

**ACTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES**

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Library  
R.J. Grey Junior High School

February 10, 2005  
7:30 p.m.

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*Members Present:* Marie Altieri, Mary Ann Ashton, Jo-Ann Berry, Michael Coppolino,  
Terry Lindgren  
*Also Present:* William Ryan, George Frost, Nancy Kolb, Tess Summers,  
Susan Horn, citizens and press

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The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Marie Altieri, chairperson.

**CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION.**

The chairperson reviewed the items on the agenda.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** - None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**1. FY'06 APS Budget Discussion**

- Bill Ryan reviewed the three proposed "B" budget (reduction) scenarios. One reduces programs, one increases class sizes, and the third closes one school (school not determined). George Frost reviewed the 'close one school' option in detail.
- Marie Altieri summarized the current results of the public survey (on-line) asking for input about the three options. Over 200 responses have been received so far, and the survey remains open until next Thursday. The majority prefer the 'increase class size' option. Marie thanked those who responded - their comments have been very valuable.
- Members of the public offered comments. There was concern that Douglas would be the school closed. There was a suggestion that we take school choice students at the elementary grades. Mary Ann Ashton and Bill Ryan responded that, based on past experience, elementary choice was not as attractive as JH/HS, and therefore would probably not bring in as much money as was suggested. Bill Ryan stated that the most School Choice students at APS was approximately 75 students.
- Most School Committee members commented that they supported 'increased class size' as the preferred option, because we can recover more quickly from this scenario than the others. Bill Ryan noted that Acton has always been a community that supports its schools, and closing one school would be a shortsighted choice.
- Capital Plan (if \$4.5M override carries, making \$350K available for capital operating needs):
  - JD Head, Coordinator of Facilities, reviewed the building needs list which totaled \$350K. There was discussion about the needs/priorities. Charles Kadlec, citizen, asked the Committee to look at the cost of operating the Administration Building.
  - Technology - Steve Hall, Director of Technology Services, proposed purchasing PCs totaling \$30K, so that 42 elementary teachers can have a computer workstation in his/her classroom. Newer office computers will be moved into classrooms, and PCs purchased for office/classrooms. The Committee supported doing this, and asked the administration to take \$30K off the building needs list.
- Bill Ryan asked for direction about the \$80K building needs study. Should it be included in the budget? Because of recent information about increased health insurance costs, we would need to make additional budget cuts to add in the \$80K. He recommended not including it in budget, and School Committee members agreed.

**NEXT MEETING:** February 17, 6:30 - 7 pm, Jt. Executive Session

7:30 pm, Open Budget Hearing, JH Library

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah T. Lawton, Secretary pro tempore