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**TOWN OF FOXBOROUGH
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
February 04, 2009**

2009 MAR 10 PM 7:46
FOXBOROUGH, MA 02035

Committee Members Present: Lorraine Brue, John Dustin, Thom Freeman, Bob Garber, Jeff Rudd, Jenna Strickland, Brian Walton, Gary Whitehouse.

Members Absent: Lauren Bitar, Jim Devellis, Michael Fitzmaurice, H Hardie, Tim Kenneally.

Others Present: Andy Gala, Town Manager
Dr. Christopher Martes, Superintendent of Schools
Debra L. Spinelli, Assistant Superintendent
Beverly Lord, Larry Harrington and Katie Adair, School Committee

The meeting was brought to order at 7:30 p.m. by Lorraine Brue, Chairperson.

7:30 – School Committee FY-2010 Budget – Dr. Martes said the budget presented is a “work in progress”; he expects to come back to the Advisory Committee after the final numbers are in. He said this is the same budget as voted on by the School Committee at the Public Hearing on January 26, 2009. He said it offers the same level of service as they presently have. He is still developing scenarios if they have to reduce the budget. Copies of the presentation were distributed. Dr. Martes referred to the projected retirements included in this budget as well as projected resignations. He said these are situations that he is aware of and have resulted in some savings in salaries because he can hire replacements at a different scale. The FY-2010 Budget request is \$26,321,767 – an increase of 5.72% (\$1,423,824).

Total Enrollment projection is down from last year. There are 31 out-of-district students enrolled at this time. Beverly Lord pointed out that that number could change. Dr. Martes said these numbers are from census figures based on school age children. The unknown factor is the housing situation and other changes in population with development of Foxboro Lodge and Chestnut Green. Enrollment and staffing were briefly discussed. Dr. Martes pointed out there are no new positions requested in this budget.

The major components of the changes in the FY-2010 budget were reviewed. Costs related to Special Education were the subject of lengthy discussion. Dr. Martes pointed out the costs of transportation for these special students is a very big “chunk” of the budget. He explained they had been working with other towns to combine routes. The time limit for transportation is 60 minutes and in some cases this is not achieved. The student is then transported by taxi rather than by school transportation. He said some parents are very inflexible on this issue. Katie Adair said the State does not reimburse the Towns for these transportation costs. Dr. Martes said they are working with five other vendors and two collaboratives trying to determine what might be more advantageous to the Town. He explained that the State does provide what is known as a Circuit Breaker that provides that the Town spend \$35,000 and then the State covers whatever costs there are.

A lengthy discussion ensued relative to the impact of the Charter School. Larry Harrington pointed out that the Charter School does not have any Special Needs enrollment, nor do they offer programs in music or sports. Larry said the State aid per student is \$2,000 more for the Charter School than the Town gets, consequently the Town loses a lot of money by having the Charter School in Town. Beverly Lord said the full day kindergarten has been very successful. Some of those children transfer into the Charter School for elementary but then return to Foxborough for middle or high school classes. Larry Harrington said the School Committee has been working very hard to make people see the real value of the Foxborough schools. Beverly Lord noted that the teachers in the Charter Schools do not have to be certified teachers. John Dustin expressed concern that if the level of service might have to be reduced does that impact

the school accreditation and if that were to occur could steps then be taken to close the Charter School. Dr. Martes explained that there must be a five-year plan to accredited. He pointed out that the State Board of Education is the authority to award certification. Thom Freeman asked if there had been a change in the threshold of diagnosis of special needs children. Dr. Martes said there are a lot more children being identified and many have more complicated issues. He said there needs to be another funding mechanism. Dr. Martes touched briefly on Legal expense noting that is down in this budget, Athletics, Heat, Utilities, Salaries and Outside Resources. Debra Spinelli noted that new text books and standard teaching materials. Larry Harrington said they might have to raise funds for the purchase of books, etc.

Ms. Spinelli distributed a packet of information for review by the Committee that included MCAS Multi-Year Comparisons for each subject area tested, comparisons of groups of students and how they performed over a period of time and the average scores across grade levels and subject areas as compared to state averages. A general discussion was held regarding the scores and comparisons in the four areas where students were tested – English Language, Mathematics, Science & Technology/Engineering and Biology and/or Chemistry. Also distributed was a summary report on SAT scores going back to 1977 in Verbal, Math and Writing.

Dr. Martes gave a brief update on the High School repair project. He expects a report by mid-March to be submitted by the architect on the costs. He said there is a lot to be done and the plan is to try to get some things done during the summer and other repairs can be done during school sessions. He said the asbestos abatement would be done when the students are out on summer vacation. He said it is a complicated process and they are "going to have to work through it". Bob Garber asked if thought had been given to installing alternative energy systems. Dr. Martes said this was something that was included in the plan but at this time he could not speak directly to that issue.

9:30 - OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Lorraine Brue distributed copies of the questions for W&S as submitted by Committee members. A brief discussion was held regarding the upcoming rate increase and if by reviewing the budget again could the rate increase not be necessary, cost containment on salaries and on-call pay and time and a half pay on weekends. Lorraine asked that any additional questions be forwarded to Bob Garber so that he in turn could get them to W&S Dept.

Minutes: the Minutes for the Advisory Committee meetings of January 14 and January 21, 2009 were reviewed.

Motion by Gary Whitehouse to approve the minutes of the meeting of January 14, 2009 as amended. Seconded by Bob Garber.

Vote: 7-0-0

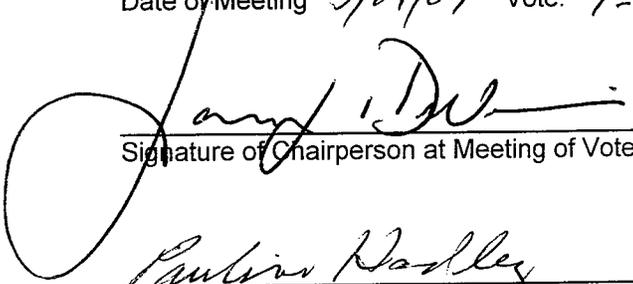
Motion by Gary Whitehouse to approve the minutes of the meeting of January 21, 2009 as amended. Seconded by Brian Walton.

Vote: 7-0-0

Motion by Bob Garber to adjourn. Seconded by Jeff Rudd.

Vote: 7-0-0 Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Minutes Approved by Vote of the Advisory Committee.
Date of Meeting 3/04/09 Vote: 9-0-0

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary D.", written over a horizontal line.

Signature of Chairperson at Meeting of Vote:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pauline Hadley", written over a horizontal line.

Signature of Secretary at Meeting of February 04, 2009