

Budget Hearing Meeting – January 14, 2013
4:30 PM

Members present: Donna Lowell-Bettencourt, Chairman; Les Baynes, Co-chairman; Mort Fearey, Jr.; Steve Jordan; Alex Rentumis; Bob Clay; Fred Condon.

Pamela Dolby, Town Administrator; Margaret E. Serpa, Arthur Smadbeck, Selectmen.

James Weiss, Superintendent; John Stevens, Edg. Principal; Steven Nixon, MVRHS principal; Laurie Halt, Amy Tierney, Mark Friedman, Supt. Office; David Rossi, Susan Mercier, Edg school committee members.

4:30PM – Superintendent's office – James Weiss, Superintendent passed out updated information for the FY14 budget requests(attached). He explained the various mandated services that the schools must provide students and the increased costs this passes along to the towns. Special education services consist of about 60% of the overall budget with salaries/contracts being another third. The request for FY14 is up \$357,000. Discussion followed on the various requirements mandates. The FAC asked for a five year look back on mandated service costs.

5:10PM – Edgartown School – John Stevens, Principal. The FAC thanked John for attending several previous meetings to bring the committee up to date on FY 14 budgets. The committee still had questions on the difference paid per-student in Edgartown, as compared to state averages. John explained that some of the reasons are that 52% of staff is at the maximum level of salaries; the teach-student ratio is 17:1 and support services for SPED are also included. Discussion took place on school choice decisions that impact the financial amounts received from the state. The state pays \$5,000. for a school choice to the town if a student comes to use the Edgartown school and vice versa if an Edgartown student leaves for another town.

5:20PM – MVRHS – Steven Nixon, Principal – Mr. Nixon handed out two packets for the committee. It showed a breakdown of the FY14 budget by categories for the six categories (shared svcs; administration; instruction; operations; fixed costs; other services) for a total of \$17,642,377, an increase of 4.28%. It explained the various costs involved as well as the many cuts that have been made over the last several years amounting to over \$539,000. Discussion took place regarding residential placement off-Island of about 10 students. This is a mandated requirement and the cost per student is about \$70,000. in additional funds. He also discussed several new programs designed to keep these student here on the Island, rather than sending them to off-Island special education schools to reduce costs.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 6 pm.