

Candia Municipal Budget Committee Meeting

Approved Minutes

March 08, 2017

Town Office Building

Members Present:

Budget Committee Chair Allyn Chivers, Selectman's Rep. Susan Young, School Board Rep. Rebecca Cronk, Paul Leblond, Jodi Hedstrom, Bob Stout, Susan Gill, Dana Buckley.

Chairman Chivers opened the meeting at 7:00pm. Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes Approved

December 15, 2016

Bob Stout made the motion. **Dana Buckley** seconded.

January 11, 2017

Approved

Jodi Hedstrom made the motion. **Becky Cronk** seconded.

February 4, 2017

Paul Leblond made the motion.

Susan Young seconded.

Bob Stout abstained, as he was not present.

February 11, 2017

Paul Leblond made the motion.

Sue Young seconded.

Bob Stout abstained, as he was not present.

Town Reports:

Expense Comparison/Revenue Comparison; heading is incorrect but will be corrected. Compares what has been spent to last year.

Question on increased insurance amount.

Chairman Chivers thought there may have been an insurance payment that should have been made at the beginning of the year? **Susan Young** said she would find out and why it went up. **Chairman Chivers** asked if there were any other questions and there weren't.

School Reports:

Chairman Chivers expressed discontent with regards to the Budget Committee not receiving the school reports in time for their meetings; that it's been an ongoing

issue. She said that she spoke to Becky Cronk before the meeting and her response was that she would give the reports to the Budget Committee after the School Board meets. Chairman Chivers said, she looked up the RSA 32:22 that's in place, it requires the School Board (upon request from the Budget Committee) to immediately surrender such reports without delay. Copy of RSA 32:22 given to all members. Chairman Chivers said that when we the Budget Committee request the information it should be turned over immediately and without delay.

Becky Cronk explained that it has been the boards policy to review the reports before they can go to the Budget Committee. The decision was made with a five member board back when Emily Roster was on the board that no one could make a unilateral decision to just hand over the report with out it being approved by the board members. That was the boards' position on this. She said the board can discuss it again.

Chairman Chivers was this discussed before today on previous instances? Have you discuss this in a public meeting?

Becky Cronk said they had, but it was decided to review the reports before they can be released.

Chairman Chivers said that it was the law, that she doesn't make this up.

Becky Cronk said she understood what Chairman Chivers was saying but they were going on what their legal counsel said to do. Becky explained that she would not make a unilateral decision.

Chairman Chivers explained that she doesn't expect Becky to make a unilateral decision; she is just disappointed that the subject has come up before and it's still not resolved.

Becky Cronk said she beg to differ, that it was brought up before and they were getting the reports to the board five days before so that they could review it prior to the next meeting. That the school board has been in compliance since that point.

Chairman Chivers said the final budget was not submitted prior to our meeting on a timely basis.

Becky Cronk said, that they cancelled their summer meeting and the computer system was replaced which caused our time lines not to match up.

Chairman Chivers said, she would like to see what the rest of the board wants to do, that the law is pretty clear.

Paul Leblond asked what are the legalities with this.

Becky Cronk explained that this is what Legal Counsel & CPA has told them to do, that it wasn't appropriate to turn it over the reports without reviewing them.

Chairman Chivers said it's the School Boards desire to review it before it comes to the Budget Committee, this is just information that's already there.

Becky Cronk explained that the School Board wants to review the report before it can be submitted to the Budget Committee. **Becky Cronk** will speak the School Board to see what they can do to correct the timing issue at tomorrows meeting. **Becky Cronk** explained that their legal team & CPA has said they should not be submitting the reports before they are reviewed by the School Board.

Susan Young commented that she had not asked Lynn to speak on the late School Budget Reports (Lynn verified this) and was sure the School Board's attorney was aware of the RSA. The law is the law, a RSA supersedes what the School Board or any board wants to do; you must follow the law.

Susan Young also explained that she has not seen it on any School Board agenda, so unless they're having private meetings she could not see where it was ever discussed. It has however been discussed with this board several times, you'll find it in the minutes or on the tape. We have not gotten them on time. We were told we weren't going to get them and we haven't. I called the state; the state said they must be here. Whether the School Board wants to bless them or not, they must be here, the law is the law.

Becky Cronk explained that it was the previous school board that created the policy.

Susan Young said it doesn't matter; an RSA supersedes what this current School Board wants to do. She explained, if she wants to go to Disney but is told legally that she can't, then that's what needs to be done. I don't think the current School Board understands that, in a lot of different areas. You can label it rough draft, unapproved, not approved, approved by two, anything you want. This information needs to come to this committee and anyone else that asks for information, and as long as your clear on that, again. We haven't gotten them on time, one time it was the computer, another time someone was on vacation, there's always a reason why, but we haven't gotten them so that was not an accurate statement.

Becky Cronk that is not an accurate statement, we had that discussion and since September/October we've delivered them in a timely manner.

Susan Young said, except for today.

Becky Cronk said, it was because we changed our meeting.

Susan Young said, it doesn't matter.

Chairman Chivers asked if anyone else would like to weigh in on this.

Bob Stout said he doesn't understand why the school board doesn't want to share it. I've only been on this board for 16 or 17 months. We're not enemies, it seems like we should be more cooperative. If you submit an expenditure report the worse we're going to do is ask a few questions, we may say Becky can you get us an answer. He just doesn't know why it has to be so secretive. In the spirit of cooperation it seems like a reasonable request. You already have the budget money, you can spend it the way you want, you can move it the way you want. Our job is to oversee it, ask questions, make sure things are appropriate. We're not going to take the money away, we can't. It's for information purposes only. At the end of the day if you want to get cooperation you need to share things. It's going to trigger more questions and debates. I'm not an enemy with any of you, don't want to be. Some times I ask questions and I'm like the bad guy. I've always loved vigorous debate. When you speak I learn something, hopefully when I speak you reflect and learn something. I was hoping Kevin Coughlin was going to be here tonight because my comment was going to be that the whole time that I've been on this board, Kevin no matter what his position, he was always polite, respectful and did things the right way, I agree with him and I would like to see us be more like that. We're here five minutes and the tone changes; the voices start to go up. There's no need of it, we're neighbors. Ok maybe we have different political connections and we come from different backgrounds. We're all committed for different reasons, we want to have our voices heard and we don't always agree with each other, I don't dislike anyone here. I just wish we could be more civil and I think sharing information would go a long way in doing that. The worse I've seen in any of the school reports, we've asked four or five questions to bring back to the board for the next month. Am I wrong? I think it would be nice, I don't see the bad part of sharing that information, you know Becky.

Becky Cronk I don't either. I will tell you I've been very disheartened this year on this board as the school board rep. Every time something went wrong it wasn't respectfully approached. It was always argumentative, it was always well you guys did this wrong. I gotta tell ya, I was on the Budget Committee before I was on the School Board. I volunteered to be the school board rep because I enjoyed my time. The tone and the atmosphere has dramatically changed to the point that I would say crap I have a budget committee meeting next week and I dread it, and I don't like that, it's not fair. I understand that you want this information right away; I will address it tomorrow night. You have to understand you have had no tact with the school and it has come across to all of us, not just me, all of us. We all kind of go, ok who's turn is it. I want the same feeling we had last year, we had a good working relationship.

Bob Stout said he agreed and thought that they need to fix it.

Becky Cronk said she will speak to the Board and come up with a consensus at the School Board meeting.

Susan Gill shared suggestions on how the school reports could be released to the Budget Committee before School Board review, so that it's on time.

Minutes:

Susan Young thought that we need to discuss what we want for the minutes for Doreen so she knows exactly what we want. Doreen said she would do whatever the Committee wanted. Several commented Doreen should do what works best for her, following the requirements. Everyone believed that a summary of what had been said would suffice.

Bob Stout praised the "easy to read" minutes from Doreen.

Legal Concerns:

Susan Young spoke about the issues with the atmosphere and the fact that just Dana Buckley and she were targeted with respect to their emails, with a Right to Know request from Sharon Dewitt, cousin to Nicole LaFlamme. In addition, out of five Selectman, Sharon Dewitt requested a copy of only Susan Young's emails. Susan Young stated she was a true believer in transparency and the Right to Know and would defend Sharon DeWitt's request or anyone else's to the bitter end. **Susan Young** did question the motive of the RTK request, as it did not involve all members of both the Budget Committee and Board of Selectmen.

Susan Young said, she wanted everyone to know that it is illegal for someone on the board to call one or more board members and say something along the lines of, "the

School Budget, I've looked at it and looked at it, it doesn't have any fat in it so vote for it". Susan Young explained that is not legal to do, and has been done by others.

Susan Young explained, this year a lot of questions have been asked with regards to the school budget and Susan felt that had ruffled a lot of feathers, which is unfortunate. No one should be targeted for asking legitimate questions. If you go back and listen to all the tapes from April, the questions are not derogatory; they were legitimate, factual questions that may have been difficult or embarrassing to answer.

Susan Young commented that she wanted to end on a positive note. The good news is, that there hasn't been one law broken, anything unethical, or derogatory remarks to anyone, with any of the emails and she had gone through so far, to the best of her knowledge. There are more than 600 emails reviewed so far and there are many, many more to go. Unfortunately, the emails may come with ramifications for the two

chairs persons of the Budget Committee and Board of Selectmen, the School Board for untimely reports etc., and others. She felt that everyone needs to start getting along.

Becky Cronk explained that Sharon Dewitt made the request on her own, that Nicole Leflamme said she knew nothing about it. Becky explained that she knew that Nicole pointed the finger at Susan at Candidate's Night (accusing Young of going to a radio station) but the reason was that an audio recording from a Budget Committee meeting was used against Nicole on the "Gerard At Large Show".

Susan Young explained that the audio is public record and that she (Susan) had nothing at all to do with that.

Becky Cronk agreed that we just all need to get along and would like to see that happen going forward.

Dana Buckley said he complied immediately to the (Sharon DeWitt's) Right to Know request **and Susan Young** said she also complied immediately.

Chairman Chivers said, that is why we changed our emails. She wanted to thank Dana Buckley for his work on the Budget Committee.

Chairman Chivers asked for a motion to adjourn.

Dana Buckley made the motion. **Paul Leblond** seconded.