

**MINUTES**  
**CABOT ANNUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING – MARCH 1, 2010**

Pursuant to the Warning as recorded and legally posted, the legal voters did meet at the time and place indicated and the following business was transacted:

The March 2, 2010 Cabot Annual School Meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by the School Board Chairperson, Chris Tormey.

Article 1 – Motion made and seconded to elect a Moderator for the ensuing year. Ed Smith nominated; seconded. Declared nominations closed; Ed Smith elected Moderator unanimously by voice vote.

Article 2 – To elect two school directors by Australian ballot – one for 2 years and one for 3 years; Australian ballot results: School Director for 2 years, David Hale 242 votes. David Hale was declared elected. School Director for 3 years, Chris Tormey 221 votes. Chris Tormey was declared elected.

Article 3 - Shall the voters of the Town School District approve the minutes of the March 3, 2009 Annual School District Meeting? Moderator read the article; moved by RD Eno and Charles Butterick seconded. No discussion. Moderator stated the question. Article 3 adopted by unanimous voice vote.

Article 4 – To hear a report by the School Directors. Moderator read the Article. Chris Tormey discussed the desire for a better meeting turnout by holding a separate meeting the night before Town Meeting and the process of reducing the budget; Ann Cookson discussed the need of proactive volunteerism and strengthening community involvement; Regina Quinn discussed the challenge of balancing large budget reductions while maintaining a vibrant school, and school changes for the upcoming year; Roman Kokodyniak discussed the need for volunteer participation from community members in school program development; Niall McCallum discussed the need for volunteer participation in the summer campus improvement project. Jessica Miller asked for the total budget reduction over last year? Chris responded that it was \$260,000. Jessica asked if stimulus money was included in the budget? Chris responded, yes. Jessica stated that indicating Cabot is not in the excess spending category was disingenuous as we are being penalized for amounts over the per pupil base. Judy Lewis asked how many positions were being cut? Regina responded that 4.6 positions were being cut. Ruth Moore asked why, after proposing alternative reductions of \$235,000, she was never contacted by the school board or superintendent's office? Chris responded that he is unable to speak for the Superintendent's office, but apologized for any oversight and hoped Ruth would stay in contact for next year budget cycle. Peter Dannenberg asked if the 40% next to the elementary music teacher salary was \$53,737? Chris responded the salary indicated was a typographical error and the teacher is no longer with the school. Jessica asked if the error amount was deducted from the budget? Chris responded that the budget is calculated separately. Jessica asked if the board would discuss UDAG and the performing arts? Ed stated that the performing arts center can be discussed in general, UDAG would be under other business. Jessica asked if the \$75,000 was approved in 2008 toward the performing arts building? Chris responded that it was approved. Jessica asked if that money was used? Caleb Pitkin stated that the money was not collected that year in taxes. Jessica asked if there was an anticipation note for the \$75,000? Chris responded, No. Jessica asked how money was used? Chris responded that money came from the school district funds and replaced mainly through fundraising and no anticipation note was taken for CSPAC. Jessica stated that the overall cost of the CSPAC building appears to be \$305,000, but the cost indicated is \$259,000 – what is the final cost? Chris responded \$259,000. Patricia Brochu-Cox asked for the percentage of teacher raises? Chris responded 4%. Patricia asked whether they were asked to forego an increase? Chris responded that they were not because they must adhere to the contract agreement. Some voluntarily returned the contracted increase, but the staff as a whole did not give up the raise. Patricia asked for the total raise amount? Chris responded that it was \$40,000. Jessica asked about the \$50,000 for the Special Revenue Fund? Chris did not know what that was for and asked if there were no objections if George Burlison could address the meeting? No objections. George stated that he would like a moment to check. Jessica asked why Supplemental Environmental Project money, received by the school from Cabot Creamery fines, is not included as income? Gary Gulka, who works at the Agency of Natural Resources, stated that while this project does exist in general, he knows of no money going to the Cabot School. Jessica states that this is untrue and people can check with the Secretary of ANR. Ruth Moore asked why there is a need for a behavioral support person when guidance and para-educators are available? Chris responded that the position is available to head off disciplinary issues and is seen as separate from guidance. Ruth stated that it does answer why there are several para-educators. Judy Pransky supports the reduction of behavioral support staff and questioned why we spend 50% of our budget on special education and psychological/behavioral support services? Regina responded that there is a high need for our student population and that the school offers a successful life altering environment not at the expense of other services. Charles Butterick stated that it was important to realize the difference between behavioralist and guidance counseling. Toni Lolli stated that he would like to convey his appreciation to the board for their service.

Ruth Moore asked whether \$370,287 revenue for SPED funding was from a state reimbursement? George Burlison announced that the financial manager is not available to answer budgetary questions at this time. Ruth restated that a lot of the behavioral and special education services are redundant and asked why we need to spend approximately \$740,000 for 40 special education students in addition to their per pupil cost. Jessica asked whether contracted counselors are provided for SPED? Chris responded that it was. Mary Carpenter stated that she is concerned when we focus on cutting funding for special education when it serves those who need it most. Karen Alexander stated that the school board is not obligated to solicit outside assistance when crafting a budget and that she would prefer to spend money on addressing behavioral problems at this level than to spend for correctional facilities in the future. Alfred Moore stated that this is not just cuts to SPED, but we should look at other programs available to students. No further discussion.

Article 5 – Shall the voters of the Town School District approve the sum of \$3,471,315 necessary for the support of its school for the year beginning July 1, 2010? Moderator read the article; moved by RD Eno and seconded. RD stated that the school board performed a painful task admirably and supports the budget. Jessica asked if there was an answer to the \$50,000 Special Revenue Fund? George Burlison responded that special revenue funds are not raised locally and cannot provide information on how it was spent. Jessica reaffirmed that the school district business manager is not available to answer these important questions and moved to amend the amount to \$3,171,315; Bonnie Dannenberg seconded. Ruth Moore spoke for the amended budget, Carla Payne spoke against amendment. Charles Butterick stated that additional volunteers are needed to work at passing the budget and to support the full budget. Jessica stated that the \$300,000 in Federal Stimulus money received should reduce the school budget. Chris responded that the stimulus money went into the State General Fund and the school will receive \$90,000 for the upcoming year. Regina stated that the stimulus money cannot be used to supplant other funding sources, but to improve what is offered. No further discussion. Moderator stated the question. Meeting called for paper ballot; required seven people to stand. Results from paper ballot: Yes – 49, No – 127. Amendment defeated by paper ballot. Erika Burke moved to amend the budget amount to \$3,487,715; Mike Cookson seconded. Erika supports the increased budget to assist with school-sponsored recreational activities. Cheryl McQueeney and Joel Schumacher support the increase to maintain school sports transportation. Judy Lewis does not support the increase, feeling parent volunteers should fill budgetary gaps. Rusty Churchill does not support the increase, feeling it shouldn't be okay to cut academics but support sports. RD does not support the increase, feeling that parent volunteers should support sports programs. David Hale stated that the burden falls to a few individuals and feels that it will take more community volunteers to meet the needs of the sports program. No further discussion. Moderator stated the question as amended; amendment defeated by voice vote. No further discussion. Moderator stated the question. Meeting called for paper ballot; required seven people to stand. Results from paper ballot: Yes – 126, No – 51. Article 5, Question 2 passed.

Article 6 – Shall the voters of the Town School District appropriate the audited fund balance as of June 30, 2010 for deposit in the Reserve Fund? Moderator read the article; moved by RD Eno moved and seconded. No discussion. Moderator stated the question; Article 6 adopted by voice vote.

Article 7 – To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting. Chris announced that Roman Kokodyniak resigned this year as school director. Ruth Moore asked if it were an appropriate time to discuss Article 2. Ed stated, Yes. Ruth was concerned whether a conflict existed as Chris Tormey is elected school board director who has direct authority over his spouse Mary Ann Tormey, an employee of the school? Linda Savoca feels they make it a point not to discuss conflicting issues. Russell Brown stated that Chris Tormey was the best thing that ever happened to this town. Caleb Pitkin stated that Mary Ann is okay, too. Leonard Spencer stated that there is enough separation to make appointment permissible. No further discussion.

Article 8 – To adjourn this meeting. Moderator read the article; moved by RD Eno and seconded. No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously and meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Tara Rogerson, Town Clerk  
Approved by:

Ed Smith, Moderator

Chris Tormey, School Board Chair