

TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN – BOARD OF SELECTMEN

JOINT MEETING WITH SCHOOL COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2006 @ 3 PM

JUDGE WELSH HEARING ROOM

Chairman Cheryl Andrews convened this special meeting at 3:08 PM noting the following attendees: Board of Selectmen members: Cheryl Andrews, Sarah Peake, Michele Couture, Richard Olson, David Nicolau

Other Attendees: Town Manager Keith Bergman

School Committee Attendees: Terese Nelson, Peter Grosso, Debra Trovato, Molly Perdue, Burt Wolfman. Other Attendees: Superintendent Janice Lachowetz, Elementary Principal Anthony Teso

Recorder: Vernon G. Porter

The following are meeting minutes in brief.

1. JOINT MEETING WITH SCHOOL COMMITTEE

FY 2007 School Budget - Proposition 2 ½ Override for 2.6% Increase

Chairman Andrews - This is just the beginning to deal with proposition 2 ½. Would like to meet more with you during the year. We might not always agree on things but no matter what lets share information so that there are no surprises. We started to see a few weeks ago that the School may need an override if you went for a particular budget we were hearing about - I felt that it was appropriate to alert you so that we went into Town Meeting prepared. We are the last town on the Cape and frankly, I think we have been very lucky to have avoided it for so long after watching some of what other towns have gone through. The Selectmen will be dealing with it with municipal issues and with the school budget depending on what budget you folks bring to town meeting. The rules and regulations around Prop 2 ½ cause the Selectmen to have to do certain things and take responsibilities - even if it is your budget. One of them is submitting the Warrant. The main issue is knowing what budget you plan to submit to the Town Clerk for this Town Meeting because depending on what budget you submit that tells us what kind of Articles we have to have on the warrant and it doesn't make sense for us all to be sitting here on Friday waiting to see what you are going to do. I made the mistake of thinking when you took your budget to the Finance Committee I would know what your budget would be but the last time I had spoken to your Chairman she kind of said thatwell we've submitted two budgets. So that is, from my prospective - first and foremost what we have to deal with before the Warrant closes on Friday - what budget do you intend to submit ?? so that we can have the appropriate Articles there. The second issue will be - no matter what budget you submit there is going to be point where you look for the Finance Committee to take a position on it and you look for the Board of Selectmen to take a position on it. I certainly attempted to begin to think about what I would be looking for to support your budget when I spoke at the Finance Committee Hearing . I didn't intend on speaking when I went to the meeting but I could clearly see there were loggerheads developing and I thought that it was important to expand on my position because it had changed since the first time we met. Our Board hasn't talked about it though, since then and I made it very clear that day - and stated clearly that it was my position I was talking about.

There has been various discussions about studies that may or may not be done by one group or other groups or both groups. That certainly may or may not come up today. One last issue I am going to offer, for discussion, is maybe a serious commitment by the two Boards to meet a certain number of times during the next twelve months. Because I would like to see us meet more. I'd like to try and not dialogue through emails other than to schedule meetings. I know it was Mr. Wolfman who asked if I would consider the concept of a subcommittee - not me - I think these things are too important. As much as it is a hassle to find a good time for us all to get together - what's the alternative ... I think it's our responsibility. I said to Mrs. Nelson that morning when we met - pick a date and we will be there ... I meant it. I wasn't being fresh at all. If you want to meet twelve times in the next 12 months, I'll be there and I bet my colleagues would be too. What it takes though is somebody choosing a date and saying, will this work? So, I'm committed to that and I'd love to walk out of today's meeting with a commitment with the two Boards to say that we will meet six times - even if it's for ten minutes - just so we can update each other on where we are and what's happening and we talk as

opposed to emailing or letters or the press or any of the rest of it. For as much as this year is difficult - it's not going to go away. Unless there is some magic mathematically that I don't know about it, all the other towns - they don't have one override and then it stops. They have an override and maybe they get a year off and then they have another. I've seen them win and I've seen them fail. Just telling people it's only a dollar on their tax rate or only fifty cents on your bill - 9 times out of 10 that doesn't matter to people; there are other issues that matter and I know we need to address them for us. I know you folks need to and I would just as soon help be part of that dialogue with you so that, again, we don't have the mess of a failed override. We're certainly aware of the risks for us. Like I said this is the beginning of us learning to deal with Prop 2 ½. So, those are sort of the targeted things I had and I guess my question is did I leave anything out - are there issues you want to try and address this afternoon? You know we have a second meeting tonight but we can see what we can get done.

Terese - As far as our budget we will be meeting tomorrow morning and we will be voting on which budget to bring forward. We've been grappling between ourselves about what we felt what we wanted and what we need. We're also sensitive to the override issue. So we will take a formal vote tomorrow so that you will know before your deadline.

Cheryl - What time do you intend to do that? Answer: I would say close to 11 AM.

Then my question to you Mr. Bergman is "would it be possible to take a contingency vote such that if the School Committee submits this budget this is the article that goes with it and if they use that budget - so we don't have to have another meeting on Friday?" Given your time schedule we can't meet again, legally .. well we could recess this meeting I suppose if you wanted to meet with us again, but we really need to do this today.

Terese - Well we've presented both budgets forward.

Keith - I would say the Board of Selectmen could take votes today, which cover both contingencies and let's define what that is. If the amount of the budget is greater than level funding then I think the Board of Selectmen would want to condition that increase over level funding on a Prop 2 ½ override. Question - the reason for that is so that we're not facing a situation where the total of all the articles at the Annual Town Meeting that get passed add up to more than an amount that we can set a tax rate on. I think you could do that. Let's understand that it would involve also your voting for a Prop 2 ½ override question on the ballot. I would say that you could vote to do that today. If you find out tomorrow that the School Committee is proposing a level funded budget then when we meet on Monday night to determine the order of the Articles you can vote to rescind your vote on the override questions since it would be moot. Secondly, I would say that you could vote now - that in the event that the School Committee budget is greater than level funding that the amount of that increment - that there be language inserted in the warrant to condition that increment on the override vote - and then if they level funded tomorrow then the article contingent language doesn't go in the warrant. But the ballot doesn't get printed for a few more weeks .. So, even though the warrant for town meeting does close on Friday, you can vote it today and undo it on Monday safely.

Cheryl - You know the joy of it is trying to anticipate all the different scenarios so that we are prepared. I understand the debate you are having and thought to myself, what if they were having that debate all the way up to town meeting? It wouldn't be the first time that someone submitted a budget and moved it at a lower level at town meeting - and I asked Mr. Bergman, what would that look like? And he said well, that your ballots are already printed. Again, this is the same thing I said weeks ago; we need to make sure that you folks understand that. Like I said that is the primary motivation of being here - is make sure the information is going back and forth because this is new to me. I know it's new to you.

Terese - Right. So, OK, I guess the question Mr. Bergman would be then does the language .. you gave us one proposed motion .. would this motion cover the scenario that you outline? I know that this is a ballot question and we also have to have warrant language.

Keith - We will need to condition the second clause.

Terese to Keith - Just for verification can you provide us with what your level funded number would be? Answer: \$4,152,958 assuming the increment of 2.6% that has been announced thus far. Add \$109,044 you get \$4,262.44.00.

Therese - OK

Keith - With respect to a motion now, I would suggest that you could say: "and further, in the event that the School Committee budget request exceeds level funding, vote to insert the language that is specified." The other part of this that we haven't said yet, but I think it is well to say it here - as I said it to FinCom and the Chairman mentioned when we were there a week or so ago, is that, in crafting this language I know it is my intention to be supportive of the override that the School Committee would need for its increase, if they're game to go for it because by asking for that increase it would be the School Committee's expression that they need that additional funding to pay for the educational plan they have under our current structure. That's the sort of argument we need to be able to defend, collectively in order to face an override .. that the funding level is needed to support the Pre-K through 12 school system that we currently have. That was frankly, part of the evolutionary process when we talked about no override - no never, that on the one hand that squeezes us where we are having to take the political act of asking for an override but at the same time if the need for a budget increase is coming from the School Committee's belief and convictions that that is what they need to fund the quality system for the way it is structured now .. then we ought to support that effort.

Cheryl - Maybe that's the perfect time to stop worrying about the warrant. Clearly we won't know how to print the warrant until you make a final decision. And to the extent that I began to think out loud at your Finance Committee meeting about how I would or would not support both those budgets, my colleagues may want to have a dialogue with you as well. I'm sure you're curious. I mean that the big thing that usually happens between your submission of a budget and all of us going to Town Meeting ... is that we vote to take a position on it .. that is really one of our primary roles .

So, I think you all know what I said although three of my Selectmen weren't there when I said it but what I said at the Finance Committee meeting was that, "Instead of just saying, and I think you read about it in the paper too, instead of just saying..... "No you have to have a level funded budget" .., what I said was, "wait a minute, if you're saying that a level funded budget would decimate your programs, and I certainly got educated about exactly what some of those structural financial problems are facing the school system, I'll support you going for an override with a caveat. And that is what I said publically that we have some difficult discussions that we need to have --- they are difficult because they mean including choices we don't want, or at least some don't want. I certainly know the value of having the High School here. I don't need to have anybody really list for me all the contributions that we get in lots of ways from it - but, clearly, I think the public, the citizens, the voters, the taxpayers are in a position where they are going to ask that we do a hard study and look at all the options and alternatives including some maybe we haven't even talked about. That is what I said at the Finance Committee meetingthat that kind of commitment - exploring all the options would certainly have my support but I could not speak for my colleagues. That's where I'm at.

David Nicolau - Along those lines. I certainly, and I mentioned it at the last Selectmen's meeting, that if you need the override then I support the override because after the last discussion we had at the last meeting where you talked about service that you would have to cut if you didn't have that \$109K for me, I respect that we need the programs that you say we need and I would support that. With respect to the study, and I know there has been a lot of discussion about the study, what kind of study, who is going to be on it, the money that would be taken from the Finance Committee to support the study. I would like to hear a little bit from you. I think we've reached the point where I would hope that something good is going to come out of this .. that we keep talking about community and being a community doing things together and I think this is the perfect opportunity in a diverse study of a group that that is where we can begin - and including if we really want to have the school stay here and stay open, what is it that we haven't looked at. People are already set in their mind that we are going in one direction. So, I would like to hear a little bit more from your side as to what your fears are about that or positiveness about that so it could help me with that piece. That is where I am with it.

Sarah Peake - What I feel bad about is that it feels like I'm talking about the Study Committee, that the cart got ahead of the horse here. I know that at a Selectmen's meeting where we voted to open up the warrant, I looked through the pages and there were a couple of articles in there that, sponsored by, you know, requested by the Board of Selectmen and the Town Manager. I raised the issue at that meeting asking why, how could this be because we haven't talked about those articles, one of which was the Study Committee and other was Term Limits. And the response was, and it's absolutely legally correct, that by opening the warrant we are not voting to recommend or not recommend. We weren't voting to insert at that point in time. But as you all know, the Press gets our packets and then the word is out that the Board of Selectmen are requesting a study committee, when we had had no conversation about it. So, I am happy to have the conversation about it today, and here are my feelings.

I think it's important that the School Committee, and I would hope that you would want to work with the Board of Selectmen on this and also the Economic Development Committee, I mean we have even talked about having a member of the School Committee serving in one of the positions on the EDC. I hope that we can have a conversation and talk about the long-term quality education of our children here in this community. And I would like to think of it in that way because I think that leaves - it's a broader spectrum of issues that can come before us that the long term viability. The long-term quality of education I think, is what all of us are about and how we want to proceed doing that. Now is Nauset School District the way of doing that? Maybe it is - maybe it isn't. Is it looking at issues around school choice? Is it look at issues around Economic Development when we build community and affordable housing in this community - how many bedrooms are we having in those different units; what are we doing to diversify our economic engine. I mean there are myriad of things that go into that. So, my feeling on it is, so long as we can have access to information that we need, such as enrollment figures, monetary issues, per pupil costs, how things work with school choice funds following students, what assessments would be. As long as we have access to the information, which I think we do because I have seen lots of reports come under our nose in the last month or so. Unless the School Committee endorses and wants to put this Article on the warrant, I won't be voting to insert it. [Terese - You will or won't?] Answer: I will not. I will take the lead from you on it. But what I would hope is that this is just the beginning of the conversation and its not the end of the conversation and the focus of that conversation is the quality of education and the long-term viability of the quality of education. What steps are we going to take today to make sure that the children and the students of the Provincetown School, today, have the opportunity for quality education. So, that's my feeling on it. You know when these things get off track it's because we get ahead of ourselves and we can't turn back time no matter what Cher says, but I wish we could so there wasn't all the anger and upset, because I feel confident that the ten of us working together and with the other talented people in this community; that we will be able to come up a solution and brainstorm for ideas and attack this issue the same way that we looked at Affordable Housing, and at our Economic Development. These are all core issues about what our community is and what we want to see it become to the future. On this specific voting to insert or not, I will take the lead from the School Committee and vote accordingly.

Cheryl Andrews - I never even mentioned the language in here. I'll make sure that I do before we finish tonight because I should comment on it. I was so busy setting a stage for our conversation that I didn't.

Michele Couture - In regards to the budget, my feelings are that I am strongly in favor of you coming in with a balanced budget. Does that mean that I wouldn't vote for a 2 ½ override? It doesn't mean that all - because I would. I think that as hard as we worked on the Municipal side to keep all the budgets level funded, I think that it would be a really good thing to see all the budgets across the spectrum level funded. I think the difference, of course, is that the passion runs a lot higher when it comes to the school than it does on the municipal side. Here we can talk about not getting a copier or cutting down on one thing or another and with the schools we're talking about education and children and obviously that is a different story all together. Someone mentioned earlier, you know, it's a difference - it may have been yourself Terese - about needs and want. How do you define that when you obviously make your decision tomorrow it will come down to - what it is you actually need and what you want and how do those reconcile themselves within the town's budget.

As far as the study is concerned, I think that one of the things that I would like to see, and one of the things I firmly believe in is the viability of the schools - and I mean having the schools in Provincetown is really an essential thing. Do I think there are things we can look at in the future - I do believe that and one of the things I would be looking for is consolidation of the buildings, perhaps, because I do think that they are underutilized. Before I would look to Nauset as a resource, I would think that we have these two large buildings - we all did a tour and I know that when I was on the tour one of the things that struck me is how much space there was and how few students there were in both building. So, that's one of the things I would like to have future discussions about with you. As far as the study goes, I agree with Ms. Peake. I think that I would not be voting to have that inserted into the warrant. I would like to see where you all stand with it, but as I said, I think that there are other things that I think we could take a look at first.

Richard Olson - My feeling about the override is not a strong one. You people will decide, I think, whether you can go along with the level funding or you really feel that the override is a needed thing and I'm not going to die in the trenches one way or the other on that issue. I am glad that we've reached a point where we are discussing the long-range issues. At the risk of creating a shopping list of things that I think need studying, or questions that I would like answered - among them are these: the experience of the eleven students that are currently at Nauset. I've heard that students at Provincetown High say they don't want to go to Nauset, that they will be lost in the crowd - will be discriminated against - various problems that they perceive and I'd be curious how the students are coping and what

disadvantages or advantages they have experienced at Nauset Regional. Another question is with regard to trends. I know that trends and population can bounce. We see a down trend - I do note from statistics that the Town Clerk just gave us on the overall population on the town - it seems to be down trending but if you look at the long term, it's bounced up and down over fifty years - over the last ten years. So, we have to look at whether we have a possibility coming back in our directions. Subset of questions - children of same sex couples - are they likely to be a factor down the road in increasing our population? I'd be interested in the proportion of special needs student. And in fact, we're doing a good job educating special needs students - if becoming a magnet for students from out of Provincetown looks to be an advantageous thing, do we have a reason to make magnetism for special needs students an objective. By the same token, I have been told that we have an exceptional number of gifted students and if advanced placement courses and enrichment are something again - that if magnetization is a good thing, economically and enrichment wise, is that a directions to consider even though I bet you have already done a lot in that direction.

Something struck me reading the Banner today - the effect on Truro. They're being respectfully quiet about it, but any decision we have to make long-term is going to affect our neighbor town with whom we have a lot of issues we have to be cooperative upon. Going back to magnetization, I'd be curious just what progress there has been and what prospects there are in the fields of Arts and Drama, and I know that you have relationships with the Fine Arts Work Center and the other cultural organizations in town. By the same token, Oceanography and the Center For Coastal Studies - I know that has been in process. Another thing I would like to consider is administrative reorganization. Perhaps this is a time when we consider whether, considering the number of students, we may not be a bit top-heavy with a Superintendent and two Principals. Maybe that's not practical in this day and age. The subject of unused space has been raised and I did think, as did Ms. Couture, touring the two schools, which were being showed to us very proudly, for the fine renovations that had been done and the number of very enriched programs, but it looks like there is generous space, if not lavish space, for the number of students participating in these programs. The consolidation in one building is a possibility. I guess it was done during the period of the renovations of the High School. Finally, a comment that someone made to me is whether adult education is being fully utilized as a magnet, as a source of revenue and as a use for the school. I tend to think it is, but I was told that more could be done along those lines. And those are my thoughts for now.

David Nicolau - It was in the packet when I asked for information; that one subject that Sarah had mentioned that might be a possible article about whether or not we are requesting to form a needs conference. I could see, after reading that, as actually we never did discuss it, like Sarah said it was in our packet and all of sudden it showed up and I think that was one of the bombs that flew out because if you read it - I was under the impression just from general conversations that the reason why that was being done that way because that was the only way we could get information. Obviously, we got a lot of information without it. So, in the spirit of gesture of good will and trust - and I think that's where we need to come back to here because I think a lot of the bricks got pulled out because of things just getting out of hand. I'm going to count and trust on the School Committee. If you decided you wanted to put something like that on the warrant - fine; but if you don't that's fine too. I think that we can start from scratch and hopefully we'll have meetings and will figure out the rest and we will have a study by look at it together. I'm not going to shove anything down anybody's throat.

Superintendent Janice Lachowetz - I'm not aware that there was any information requested from the school's Superintendent's office or the School Committee that hadn't been acknowledged. Am I not correct on that?

Keith - You're not correct on that. In the course of trying to get information about the option of Nauset (and I can point emails that have gone to you and to Betty and Alma), that I received responses which have led me to conclude that school staff is not authorized to deal with those issue, if I want answers I need to go to Nauset directly - and I did. And I want you to know, and it can be a matter of record here that I first attempted to request that information from the Provincetown School System and it was only when I didn't get cooperation that I had no option except that if I wanted an answer, and believe me I did, I went directly to Nauset. I don't want ever to have to do that again.

Superintendent Janice Lachowetz - I never recall questions about Nauset and the question about a merger. Never, I'm sorry.

Cheryl Andrews - Back to you. As you've heard we haven't had a discussion on this and frankly we are trying to have our discussions with you - in front of you, which is difficult but at the same time I think on this issue probably the best way to go. With regards to this language, the question as I understood it at one point, when I talked to Mr. Bergman was, if we needed information, if the townspeople need hard data about whether Nauset was an option. What did we need to do about it? How do we get hard data? How do we have the discussions form the data prospective - and the

answer I got was "well you need to vote to petition the Nauset School Committee". And my answer back was, well, you know it's going to be a bomb because it's going to look like we've already skipped the study and decided what the answer to the question is. So, I said to Keith, would you do me a favor please and show us the language. Because if the language looks like bomb and acts like a bomb it's going to be a bomb. We need to talk about it and understand the language and understand if it is what it says it is. We've never had that discussion and I'm still not clear on whether the language that we have seen, because we haven't discussed it, means what it looks like to people what it means. Because when you read it .. it basically implies, certainly that's how you took it, that we want to join Nauset.

David - who wouldn't take it that way?

Cheryl - Well that's why you have to have the language in front you and ask questions about it.

Superintendent Janice Lachowetz - the question of merging has never been put before the School Committee. It has never been on an agenda and I've never been directed to put it before them.

Terese - we had summit meetings and it never came up.

Cheryl Andrews - At this point, frankly, as I have said to a lot of people, I've not had to really deal with this issue as a Selectman for quite sometime. I haven't really delved into it, I've learned a lot in the last three months about Choice and tuitioning and regionalization and a lot of things that I never had to think much about. As far as whether it is an issue, it was an issue when I first started going to Town Meeting fifteen years ago, and the answer upstairs was that Nauset didn't have room. I keep reading the papers where everybody on the Cape, except for maybe Bourne and Sandwich, seem to have room - that we're all suffering from the same problem. Absolutely, Terese, I know it is just not about room. I'm not simple. I get it - it's about a lot of things. So, the question was, what would the language look like, could we talk about it and find out what it meant? We never got to that point because everybody got upset and I understand that. In any case, what have I learned since all this discussion began? I've learned that approximately one-third of the Provincetown students grade 9 through 12 now are educated out of town, they are not educated here. The second thing, when looking at the data we do have, I learned that a majority of the students attending our high school - a majority Grades 9 through 12 are from out of town. I guess the third thing I also understand is that we have eleven kids, which is about one-quarter of the local population 9 through 12, going to Nauset now. So, already a quarter of our students are at Nauset. But when I realized that in essence we're running a regional school now - that more kids are coming here from out of town than from townbut we are not able to assess the cost the way a regional school would be assessing it. That's a problem. Because what it means is the parents of those kids aren't on our town meeting floor footing the bill. That's an issue for you folks with the voters. It's an issue for me, when I think OK, I'm used to paying high prices. We pay high prices here for everything. I don't mind paying. So we're number one in the State - you're number one in the State. But wait a minute; these kids are from out of town. So it begs the question, you know, what's going on here and are we happy with these trends. Are the townspeople going to continue to fund the system with these trends or not? And it became clear to me that no matter what we debate about - who said what and how the communications are going - I'm hoping that you folks will publically commit to looking at Nauset now. If this is the wrong language to do it, I'm certainly happy to say, all right, we can put this article aside for a year. But I'm hoping to see a School Committee that says, yes, we're going to look at all the options and Nauset is one of them. I haven't heard that and I hope I hear it soon because I think that's what needs to happen. We need to look at all the options and having the kids go to Nauset, as much as that's not what we want, has to be part of the mix of things we study and look at and consider. And when you say it's not just an issue of "is there room?" - of course I know that. It's lots of issues and all those things should be looked at. When it comes to this article my understanding is that this article was necessary to get the information to examine this option. If we can get all the information without the article, fine, I don't know whether that's true or not. I guess we'll have to hear from the folks at Nauset whether that is true or not but that's my understanding. So, I guess that's my final statement that I'm really looking for the School Committee to let us know - are you going to look at that as an option?

Sarah Peake - As I thought about this, I thought about my experience on the Board of Selectmen and where things have been successful and where things have been not successful, - like where it's ripped the community apart. Where there has been a process, although it may take longer for us to get to an agreed upon article, let's say on town meeting floor, where there has been a process there has always been success with that article. Whether it is affordable housing initiatives, whether it was siting the Manor. We all remember the controversy and how it ripped apart the community in talking about Site 'Y' and what the environmental concerns were there or not. We finally ended up with a same site development. As part of that same site there was the issue around the ball field and the way that was handled. But

where we have taken a step back, when we put a process in place and everybody has made a commitment to talk to each other and talk about all of the issues - to Cheryl Andrews's point - it's been my experience that we as a community can figure out anything ... and we can come up with solutions and I think that's what our challenge is here with this. Nobody wants to see the schools close but my theory is if we don't have a conversation about the long-term quality of education for our children - now that we are at our Prop 2 ½ levy limit, what I don't want to see happen is maybe this year the override request is just \$109K but in some future years it's a significant chunk of change for the budget, I would hate for the budget not to pass in an override situation because then we're all in big trouble. We're in a crisis management mode as opposed to being in a proactive management mode. I know that's what we're wrestling with on the Municipal side of the budget and keeping things in balance because in taking an override to the voters we want to be able to articulate the reason why we need the money and what the long-term implication of it is. Because if it fails, well you know what, then it's about more than paper clips and copiers, it's about laying off DPW workers, more policemen or not doing curb side trash pick-up. Things that really affect this community. So, that's where I'm coming from on it and I hope we can agree on a process. I think agreeing on a series of regular meetings is a big first step in that direction.

Cheryl - Terese, I'd like to turn it over to you but I have to say, I like the way Sarah said it a little better than the way I said it . You know, it's a little more polished . This is a little bit upsetting and I have a hard time choosing my words except in a very detached way sometimes because this whole thing is upsetting - just to comprehend. But Sarah is right - that's my vision of the alternative. If there isn't sort of a major grappling of the issues, and you folks have to take the lead on it, that's what's going to happen - some of these overrides will fail and you'll start looking at a system coming apart and then we've all failed. I'd agree, I appreciate your sentiment. Let me turn it over to you.

Molly - I just wanted to comment on something that Sarah said. You know when you talk about DPW workers, you have to remember that the Schools are just bigger than just the students. You're talking about cafeteria workers, you're talking about kitchen staff, you're talking about custodians, you're talking about a lot of jobs .. and the fact that that has not been brought into the conversation concerns a lot of us because it's going to have an impact on so many people. I think instead, and it's true you can't change the past, but instead of the Selectmen and the Town Manager going - taking a trip to Nauset, you know the School Committee is also available and we are the elected officials. I think it would have been nice to have this conversation because it has spiraled to a point where you can't take something back and regionalization is kind of mixed in there with so many feelings about people in our community. I know how many emails I've been getting and I'm sure others have and it's a concern where we go from here. I feel that when you're already talking about regionalization as if, you know, that is what we all have come up with. In other words, when you ask the question about regionalization you have left out cost containment, you have left out - well I mean these are different issues Cheryl, I mean if the point of the study is just regionalization ...

Cheryl - I didn't say that. I'm saying the study is all encompassing. Let's not insult our intelligence here - a number of us have major degrees. Most of us went beyond public schools. I'm not dumb. I'm very aware of all the issues that you're saying and a quality look at these issues would include all those things. And frankly, I hope that at some point, when you folks decide to do this, you will layout all those issues and we'll have that discussion. What I was asking, Molly, was that in that big discussion you agree not to exclude regionalization from the discussion. That's all I'm saying.

Molly - I think that's a little different that how things have been presented to us. I mean I would love to look at innovative ways of cost containment. We've been saying this for a very long time about facility utilization. Our first meeting I talked about, wow - wouldn't it be great if we could utilize, you know, the facilities we have and make them year round, make them filled with all sorts of programs that educate not only children but many different age levels in our community. And we haven't yet tapped into that and that's a different conversation to me that talking about closing the schools. When you talk about regionalization that is the fear that is going to be initiated in every one that hears that word.

Cheryl - Well, I didn't say schools. I think the original conversation was 9 through 12. And as I said there has to be a discussion amongst you folks.

Terese - but see you all are deciding the parameters is what I think that what Molly ... our problem is when you say 9 through 12 you're not keeping your middle school. I mean, how do you know that your middle school will survive? That is all part of this study. This is our issue. You can't ... I know

Keith has talked about in his memorandums about closing the High School 9 through 12 and put them on a flex bus and selling the Elementary School. This was laid out before our community. I mean if you want to talk about insulting our intelligence - how do you think it made our children in this community and the families and their loved ones feel when they get this information. We're more than happy and we've been more than happy to share information, to share resources, to share property, our parking spaces - whatever you want - we've played the game. We've played it continually. As far as the study, the first time, you know, you floated around a little piece of paper of someone we were going to start some initial talks with. We get from Keith - we don't like that person, they don't crunch numbers. We get a letter from the Finance Committee - this person .. we've already gone on the internet. We haven't even interviewed the person yet. We want to put together a community-based study. Do we need to have the word regionalization with Nauset? No! Because it's going to involve everything. Is Nauset going to be left out of the equations? No! We're going to look at everything. We're going to look at how it affects our families, our firemen, our Cumberland Farms, our Tedeschi's, how it affects the Penny Patch people who work there. It's about everything. (Cheryl - it should be.) We are a major part of the fabric of this community and it's going to be everything. It's not going to be just about regionalization with Nauset. If taking a field trip to Nauset and then saying, "OH! By the way guys the only way we could get the information is to go up there on our own." I'm sorry, we've never in my experience have turned down any information that has been asked for - -whether it has been through this committee or through the finance committee. We will be setting a broad based community - we're going to appoint - we'll have business people, may have a religious leader, some educators - broad based. Will it be staff, yes, but I think that is for the committee to determine. We may need an educational consultant, we may need a business consultant, we may need a community development consultant. We may have put a package together. We do not know where that's going to go and I think to try to tie that package up by town meeting is a mistake. You want to have an open conversation. You have an open conversation and you prepare our young people to take the journey with us. You know that yesterday was move-up day and today is Truro visiting day. What do you think that is going to do to our numbers? For all those people who are wondering whether there is going to be a school in 2007. Everybody for us is important and we want to make people feel secure. We want to take them on the journey with. We'll be happy to take you with us as well and have open dialogue. (Cheryl Andrews - Super. I agree with what you're saying.) I'm not in favor of the article and I'm not in favor of the way it's written.

Burt - I'd like to respond to a couple of things. One, on the questions of level funding and 2 ½. Part of our summit and part of the whole discussion and part of what we have to grapple with, is I agree. This is not going to be a one-year solution. We're moving here on a multi-year fiscal issue - from which, from our perspective, we've getting very little direction, we had in this whole budget process. You know, we like could sacrifice, survive with level funding - we can't do it every year and neither can you. And so the question is then, what is our multi-use strategy. We've got collective bargaining agreements; we got staffing issues that we have to make multi-year commitments to. And that goes also for the whole discussion of the school budget and the school population. School are fragile reeds, particularly teenagers. You don't pull the rug out from underneath them. You make a long-term commitment to them. They and their parents need it. The minute you start saying there are alternatives vis a vis regionalization, you're going to loose the middle school. Wherever there's ambiguity, parents make decisions for stability for their children and you can't just say, with a shrinking population, if you believe in your community and if you believe your community includes families and children, then you have to give them guarantees. Yes, it is expensive, yes, there's ways of cost containment, yes, there are ways of building enrollment. But if you look at the Truro population and you can make this dichotomy they're out of town, who are they? They are the children of Provincetown High School graduates. Their grandparents live in town. The grandparents use the Manor. Truro's just an extension. It's because there is no affordable housing that they are in Truro. That's one population and if you want to cut them off and ignore them - where's your labor force, where's your integration in terms of the dynamics of this town - you lose it. And even though we throw these numbers around that we're the most expensive without really looking at the numbers. If you look at the High School. The High School is level funded. 9 thru 12, seventh grade - they were level funded this year even before the rest of it. And if you take the Truro revenue in to that level funding and then you start running your cost per students and adding in the special ed - that isn't a big expensive deal. And it's hard to match and push those kids out elsewhere and hope the savings you get is going to relieve your budget - going to avoid 2 ½ and you lose your town in the process .. over nickel and diming kids. I think it is fine to talk but the one thing that is keeping our talk gonna be off base and not successful unless there is staff respect. That goes for Town Manager vis a vis the School Staff. Unless staff is committed to work together and sharing and avoid adversarial. Our talking together is useless. It happens, we'll be wasting our time. That's my condition for continuing to meet. I don't want emails back and forth and harassment. If we're going to talk, we'll talk, but we'll all talk on the same page.

Debra - I just have a question Michele said about all departments are coming in level funded, and I don't think that's true. I'd like to find that out and I'd also, the article that are coming up - what kind of money are we talking about for other articles being put on the warrant and why they wouldn't - are they included in Prop 2 ½ for the School Board side? I'd like to hear a little bit more about the municipal side of the Prop 2 ½ and how that's being handled. Cheryl - are you talking about '06 or '07? Debra - for your Prop 2 ½. Cheryl - for the Manor? Debra - I don't know. I hear so many stories out there and I don't know what its for.

Keith - The Board of Selectmen has inserted an override question for this year not next year. For this year for supplemental budget for appropriation for Cape End Manor - \$350K. That increase, if approved does raise the levy limit permanently and that \$350K would be enough to cover what we had diagnosed in our joint meetings as the \$315K that was necessary to "level fund" all budgets. That level funded plan did, as the questioner is aware the Fire Department is not level funded that that's an increase - the ambulance is not level funded, that's an increase that there are specifically some don't touch them, don't mess with them budgets that we're increasing. But that DPW is level funded, the Finance Departments are level funded. Up and down the general government list are budgets that are level funded. There is a \$400K one-time exit cost that we have in Fiscal '07 associated with transitioning Cape End Manor over to New England Deaconess. We've got \$50K, the only appropriation article that we have for spending is \$50K for, I was going to call it Fireworks, but I guess it for July 4th observance. So, those things are plugged in, we can do all of those things and level funded projects with the residual affect that that \$350K override for next year. What we can't cover is the additional \$109K for the Schools.

Terese - I have a question, I remember back a few months ago there was \$400K shortfall. Now, I guess I'm confused. When we come in with a budget, we get so much money and then we stay within that budget and that's pretty much that unless we had an emergency and then I guess we'd have come back and ask for more money. Does that hold true with the Town Budget - when you're given that amount of money, do you stay within that or then do you use whatever other monies - I know we've given up some Grant monies and there's been other monies generated on top of that - are you also allowed to spend over what's approved at Town Meeting? Keith - We're not and we made those adjustments in November to cut back spending. We cut two hundred or so thousand dollars out of our operating budget. Terese - So you don't spend more that what's appropriated at Town Meeting? Keith - Only at the Nursing Home. Terese - I don't understand that.

Sarah - So, as you may recall, at Town Meeting we always have a Special Town Meeting before the Annual starts and what takes place often in the Special is we vote to move money from various accounts - let's say all of the approved funds from one department haven't been expended but because of some unforeseen circumstances another department has spent more that what's been appropriated. Terese - Like a line item transfer? Sarah - exactly. But then also, every year from my recollection - since I've been on the Board of Selectmen, when we have received our budget book, it hasn't been just for the upcoming fiscal year that starts July first but there's also a section in the front that has talked about, well for A ,B or C reasons - usually something that has to do with the Manor we raised and appropriated at Town Meeting a year ago a certain amount of money and now we're short. So at Special Town meeting we're going to have to ask the voters to raise and appropriate an additional sum. And we always have. What's different now is, we're at our levy limit. When we had a \$1M cushion, we ate into that -- we ate into that - so before we even looked at the next fiscal year we were raising the amount at Special Town Meeting - of the levy from the prior fiscal year.

Terese - So when you get your budget approved are your able to go into that cushion and utilize that money? Sarah - If Town Meeting votes to give us the money that we've requested for, like the current fiscal year, yes, we spend it then between town meeting and June 30th of that year.

Cheryl - You've got the town meeting vote, that's the key. Keith- with the appropriation. Sarah - So now this year, because of the increased census at the Manor which is a good news story that the census goes up - as the census goes up expenses increase with it. The disappointing side of the story was we thought we were going to offer outpatient rehab services to increase the income, but because of State licensing procedures, that just can't happen until we have the new facility. So, the income stream was smaller than expected. The expenses were greater, some of which we'll recoup - but it will be after July 1, 2007, so we were facing a \$350K shortfall for 2006, the current year. That's why a couple of weeks ago we voted to at Special Town Meeting, request the additional funds, which will then have to be a ballot question in May for Prop 2 ½ override for that \$350K. Terese - So the \$350K you get on an override will then cover the \$317K for '07? Sarah - What it does is lifts the levy and we start FY 2007 at a higher tick point basically. Keith - For both years, it would raise the levy. It raises the levy for this year and it will be available for next year.

Cheryl - Because the last thing, I think, we were all talking about, the last time we met - was alright we have an override problem of some number - how do we divvy it up - between you folks and us and Keith had said 50/50 and you had said, you're out of your mind and then it was like would it be 80/20. The Selectmen turned around and said to Mr. Bergman, you know what - you'd better give us a couple of options. Splitting the override problem with them, doing it 80/20, maybe us having to eat the whole thing. And that was literally were we left off. And then this news came in which, while it's one more thing we have to deal with - for at least this cycle of discussions it take the pressure of that problem away - as far as the override for that amount.

Terese - I have a couple more questions, as I'm trying to understand your side of the budget.

Sarah - And just as a follow-up, if the town meeting votes to give us the 350 at the Special Town Meeting and it then goes to the ballot - if the override fails at the ballot - I had asked this question at our meeting - what happens because we're short this year - well, it has to get attached to FY '07 which means come July 1st we'll be looking in the Municipal Budget for \$350K worth of cuts; because we have bills to have to pay - but because we'll be starting the new fiscal year - we'll have to find those cuts, which will be deep and painful - God forbid it doesn't pass.

Terese - I guess the other questions I have as we've had so many statistics that have looked at the school side of things and we also look at the town side of things, when we say our loss in population or our cost per pupil we also say, "well you know, we are doing a study" but sometimes the study on the other side can also help some of our questions; because you know you guys have a lot of questions - but we have a lot of questions too ... like year round community, how many people stay year round, are your numbers going up or are your numbers going down, what's the percentage of increase on the town budget - your per person cost as opposed to our per pupil cost, how do those numbers jive when you set up a graph, both with families or year rounders? We'll use the term year rounders - that stay and how that may have an impact on the school because we're looking at a long-term study. We're not looking to put a band-aid on an operation. You look at a long term study. Even those numbers may be small and even those cost may be high, if you determine that it's well worth the investment for other reasons - that's a long-term study. Cheryl - Right! That's the key. Now you've hit the nail on the head.

Terese - Well, I also want to say that the nail needs to be hit on your head too, because when you look at that study, you know, you have to look at your demographics and see, as Mr. Olson so clearly pointed out about the sway and the pendulum, and you know, same sex couples bringing kids in. Well..... are same sex couples buying homes here? I mean, that's part of what maybe you guys need to study so that when we do sit together at the table and talk about our study there is some connectiveness to how those two studies fit together.

Cheryl - But here is the key, in the end we both answer to the voters.

Terese - Oh! Absolutely we do and I can tell you dollars for donuts how our voters feel.

Cheryl - Great, then you're all set.

Therese - But it's not all set. That's not the point. It's not about what our side says and what this side says. We don't want to polarize anyone because we believe, and we've said this for the last sever years - we've come in level funded for the last several years - but we said this for the last sever years - and it answers Richard's question and it answers some of the other questions in the room and it even answers some of Michele's - yes, we have a nice spacious building and yes we are inclusive in how we handle that. We've talked about having a learning center for all ages. Do we want that? Absolutely! Because we think that it is not only beneficial for our older folks in this community to benefit from our younger people but our younger people because that is how family works at its best. Regardless of whether they are heterosexual or homosexual - it doesn't matter. Older people and younger people are good for one another. So, you have a learning campus for all age. I go to the adult school - I take my son. Now in my class there are six year olds - he's twelve. There's 300 people enrolled in the adult school. Would we like to have two sessions? Yes. Can we afford two sessions? No. But you know what, that may be part of the long-term plan that we bring to this table with the community; because you're doing a study for needs and we're doing a study for needs and that may be something that decide that we need together because that's how best we can use the property up on the hill. Are we utilizing our school for the Fine Arts Work Center, are we using it for art auctions, are we using it for adult yoga lesions? All those kinds of things. We can make that not just a cost per pupil. We can make it a cost per person, so that we can best utilize those

properties without having to put them on the Real Estate market for something that we'll never be able to recapture again. For what? Saving two or three thousand dollars per pupil to out force our kids? If that's not what this community wants for itself, if that's not where we are going to get our workforce, if that not going to keep our business men and women. It's a big large picture. Are we willing to tackle it? Oh Yea! Because you have five people on this committee are not just passionate about their school but they are passionate about their community.

The final thing I want to say, and I am talking as a parent. There's nothing more hurtful than to have a kid come home or to have their friends see you at the basketball court and ask you whether they are going to be able to return to school in the fall. That should never happen in this community. That should never be .. The kids should never feel that they are not wanted in the community regardless of where they go to school. Whether it is here or whether it is at Nauset, whether it's at Chatham ... they should not feel as though this community does not want them to be here. And that is what I really what I find to be the thrust of my anger. The hard questions are easy. As adults we can answer those questions. And I know you might not like hearing that side of it. But that is the side we see. We have an assembly. We have kids that are doing power-point presentations. We have PTA meetings. This committee has been out every day trying to pick up the pieces of how staff feels .. wondering whether they have applied for new jobs. You know, veteran staff and the staffing we have is difficult.

Cheryl - I guess I am a little confused Terese, because if you know how the voters feel and you feel right now based on everything you know that the voters are wholeheartedly content - why would these people be worried about their jobs - because we don't have the power to close the school. I'm sorry, I have a lot of respect for the job you do - you do it passionately and I think public education - there's really no function this town performs that is more important than educating the kids. But the reality is that, when I first came to the table this winter, and I am speaking for me here, my concern was that I tried to put in my own head - what were my questions about the school system - just for me as one voter. And it wasn't necessarily the cost. The question was, do I feel good about what I'm buying? And I'm thinking to myself, you know what, if they have to go for an override - they have to be concerned about what other people are asking too - because those are the people who are going to say Yea or Nay on that money. So, as one good citizen, it makes sense to communicate that to you because it concerns me. And I did the same exercise for myself.

Terese - It's not about power. It's about attitude. Cheryl - Let me finish just finish the thought. I did the same thing in my head, I said, "let's throw 2 ½ away, let's pretend we had tons of money, we're all wealthy and we didn't have to worry about Prop 2 ½" - when would we have questions about what we are voting for? OK ..and your answer to me is - you know what, we've answered those questions. Well you said that a few minutes ago - you said, *I know what the voters think*. And if you're right, then you're right - then we don't really need to do too much work, the town's ready to vote your override and vote your budget and that's great. I know for me, I don't want to micromanage your budget. I don't want to really worry about cost containment and buildings - that's your job. I just know as one person who works hard for the town - this scared me. When I saw what was happening this winter and I thought it was important to talk about and for me, I thought having a good conversations would be looking at the options and saying, here's where we want to go. I looked at the paper the other day about Technical Vocational Schools - I'm sure you saw the article in the Cape Cod Times, and they were talking about Cape Tech in Harwich and saying they have, what do they have about 700 kids, and they have a waiting list of 200. Two Hundred, a waiting list and I'm sitting here going - maybe that's it - maybe we should have a Tech School here in Provincetown. - I don't know. I do know that I hope that our School Committee is really looking at those issues so that the public, the voters, feel good that you're doing that and that was my concern.

Terese - And I agree with all of that but let me just backup here for a minute. This didn't just start with this one issue. This started several months back when it was reported that we were going to pull out of Cape Cod Tech .. and we were going to, you know, get in line and our kids were going to go on a waiting list because it was thought that the formula was going to be - I don't now - \$30K and the override would be X amount. Then again it put the people who utilize our educational system who live here round in turmoil. We were all called. We all had to drop everything in the middle of a budget process. We all had to come and, you know, speak up and defend our kids at Cape Cod Tech - then all of a sudden, that's not the right formula. No problem your kids are back in line. You're jerking them around. Cheryl - Actually it's the State that's jerking you around. Terese - But it's not the State! Cheryl - Oh yes it is. Terese - No it's not! Because it came from this office. Cheryl - It came from the State - those numbers. Terese - Not the numbers - the action. It's the action.

Keith - Could I have an opportunity to respond to that? Cheryl - Yes. Keith - Because, I think that is an excellent example to bring up. Because it is the same issues where, for whatever reason, an act that's put forth out of my office - in that case which was an action requesting that our fellow district member help us craft a way so that Provincetown can pay a lower figure without jeopardizing our students. There was no mention that suddenly Provincetown students would be taken out of the queue at Cape Cod Tech and that they wouldn't have an opportunity to continue to go there. That wasn't the proposal that I put forward but it certainly, from many of the comments that were made sitting at this table, that the reaction was - no - that's an awful ideawhat about the students ?. An issue gets out and its gets framed and it's instantly twisted into something that is hurtful and that's no way for us to be doing business. If what we're talking about is going to stop that - then that is great.

Molly - I just want to say that I hope we do stop it. Because when talking about that argument you think - all you have to do is pose a question and the question could be, "should we pull out of Cape Tech regionally? Can we send our kids there without being a part of the regional system? As soon as you ask that question, and you know it doesn't get asked here and processed first with the people I think that are involved in the educational process, then it spirals as does regionalization and you get to a point that I don't know even how you can have a frank discussion because everyone is so emotionally involved in their livelihood, as they should be if they work at the school or go to a school.

Janice - May I just make a suggestion that, henceforth, if there are mutual issues, such as the tech school issue for instance, that the communication comes either through Keith to the Superintendent or a request to be on the School Committee Agenda. 'Cause when it gets on the School Committee Agenda that's where it's discussed - it's an open meeting and everybody gets there. So, that if there is a strong issues, I think, if it's particularly a school issue that the process really that the School Board goes by and follows. All their business is done via the School Committee and what is on the agenda and what's discussed - not behind this or not behind that or not by email suggestion or not by that. And I think that is part of the confusion here and I think that those of who work in that process expect that probably that is the way it should go. So, henceforth, I mean I never hesitate; I don't like people to think that Keith and I do not communicate. I think we do. I don't hesitate to pick up the telephone and you know he prefers to work by email; he knows that not my strong suit but the thing is - I think if it is that important then it should come to the School Committee.

Cheryl - I think we're all inclined to agree again which is always a good way to finish up meeting. It would be much better if we had good conversations as opposed arguing how those conversations are happening. I think we agree on that. Let me ask you a question - how often do you folks meet? Terese - a couple times a month, at least once now it's been like a couple times a week. Cheryl - Ok. If you can make a commitment to putting Mr. Bergman on your agenda. Janice - he should call, he should and discuss it with me or Terese.

Cheryl - Wait a minute, I need to hear this because we need to give him a directive. He answers to us and frankly these are issues that we as a Board - we need to give him clarity and ??? you. If you're saying you'll make a commitment to put him on the agenda (Terese - yup!), at your next meeting, then I think we all have agreement that that's the way the communication should take place. He'll ask to be on your agenda and meeting with your committee. Is there a problem with that? David - It's not that there's a problem Cheryl but I would like to have enough discussion about do we want to meet with the School Committee - say once a month. Janice - I'm talking about the same issue - not every School Committee meeting. Keith - And I appreciate the subtlety of what Janice is saying that if it's because of what we're not talking about is the Town Manager and the Superintendent resolving policy issues and there is going no substitute whatsoever for the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee committing to .. I mean what's even more important than my committing to go through Janice on educational information, which is perfectly fine by me. Janice - As long as it's manageable Keith. Keith - Well exactly, that's it and we'll come to an understanding at what point is information - is the answer to the question something that requires work - that require policy clearance?? . And just as important in that mix, as the Selectmen has suggested, the commitment to frequent regular communication between all of us. David - And I'm furthering that. So, what I was going to say is that I would like to commit to is that we meet with the School Committee once a month. Let's start it now. The closer we get to having discussions the longer you wait - it's like whispering in somebody's ear and by the time it gets down to the other end of town it has changed totally from what the person said. Terese - Oh David, it doesn't take that long. (Laughter) David - I would like to make a motion on this end to meet once a month and then if you'd like to join in that commitment, let's start the ball rolling now and see where we need to go.

Terese - Just for clarification, because I know you guys have a meeting and so do we. I'm assuming I'm going to call you tomorrow after our meeting to let you know about our budget. Cheryl - Actually, if you'll just email the information to Mr. Bergman. Keith - So that we know what you're -- - and we do have to have the Board make the motion. Terese - That will be done tomorrow, late morning. Assuming Article Petition For Reorganization Needs Conference is going to be dropped and we are going to form our committee and we're going to communicate about that through the ... with our meeting, is that correct? Keith - Right. David - Do we want to finish first with the once a month? Sarah - Let's pick a regular time, I don't care if its before your School Committee meetings or if we want to pick the first Wednesday of the month at 4 PM. let's lay them out right now so that every month we're not trying to say, when can we get together .. whether or not it is going to be a regular thing that is going to happen. Terese - Are you guys able to meet at 3 pm on the first Tuesday of the month? Keith - We can't do April because it Town Meeting. I think if we start with the first Tuesday in May we'll meet at 3 pm .. because we're all busy getting through town meeting and I think if we start with the first Tuesday in May. Keith - Can I make a suggestion though? I do think that we should commit the monthly meeting schedule and keep it and go with it. Terese - Absolutely. Keith - I also suggest that no matter it would be very healthy for the groups to get together prior to Town Meeting one more time so that we're clear on what we're going to say because the commitment here is to into Town Meeting jointly having mutually assured each other that we're working together and that we're heading in the same direction. We may be talking about the difficulty of getting a School Budget as well as a Municipal Budget through with overrides and the more that we can do to present a joint - you know - I think; (Terese - whatever your pleasure.) one more get together before town meeting .. it's a month away. Terese - What about the Finance Committee? Keith - I think the Finance Committee should be there too. You've got a couple of members in the audience today. Cheryl - So, one more Fiscal Summit? Keith - Yea. Frankly if we're ready for it, the Selectmen and the Finance Committee are already committed to a joint meeting on the 13th of March. - a joint Public Hearing on the Budget pursuant to the Charter ... that may be the most appropriate time (6 pm). Terese - OK, then maybe we could just stop in and do a brief pow wow as you probably have ... plus a lot of stuff to discuss. Cheryl - Yea, but we will put you in specifically as an item. Terese - If you can put us in early, we can get in and kind-a get out. Why don't we do May 9th at 3 pm. Cheryl - We have two dates then. Terese - So we have March 13th at 6 pm and May 9th at 3 pm at the School Library.

Michele - I just want to say one thing before we close, I think that one of the things I'd like to suggest - actually I would like to say two things - I would suggest that the community needs to be healed from what's happened in the last couple of weeks and one of the things I would like to suggest is a joint Community Forum - that we both could attend - that we could take questions and answers from the public and I'd like to do it before Town Meeting. I think that there has been a lot of hard feelings. I think, in fact, it has been heating up since the Cape Cod Regional Tech discussions were misunderstood. I think that this only exacerbated the situation and I really would, I would certainly be willing to do it at any time. So that's my first suggestions. And the other thing I would like to say is, language is really an important thing - being educators - people would know that, I mean you all would know that. I think that things can easily get out of hand when the wrong language is used. Even this evening Mr. Wolfman had said something using the word harassment and you know you can be aggrieved, you can be a lot of things but when you start throwing words around like *harassment* they are inflammatory and I think you know when we're having discussions about the school it is really a passionate subject and people feel very vulnerable about it and I can understand that. I know that when I saw Mr. Teso's letter that was sent home to the parents it upset me because I thought it's really inflammatory language because that wasn't really the case at all. I think that some things were misunderstood and to send a letter home to the parents on information that was incorrect was an inflammatory thing to do. So, I think that on both sides we really need to careful on how we phrase the argument. But more than anything, I think we need to come together, there needs to be some community healing here because I think that people are very tender about this and I would really like to get together and would welcome doing it whenever the time, dates and just have a Q and A and let people know we are supportive of the schools and I think we should do that soon. David - maybe we could add a joint press release to that - a joint press release.

Terese - We're having a hearing on the 7th. Richard - that was going to be my point - they are having that hearing, unfortunately we having a hearing on facilities reuse - Terese - Oh! Surplus Properties? [Laughter .. by all ...] Cheryl - let's deal with our budget. Richard - Is it possible that one of the two hearings could be rescheduled so that they don't conflict and we can accomplish both. David - I think the surplus property - I mean I think we can change that one. It would be more important to go to the Public Hearing for the Public Schools. Cheryl - I think so too - so do you folks want to cancel that? What night was that? Answer - the 7th from 6 to 8 and it's in the Elementary School. Cheryl - so the Board wants to cancel that. Richard - I want to add something - I thought we achieved that point and then

something more got added and I don't know who said it effectively - but the past is prologue and let us learn from the prologue and then leave it in the past. Please. Therese - Sound like a theologian. Richard - Well you're more acquainted with that.

Sarah - do we need to post that as a meeting on the 7th. Cheryl - I think we should post a meeting - that's a good idea. Michele - I wish there was some way it could get out that it was not just a meeting with the School Committee and to discuss, you know - I'd like it to be a wider discussion and I'd like for it to be ...

Terese - You know the thing is that when you talk about healing, the kids really need a time to be able to ask questions, they want to present a power-point presentation. This is a time to kind-a give them and I think it is good for us just to sit back and just be supportive and encouraging. And I think when that happens sometimes the rest has a way. Janice - It is my understanding anyway of a Public Hearing it's not a Q & A. What the purpose is, is that the School Committee invites whomever in the audience, whatever opinion they have to come and express that opinion and without a Q & A and without any response - that is typically how a Public Hearing is so that all that information can be gathered about how folks are feeling. Michele - I think that is only part of it though. I think it is important to have a Q & A. Therese - but we are not running it that way. We've determined. Michele - However you want to do it for your March 7th meeting. What I'm talking about is to have us jointly meet, have a Q & A because I think, well, on one hand what you're doing on March 7th is good, I think that what I would envision is that, in much like we had in the past, we've had quarterly forums, which we haven't had in awhile, but I think that one of things that's really helpful is that if people come and we have a dialogue - I think it's important to have a dialogue and that's what I'm looking for - not just, you know, having people come and talk, I think it's important that we get our point of view out as well and just, at least, let people know where we stand because I think it's good for people to get things off their chest but if they're not having some of their questions - Janice - then that would be a good idea for your summit meetings. I mean if you can get the word out because those are public hearings, people can come - they hear the discussion and whatever the issue is. I think, you know, that's where you do the Q & A is important.

Sarah - My concern about the 7th, is hearing that the student have power-point presentations, and all, I thrilled about that but like today alone we hear certain things like the memo that Keith sent in an effort, quite frankly on behalf of everybody in this community to grapple with the unfair regional school funding formula for the Cape Cod Tech resulted in people believing that meant we wanted to pull out of Cape Cod Tech. And nobody ever said we wanted to stay out of Cape Cod Tech. But to the Town Manager's credit he was like a dog with a bone trying to see if there was some way he could rally other Town Manager's who are in a similar situation paying a disproportionate share of the Cape Cod Regional Tech cost. So, how can we, just as we said it is important for us to communicate directly with each other so we hear first hand and know what our words mean and not to send memos that get ahead of the process and all of that ...what can we do now to clarify and debunk those rumors so that they don't continue to spiral out of control?

Molly - I just think that the petition for reorganization needs *conference enlargement* ?? (*inaudible hard to hear*) of Nauset Regional School District, which is what you're talking about. That, I presume, is off the table pretty much.

Sarah - I don't think that there's a will of the majority of the Board. Molly - You understand the language of that is pretty much what has inspired a lot of this because that is the language of regionalization and to sort of know that this is off the table, I think, is important knowledge for us. Sarah - and how will that be communicated to the students - because I heard what Terese said when she said the children there are upset and wondering will they be going back to the school in the fall? Well - yea! Absolutely they will be but does good news travel as fast as bad news? Janice - I think what you're going to hear, hopefully, is there's a process in sight. These issues are out there. We certainly want to hear what their concerns are. However, there is a road - there is a path. The Town, itself, needs to decide many issues and the School issue is a very important part of that. And so, I think, not being inflammatory, not allowing - I mean if you're running a meeting, you know, you have to be very careful. As you all know, that this is not about this person or that person or whatever. This is now the issue of a broad school program and down the road. So, I think you need to contain it and then answer the questions in a rational and hopefully honest way. I think that's the way - you don't want to insight; you don't want to stir the emotions anymore than they already have.

Terese - Can I just make a statement too. It's really important when information comes out in a form of a memo that's circulated to a large number of people. For instance, let me just read you something and you tell me how you might think people associated with the school might interpret this. "The Finance Committee has recently posed several questions about whether Provincetown should become part of the Nauset Regional School District at the High School level grades 9 through 12. A threshold question is whether there is room for Provincetown's students at Nauset High. In response Nauset Superintendent Michael B. Gradone tells me that his High School enrollment is about to begin a

significant decline and feels confident in September of 2007 it is very likely that there will be adequate space for the full projected enrollment of Provincetown High. Superintendent Gradone indicates the next step would be for an elected body from the Town of Provincetown to make a formal inquiry to the Nauset Regional School Committee about a potential merger. Ultimately, Town meeting decides whether to approve a district agreement for the town's entity into a regional school district."

The message you send is, these people have no say. A potential merger, it goes to Town Meeting. That's what people hear - regardless of that's what you're saying. That's what people hear.

Keith - I'm just going to have to say that in the very next paragraph it then says, "therefore, I would recommend that the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee and the Finance Committee reconvene to talk about that." That was the purpose of the memo. Terese - Yea, but Keith what I'm saying is that you're not talking about doing a needs assessment. Keith - And here we are. Terese - I'm just saying that if you want to send an appropriate message, you know there's other ways of communicating that kind of thing.

Cheryl - We have to go. But I have to say, and you folks are School Committee Members - I don't know how you communicate but I know how the Town Manager communicates. If it's something we need to discuss, he writes it to us because that way we read it over the weekend .. we think about what questions we might have and then we come to the table Monday night in public, in front of the TV and we ask questions about it. It wouldn't be my first time in my eight years as a Selectmen if something came through that I didn't understand or didn't know where it came from ... maybe I'm just use to not responding to it, because I see it all the time that that is the way that we do business. I ask, you know you can accept this as an explanation or not but I had concerns about what that language would look like. How do I discuss that with my Board? There's only one way .. Terese - we need to do a better job - Cheryl - No, I can't call the five of them. I can't have a pow-wow. I have to ask Mr. Bergman to show us what that would look like so that the five of us could discuss it and say, "this is trouble, throw it out or 'oh', is that what it means?" We never got a chance to .. you know that may upset you but that is the way we have to do business by law. Janice - And we do it via our School Committee. We do an Agenda. We send out packets - all the information is there before the School Committee and that's how we communicate or via the phone.

Cheryl - Well, we don't. We're not legally allowed to do it by phone. Janice - Oh, I mean if it's an individual question. Not a group. Well they have to because sometimes there is an initial question and they need to ask the Superintendent.

Cheryl - In any case, I respect what you are saying in trying to have good communications, but that is a process we use. Molly - I think we can do better. Terese - You know to get that memo from Rick Woods was really alarming.

Cheryl - Well, it was a surprise to me too. I'd call him and ask him about that. I don't know the man. Michele - We can do that forum for a different date other than March 7th? Cheryl - Can we have a motion so we don't forget.

MOTION: Move that the Board of Selectmen vote, pursuant to MGL C.59, §21C(g) to insert a ballot question onto the May 2, 2006 Annual Town Election ballot to read as follows: "Shall the Town of Provincetown be allowed to assess an additional \$109,484 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding the operating budget of the Provincetown Public Schools for the fiscal year beginning July first, two thousand and six? Yes ___ No ___"; and, further, in the event that the School Committee budget request exceeds level funding, vote to insert onto the warrant for the April 3, 2006 Annual Town Meeting an article requesting an FY 2007 appropriation for the Provincetown Public Schools of \$4,262,442 with \$109,484 thereof contingent upon the voters approval of a Proposition 2½ override ballot question, in accordance with the provisions of MGL C. 59, §21C(m).

Motion by: Sarah Peake

Seconded by: Michele Couture

Yea 5 Nay 0

Cheryl - I know I have questions for you folks about town meeting but is there anything else we need to discuss today?

Terese - No, I think we're all set. We have two dates. March 13th and May 9th.

Michele - Were you interested in doing a Community Forum? Terese - Right after town meeting may be a good time.

Molly - This is a discussion - we have to keep going. Terese - Right after town meeting might be a really good time when everybody's calmed down.

Sarah - We'll be up there on the 7th because we cancelled our meeting.

Future meeting with Board of Selectmen and School Committee on the first Tuesday of each month beginning June 6, 2006.

Post meeting - May 9, 2006 @ 3 pm meet with School Committee at the School Library.

March 13th - Joint meeting with Board of Selectmen/FinCom and School Committee.

Cancel Public Hearing on March 7, 2006 and join the School Committee at their meeting at the High School

The Board then discussed the future funding as it applies to fireworks display.

MOTION: Move that the Board of Selectmen vote to request that the Town Manager draft articles to carry out the spirit of the discussion that we just had now, that there will be adequate funding on hand so that we have the option of fireworks to occur either in FY '06 or FY /07 and that we have adequate funding for 4th of July events to be determined.

Motion: Sarah Peake Seconded by: David Nicolau Yea 5 Nay 0

Motion to adjourn by Michele Couture at 5:00 PM.

Minutes transcribed by: Vernon G. Porter
April 26, 2006