

JAMESTOWN TOWN COUNCIL  
**Budget Work Session**  
March 20, 2007

A budget work session of the Jamestown Town Council was called to order at the Jamestown Philomenian Library, 26 North Road at 6:10 p.m. by Council President David J. Long. The following members were present:

Julio DiGiando, Vice President  
Michael Schnack

absent: Barbara A. Szepatowski  
William A. Kelly

also present were:

Bruce R. Keiser, Town Administrator  
Christina Collins, Finance Director  
Arlene D. Petit, Town Clerk  
Dr. Robert Powell, School Superintendent  
Catherine L. Kaiser, School Committee Chair  
William C. Brennan, School Committee  
Julie A. Kallfelz, School Committee  
Julia K. Held, School Committee  
David E. Dolce, School Committee  
Maria Alfred, School Business Manager

As an introduction to the school budget, School Committee Chair Catherine Kaiser read a statement outlining the rationale taken by the School Committee when preparing their budget. Ms. Kaiser stated the descending tax cap, along with the continuing lack of state funding for mandates and department regulations has intensified the challenge of sustaining high-performing schools.

Ms. Kaiser reviewed several initiatives the School Committee has taken to reduce costs while providing a quality education in Jamestown. Ms. Kaiser noted that the school budget, as presented, was passed by a unanimous vote of the School Committee.

Dr. Powell outlined the following initiatives taken in developing the school budget:

- reduction in staff of 1.85 positions
- reduction in cost from 5.11% to 4.81% of General Fund Contributions
- reduction from 4.26% to 3.97% in School Fund Expenditure
- increased programming for high level students
  - virtual high school internet classes
- increase in professional development by providing a part-time literacy coach and a part-time math coach
- initiating capital expenditures that conserve energy and resources while keeping the buildings in working order
  - insulation
  - window replacements
  - waterless urinals
  - energy efficient lights

Dr. Powell also noted that the School Committee is considering leasing a portion of the Lawn Avenue School for an outside special educational program.

There were several questions by the Council on specific line items.

32204-6190-21 Teacher Assistant \$77,512.00

Dr. Powell noted that the increase was due to additional grant funding.

41735-6195-40 Purchases Services \$32,000.00

Catherine Kaiser explained that this is Jamestown's portion of the food services provided by North Kingstown to the Jamestown School system.

60705-6999-40 Salary Contingency \$173,466.00

Dr. Powell noted that a portion of this fund is in consideration of union contracts that will expire in September 2007.

#### School Fund Budget Revenues

##### Medicaid Reimbursements

This line item has been reduced by \$10,000.00 from the last budget to \$55,000.00. Dr. Powell noted that this is a difficult item to estimate, but that the \$55,000.00 is a conservative approach.

##### Benefits

Dr. Powell informed the Council that the cost of health benefits has been reduced in the budget because the increase in costs was less than originally budgeted for. The actual increase in costs for Blue Cross is 6.9%.

It is anticipated that the proposed school budget will be in the amount of \$11,101,000.00 with a capital budget being 176,000.00 for a total budget of \$11,277,000.00.

There was additional Council discussion on the entire budget as presented by the School Committee, with Council President Long complimenting the School committee and school staff on the amount of detail contained in budget and narrative.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Attest:

Arlene D. Petit

Town Clerk

c: Town Council Members (5)  
Town Administrator  
Town Solicitor  
Administrative Circulation