

MINUTES
CABOT ANNUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING – FEBRUARY 28, 2011

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 February 28, 2011 Cabot Annual School Meeting was called to order at 6:00 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. Moderator began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence. The Moderator then made opening remarks concerning the meeting.

Article 2 – To elect two school directors by Australian ballot – one for 2 years and one for 3 years; Moderator read the Article. Australian ballot results: School Director for 2 years, Ann Cookson 96 votes. Ann Cookson was declared elected. School Director for 3 years, Paul Stecker 67 votes. Paul Stecker was declared elected.

Article 3 - Shall the voters of the Town School District approve the minutes of the March 1, 2010 Annual School District Meeting? Moderator read the Article; moved and 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; moved and seconded. Chris Tormey discussed ways to improve and sustain costs, namely through maintaining staffing levels, improving and drawing new students to the high school program and working on the physical campus needs. Niall McCallum discussed school property repair needs and the new physical plant manager, Peter Ackermann. David Hale discussed expense increases and cuts necessary to minimize an overall budget increase. Chris gave an estimate of increase cost to 2011 education property taxes; asked to suspend the rules in order to allow the principal and superintendent not residing in Cabot to address the assembly; no objections. Karen Stewart discussed practices necessary to bring Cabot School into the 21st Century, the results of NECAP testing, vertical continuity for students and anticipated school changes necessary to meet the goals of the School Board. Rebecca Nally asked about vertical continuity of curriculum and whether online courses are planned for AP classes? Karen responded that online learning may be in the future and supplemental instruction would be necessary; a vertical curriculum is necessary to fill in the lapses between the younger and older NECAP groups. Mary Carpenter asked that people be wary of NECAP interpretations and whether money exists for John McSweeney's position, as it was crucial to many children. Karen responded that information technology would be accomplished through the school librarian and media specialists. Jessica Miller asked why the Article amount was different than the total appropriation request, consolidation of schools, added support staff and the cost per pupil. Chris responded that assistance for some children is obtained through Washington County Mental Health; more assistance was needed last year, the school was charged a higher rate and less reimbursement is received by the Federal government. Karen Alexander asked what other metrics beside NECAP are used to track the progress of students and how the success or failure of the new implementations be used as feedback to the Town? Chris agreed that better tracking of students would be helpful. Karen Stewart responded that no comprehensive assessment system is in place and implementation will have to be reviewed. Lynn Rockwell asked whether talks of consolidation were still being considered? Chris responded it will always be considered, but the board is attempting to maintain and improve the high school and collaborate with Twinfield to expand opportunities to children. Jessica asked whether teacher salaries could be leveled? Richard Hourihan feels that student graduates could lend perspective on how to go forward. Stephen Gregg stated that properties aren't worth their appraised value and the quality of education is not up to par. David Hale stated that the increased salaries are under contract and are an obligation of the school. Caleb Pitkin thanked Chris and the School Board for their hard work. No further discussion.

Article 5 – Shall the voters of the Town School District approve the sum of \$3,500,289 necessary for the support of its school for the year beginning July 1, 2011? Moderator read the Article; moved and seconded. Caleb stated that the school increase is small compared to many monthly household expenses. Sam Lewis asked whether the budget will meet our financial obligations for 2012. Chris responded that 2012 will be difficult as well. Bill Cobb stated that the budget should be turned down to send a message that the school must think outside the box and find a new way to look at the budget. Lars Torres supports the budget and stated that new leadership counts a tremendous amount but would like to

have a panel to look forward so we are not at the same stage years down the road. Leonard Spencer stated that a preemptive budget cut was made and a lot of energy was spent on improving budget and programs and the school should be supported. Jessica stated that a committee isn't needed as the School Board should be able to make improvements to the school and budget. Bonnie Dannenberg stated that problems would increase if schools are combined and is thankful to the School Board members. No further discussion. Moderator stated the question. Meeting called for paper ballot; required seven people to stand. Results from paper ballot: Yes – 92, No – 55. Article 5 adopted by paper ballot.

Article 6 – Shall the voters of the Town School District appropriate the audited fund balance as of June 30, 2011 for deposit in the Reserve Fund? Moderator read the Article; moved and seconded. Jessica stated that the balance should be forwarded to reduce taxes. Chris stated that approximately \$9,000 would be forwarded to the reserve fund. No further 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. Moderator read the Article. Chris thanked Niall McCallum for his service for the past few years. Steve Gregg asked whether he could move to vote the school budget by Australian Ballot in 2012. The Moderator stated that it would not be binding, but could be petitioned for next year. Caleb

Article 8 – To adjourn this meeting. Moderator read the Article; moved and seconded. No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously and meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Tara Rogerson, Town Clerk
Approved by:

Ed Smith, Moderator

Chris Tormey, School Board Chair