

**UNION #39 SCHOOL BOARD  
BUDGET INFORMATION MEETING  
TUESDAY, MAY 23, 2006  
7:00 P.M.  
BLACK RIVER HIGH SCHOOL  
GYMNASIUM**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:**

**Board:** Diana Chimbolo, Board, Ralph Pace, David Slivka, Brent Karner, Allen Seiple,  
Randy Bixby

**Staff:** John Barth, Frank Perotti

**Public:** Ray Tarbell, Iggy Matulonis, Kevin Kuntz, Peter Berg, Barbara Berg, Richard  
Aiello, Pat Aiello, Laura Davis, Julie Goraj, Don Stryhas

Ms. Chimbolo called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

**II. BUSINESS ITEM:**

**A. 2006-2007 Budget:**

Ms. Chimbolo noted that the proposed 2006-2007 school year budget is \$3,507,846, a 7.58% increase above last year.

Kevin Kuntz asked why the percentage increase in the tax rate was significantly higher than the percentage increase in the budget. Ms. Chimbolo explained the Act 68 calculation and how the Common Level of Appraisal affected the tax rate.

Ms. Chimbolo noted that the increase in the local tax rate is mostly due to a change in the Common Level of Appraisal. Therefore, even if the school did not increase their budget the tax rate would increase. Mr. Seiple encouraged voters to contact state legislators about the impact of Act 68.

Peter Berg stated that he will vote no on the budget to send a message to the State that Act 68 is not working. Ms. Chimbolo explained that the State will not get the message by voting the school budget down. It will hurt the district as the school will have to borrow money to keep the school open and so voting the budget down will only hurt students. Mr. Slivka stated that 85% of Vermont towns benefit from Act 68. Mr. Matulonis stated that the school will have to use last year's budget amount if a budget is not approved.

Ms. Chimbolo noted that the school board is trying to cooperate more with the Ludlow selectboard. Mr. Matulonis stated that Ludlow residents that go south for the winter should be encouraged to get absentee ballots.

Ms. Chimbolo outlined efforts that the board has taken to increase voter turnout, and explained that the board will try to move the budget vote back to town meeting day.

Richard Aiello asked what the total difference between the second proposed 2006-2007 budget was from the first proposed budget. Ms. Chimbolo stated that there was a reduction of \$31,000 due to reductions in virtual high school costs, the elimination of a part-time health teacher, and some health insurance benefit changes.

Mr. Berg asked what the board suggested be done to make major changes to the situation as it will only get worse in future years. Mr. Perotti stated that the Vermont Superintendent's Association, the Vermont School Boards' Association and the Vermont League of Cities and Towns are lobbying for equity throughout the State and some small changes have been made. Mr. Perotti stated that it will be a long process to make changes as legislators, the Governor, and the State Department of Education will need to be worked with.

Mr. Perotti stated that the board looked at privatizing the high school but it would be more expensive. A group would have to develop the facility. If it took over the existing building that group would have to make renovations and those costs would be reflected in a higher tuition rate for Ludlow taxpayers.

Mr. Slivka stated that there will have to be a major systematic change to see real change. Mr. Slivka stated that larger towns will have to turn into sending towns rather than receiving towns before real change will take place.

### **III. ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Balch  
Board Recording Secretary