was a privilege for him to be here; noted that Region 14 has a great staff and faculty; indicated that the administrative council has worked hard with him and Mr. Arum to reduce the original budget while maintaining and improving services, while being cognizant of the economic times.

Mr. Arum provided details of the budget, a work in progress at this point, and which has not yet been adopted by the Board. He showed additions and deletions resulting in a 3.188% increase over last year's budget.

**VI. Public Comment**

Tom Arras, Woodbury, asked for per pupil expenditure; felt we are not getting our fair share of out-of-district tuition for agriscience students.

Christopher Laux, Woodbury, noted less savings on transportation, on page 13 of the budget, than was anticipated with the de-configuring of the elementary schools.

Mr. Sordi explained that greater savings would be seen in the next bus contract with a 2 tier system.

Debra Tietz, Woodbury Board of Finance, referred to a letter sent by her board in which a 0% increase was requested and to which the Board of Education had not responded. She implored the board to consider the proposal by Yankee Gas, and to reduce expenditures in the areas of maintenance and administrative positions.

Kathleen Roche, Woodbury, noted that it cannot be said that kids are not hurt by a 0% budget and hopes the board will stay with the 3.188% increase. She implored the board to avoid eliminating positions that would be difficult to get back. She asked about the notion of a special education consultant. Dr. Little explained that his recommendation to the board was that enlisting such a consultant at this time would be premature.

David Deakin, Bethlehem Board of Finance, referenced the Yankee Gas issue mentioned by Ms. Tietz, as well as by Jerry Stomski at the joint meeting of the selectmen and board of finance members and the Board of Education this past Friday. He cautioned that this may not be the "golden egg" it was promised to be, and urged further study of it before any commitment is made.

Pam Gengenbach, Woodbury, asked for a breakdown of how much of the budget increase can be attributed to the elementary schools, and how much is for the middle and high schools. For staffing, Mr. Arum responded that an extra teacher and 2.5 paraprofessionals are needed in the elementary schools, and history and music teachers are needed at the high school.

Jeanne Ross, Woodbury, questioned the board on equity of class sizes at the elementary schools based on the boundary line discussed earlier at the planning committee meeting. It allows for relative equity next year, she noted, but wondered how the breakouts look going forward since, historically, over time, this changes and the need for additional resources comes into play.

Mr. Arum responded that he had looked at the projections, which were off, and he feels that for a number of years the numbers will be within the desired range.

Andrew Sherman, Woodbury, asked about program changes as only staff numbers are shown in the budget. Dr. Little described new course offerings at the AP level at NHS, including ones in the history, science, world language and music departments.

## **VII. Adjournment**

Hearing no further questions or comments, Mr. DeLuca adjourned the public hearing at 8:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted in draft form, pending Board approval, on April 6, 2011  
Debra W. Carlton, Board Clerk