

**RECONVENED  
LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING  
of the FISCAL YEAR 2011**

June 29, 2010

The Public Budget Hearing of the Lowell School Committee for fiscal year 2011, reconvened on Thursday, June 29, 2010 in the Council Chamber, City Hall, at 6:00 pm.

**ROLL CALL**

On roll call at 6:10 pm, all members were present, namely, Alison P. B. Laraba, John J. Leahy, James D. Leary, Connie A. Martin, Mayor/Chairman James L. Milinazzo, David J. Conway and Jacqueline A. Doherty

**For the record**, the Fiscal Year 2011 Lowell School Department Budget was put together by Roger (Jay) Lang, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations. All line items were presented and recommended for approval by the Superintendent.

The chair acknowledged Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent.

Superintendent Scott stated that they were here tonight to hopefully finalize our FY2011 Lowell School Department Budget. It has been a long process. The Committee and the administration have been grappling with this budget for half a year. Late this afternoon they were able to finalize the proposals, and they did email them out to Committee members and a hard copy was put on their desks this evening.

Mayor Milinazzo stated that he would now have a presentation by Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, and then allow Public Participation. He reminded the public that if they wished to speak to please sign in stating name and address.

Mayor Milinazzo acknowledged Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations.

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that in the School Committee's packets and what he had emailed out to them today is on their desks. He wanted to walk them through that memo and the accompanying documents.

As of yesterday and today, we still do not have any final confirmation of actual funding amounts (if any would be coming) that would be coming for the Charter School kids that may be enrolling to the Lowell Public Schools. On June 16<sup>th</sup>, we had taken **\$511,203** to be set aside for contractual negotiations. We use that as an offset to the budget to the general budget to help close the gap. At this point it would be his recommendation to leave that **\$511,203** to stand still

as a budget offset in anticipation of some money coming in from the Charter School. As we talked at the meeting on June 16<sup>th</sup>, my caution is that this is a one-time revenue, not a recurring revenue. We do need to be very cautious as we spend that. In the event that we were to receive Charter School spending over the summer, he would strongly recommend the first **\$511,203** go to actual offset the local operating budget prior to the Committee taking any further actions, because, again, it is one-time in nature. Beyond that we could have additional discussions on what to do. If that is the Committee's desire, the Superintendent and he would put together some recommendations for one-time purchases for textbooks, level reading libraries for classrooms; something that has been neglected over the past number of years that wouldn't add a rolling burden to the FY12 budget. That is the recommendation in regards to that aspect.

The second thing, and this was just finalized yesterday, if you recall we had a request for proposal pertaining to the management and operation of the Food Service Program. The RFP (Request for Proposal) review committee had screened applications. It was a long process. They are making a recommendation to award the contract to one of the vendors that submitted a proposal. The Committee has a two page memo from me to Michael Vaughn, Chief Procurement Officer of the City of Lowell, just outlining some of the aspects of the contract. Critical to us, we were looking to at least have a break-even-point with our food service operations. Aramark Education Services, LLC, that we are recommending, is guaranteeing us a profit in the first year of **\$340,863** so we will no longer be operating in a deficit. They will do that largely through some national and regional purchasing. They obviously have more purchasing power than we do. They have systems in place in regards to menu planning and maximizing revenue and reimbursements. Another key aspect is that all the existing food service workers all remain Lowell Public School employees. All the cooks, managers, cafeteria workers, and drivers will remain in their current positions under their current contract. They still have to bid on the wages and benefit packages that are included in that new contract, but they all remain employees of the school department. Aramark is purposing several upgrades to the district to really maximize the number of lunches and breakfasts served, which they hope will help drive down some of this cost. The real thing for him (Superintendent Lang) was getting to a break-even point, but that **\$340,863** profit that we can tie to our operating budget is significant, and the company is guaranteed its administrative and management fees in year one to be \$352,217. In the event the profit was only \$240,000, they would take \$100,000 out of their administrative and management fees and back bill us, so we are guaranteed that **\$340,863**. Superintendent Lang stated he thought that was significant and he thought the Committee should discuss and entertain that contract award as early as tonight. We can talk about that as we go line by line through the budget.

The next bullet on page 2 of his memo, on June 24<sup>th</sup>, the DOE (Department of Education) had updated their circuit breaker reimbursement amounts for this year so he was recommending that offset. He always uses the current FY10 parent to the number of the FY11 Budget amount. There was also a discrepancy in the non-residence student tuition. He had listed this as \$30,000. He had missed the one. It is actually **\$130,000** so we are going to go back in and pick up that additional savings this evening.

On June 16<sup>th</sup>, the next bullet, we had an anticipated savings of \$300,000 for folks moving from the Master Medical Plan to the other alternative health plans. While we have had significant

movement from the Master Medical to the PTO and HMO, that number has been offset by an additional number of staff (he believes the number of staff was 13) newly enrolled in the various health plan offerings. These employees weren't previously there prior to the open-enrollment. It would have been a bull park savings of \$280,000 if no additional numbers were added, but they did have the 13 new members added in other health plan offerings so our savings for next year is **\$70,203**. When they go into the budget, he will make that adjustment this evening.

Not on the meeting of June 16<sup>th</sup>, but the meeting prior (June 1, 2010), there was a motion to remove **\$100,000** from the alternative schools. The alternative schools are throughout the budget. He doesn't have a line item account entitled alternative schools so to do that he took the \$100,000 from the contract with Middlesex Community College for the running of the Riverside Alternative School program. He did not want to take the entire \$100,000 from the Riverside Alternative School program. He is recommending going in and taking a teaching position in the salaries of the Molloy Alternative School. That will be approximately **\$60,000**. The other **\$40,000** will come as a reduction from the Middlesex Community College contract. It is going to be the **\$100,000** savings, but he doesn't want to take the entire \$100,000 directly from the Middlesex Community College contract for the running of the Riverside Alternative School program. He wanted **\$60,000** of that to come from the Molloy Alternative School.

Also prior to June 16<sup>th</sup>, we moved funds from Tuition Reimbursement and Professional Development to the School Committee's Expense Account. He is recommending that those be put properly back in the budget, because those (Tuition Reimbursement and Professional Development) are contractual obligations.

As the Committee goes through these various recommendations and if they didn't vary them at all, there will be a balance of **\$190,894** in the School Committee Expense Account for the School Committee to further appropriate. If these funds are appropriated by the Committee, the Superintendent's recommendations in regards to those funds are:

- Reinstatement of one of the Library Media Specialists at Lowell High School for **\$92,393**
- Hold the balance of **\$98,501** in the Suspense Account to
  - Work on creating a K-12 instructional media//technology position

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that the Superintendent, he, and other administrators will work on creating possibly a new position that will help alleviate some of the cost of the elimination of all the LMS (Library Media Specialists) throughout the district and the Computer Instructional Technology Specialists throughout the district. This individual would actually coordinate K through 12 informational, library media specialists' jobs. This would have to be brought back to the Committee as a new job, a new job description and salary that will have to be negotiated. This will be brought to the School Committee at the July or August meeting.

Lastly, Assistant Superintendent Lang went through various actions that they talked about during the various Finance Subcommittee meetings during the Spring. The Superintendent had proposals for tiers 1, 2 and 3. He went through all the ones that were remaining per grade levels and amounts. They are as follows:

Elementary Level Reductions .....	<b>\$395,304</b>
Middle Level Reductions .....	<b>\$358,518</b>
High School Reductions .....	<b><u>\$358,518</u></b>
Total Alternative Budget Reductions.....	<b>\$1,112,340</b>

These are not recommendations by the administration at this point, but if the School Committee doesn't accept the recommendations outlined by him tonight and desired to go deeper into the budget to make cuts, those are the areas they would recommend going rather than just going and cutting randomly through the budget.

After Assistant Superintendent Lang's memo, there is a two-page chart (which he has done in the past) of various budget action per page and budget-book location. The Committee may desire to begin with that and go line-by-line with these recommendations and take action individually.

Mayor Milinazzo thanked Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, for his breakdown of the budget.

Ms. Laraba wanted to bring a motion on the floor.

**Suspension of the Rules**

Mr. Conway moved:

For a **Suspension of the Rules**, to allow Ms. Laraba to bring a motion on the floor; seconded by Ms. Doherty. **Suspension APPROVED**

Ms. Laraba moved:

To direct the Superintendent to look at the cost-savings that might be generated by combining the television studio and folding that into the Communication Academy to see if it is:

1. Feasible
2. Cost effective
3. If these savings could be used this or next year in the hopes of bringing back Fine Arts Chair person

Motion was seconded by Ms. Doherty for discussion. Unanimously approved on roll call. **APPROVED**

In discussion, Ms. Laraba stated that looking at the various departments at the high school, she was surprised to find the television studio was separate from the Communications Academy. Her thought process, and she could be wrong, they should really be working together. Communications is part of the television studio. Again, looking at it from the outside, she understands that there are things that come into play that she is not aware of. Still, she wants to take a look at that and see if it makes sense to combine them to see if it is cost savings and if any

of those services may be duplicated. Ideally, we should want our students to be fully involved with the television studio at all times whether the day-time tapings or showing up at the night-time tapings. If this is going to be their career, that is what they would be doing on a day-to-day basis. That is where she is coming from. She wants information to see if it makes sense and if there is any possible savings in doing that.

Mayor Milinazzo stated that at this point Ms. Laraba is looking for information.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, for point of clarification stated that she could definitely look into that and come back with a suggestive proposal. She asked if Ms. Laraba wanted this sometime in the future; this coming budget year. They've restructured the district office in the middle of the school year, and we have realized cost savings in the middle of the school year. We restructured Family Resource Center and Transportation in the middle of the school year and saved money.

Ms. Laraba stated that if the proposal comes forward, if it makes sense, and they could implement it, the sooner the better. The money that they save, any money that they save could bring back other positions. That is her though process.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that all reconstruction is done in accordance to the contracts in place of employees in regards to timelines. She can definitely look into that and bring back a detailed proposal.

Ms. Doherty stated that she supported Ms. Laraba's motion. They really have to look at the television studio. It is a wonderful facility that she doesn't think they are using for the full benefit of their students. In the spirit of looking at that and what the Superintendent said, there is going to be some time involved. In terms of what they are looking at tonight, she doesn't see any projective savings. Supportive of this motion tonight will be just to move forward, looking at the television studio. She knows the television studio supports the whole district in many ways:

- Professional Development
- Elementary and middle schools programs

After that, this is where the unclear role is. We need to look at how we can use it better.

Mr. Leary wanted to know when the Committee could anticipate receiving the proposal.

Ms. Laraba stated that the Superintendent could come back to her in December and state she wanted this for the next school year. She is not putting a timetable on her motion.

Mr. Leahy through the Chair to Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations questions bullet number 2 of his memo, food service.

Mr. Leahy stated that Aramark Education Services guarantees a profit, but we (Food Service Department) were still running a deficit; right now we're at a deficit.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that right now they (Food Service Department) are at a **\$300,000** deficit that they have to cut for next year.

Mr. Leahy stated that he thought there were changes in the contract to cut that amount in half (\$150,000).

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that the **\$300,000** is the deficit right. Going into the next school year because the contract just got settled right now, it will not have an effect on the current year. It will have an effect on the next year (2010-2011 school year). They are going to knock off **\$150,000** off of that \$300,000 by those alterations to the Collins by in large, the rates that will come in. For the remaining **\$150,000** that they will be cutting, they are going to have to be looking at staffing, at supplies, and things of that sort. Technically even if that contract was just implemented in current day, it would still be about a **\$150,000** deficit that they are trying to close.

Mr. Leahy stated that this (Aramark Education Services, LLC) is a new slate and is going to be a definite profit.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that you have to look at this as two different things. If they continue to run the program with our in-house administrative staff and cook staff, we would be starting with the \$150,000 deficit, and that is what we would be trying to clean up over the summer to have an operation to at least break even. Totally unrelated to that is this company (Aramark Education Services, LLC). Through the management of the program, they would come in and serve pretty much as our day-to-day management and oversight of the program. They have looked at the numbers; they have looked at the way they would do purchasing, and things of that sort, and they have guaranteed the district a profit of **\$340,863**. Instead of being down \$150,000, we are going to be right off the bat, July 1<sup>st</sup>, up **\$340,863**. *"I am saying that we should use that \$340,863 in revenue to offset the local budget loss."*

Mr. Leahy stated that he also had a question on number 5 (of Assistant Superintendent Lang's memo), alternative schools. Why are we going to take one teacher out of the Molloy Alternative School? What would be the thinking on that?

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that when she looked at caseloads and the number of students that they service at the Molloy Alternative School, there was a reduction of one staff person that needed to be made there. They took the reduction there. Last year with our contract with Middlesex Community College, there was some extra money that they didn't totally bill us. They knew they had a buffer there so they took that out. This is how they came up with the **\$100,000**.

Mr. Leahy wanted to know what would happen if the school (Molloy Alternative School) was run the way it is suppose to run and all the kids show up. Are they going to be overcrowded in the classrooms? Not to be smart but there is suppose to be one hundred kids there a day and only sixty are showing up.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that she thinks the school is properly staffed at this time. As she goes forward and looks at problematic needs at the Molloy Alternative School in conjunction with the Freshman Academy and the other alternative schools that they have, we believe that we will be able to offer an enriched program with the present staff.

Mr. Conway stated that as far as the Food Service Program, how long is this contract; is it year to year for the management team?

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, responded in the affirmative. He further stated that this contract was actually regulated by the state (Commonwealth of Massachusetts) these food service contracts. It is a one-year contract awarded with two-option years. It is a one-year contract and if it goes well, the School Committee can entertain an extension offering for year two, and an option for year three where at that point it (the contract) will be rebid.

Mr. Conway stated that some of the savings are in the various foods that are going to be purchased, is that correct?

Assistant Superintendent Lang responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Conway wanted to know who was going to oversee the quality of the food in this.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that the management company (Aramark Education Services, LLC) themselves will be purchasing the food. Again, they are going to be buying in larger scales than we would be here. They are going to get much better volumes of discounts and rebates, which are actually a part of the proposal. They roll back by law right to the Lowell Public Schools so that savings is going to be coming to us. They will have a representative in the district (similar to what they have now), which will be reporting to Assistant Superintendent Lang on a regular basis. If there are issues, Assistant Superintendent Lang will know about it.

Mr. Conway asked if Assistant Superintendent Lang was their boss.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that ultimately he was the one administering the contract so he would be their boss.

Mr. Conway wanted to know if Aramark Education Services, LLC, were the boss of our (food service) employees.

Assistant Superintendent Lang responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Conway wanted to know if there was a contractual problem with that.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that right now if a food service employee had an issue they would go to their union. If the union couldn't

resolve the problem on their own, they would go and file a grievance which would be heard by himself (Assistant Superintendent Lang). Under the same circumstance, the new individual (the outside company that would be running the program) if they didn't see eye to eye on a particular issue, they would have the same recourse. They would file a grievance and ultimately it would come to him (Assistant Superintendent Lang). The current managing team is not part of the bargaining unit, and the new management team will not be either. He (Assistant Superintendent Lang) serves as the intermediate for that.

Mr. Conway wanted to know what would happen after the Committee makes their settlements here tonight and in the very near future one or all of their unions come up with financial concessions that might save some of their employees. He wanted to know the mechanical procedure on how that would be dealt with.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that if the Committee votes this budget tonight, 4 million dollars will have been cut out of the budget. If one of the unions comes forward with concessions and the Committee feels is acceptable and it is the Committee's wish, we will start to look at those 4 million dollars of cuts and prioritize what has to be brought back first. Again, in the context of FY12 in which people have heard me say many times that it is going to be even more difficult, we need to be very cautious on what recommendations we bring forward to the Committee.

Mr. Conway wanted to know if the negotiations would be ongoing.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent responded in the affirmative. She stated that the unions could bring forth concessions at any time for the School Committee to consider.

Ms. Doherty stated that on the sheet of cuts, the alternative budget reductions, the Committee received, they are taking one FTE (full time employee) from every elementary and middle school and six from the high school. This is what we have to do if we do not approve those other changes (Assistant Superintendent Lang went over tonight in his memo to the Committee). When she looks at what the Committee did on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June (they put a lot of money in the Suspense Account), to come up with a bottom-line number, she realizes that they found some additional savings.

- **\$146,000** from the circuit breaker
- **\$100,000** from the non-resident student tuition
  - Only had the non-resident student tuition at \$30,000

Then there was some money that they were putting back:

- Professional Development **\$237,000**
- Tuition reimbursement equals **\$300,000**
- If we go with the Aramark Education Services, a savings of **\$340,863**

There seems to be a significant amount of savings that they have come up with tonight, more than half a million, so how is it that we don't have to go in and make some further cuts when we

were short a million. It was a million dollars that Ms. Doherty stated was moved around so the math doesn't quite jive.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, asked the Committee to look at the two spreadsheets (*Superintendent's recommended FY2011 Budget Adjustments* dated June 29, 2010) that list the cuts. The first cut was the Molloy Alternative School on page 6 and the last cut was the School Committee Suspense Account. The net effect of all those changes that the Committee sees tonight zero out. This budget assumes all of the actions that were taken on June 16<sup>th</sup>, which the Committee enforced with these particular changes. One of the big line items was the movement of the **\$511,203** into the budget as a revenue. That was not included on the spread sheets the Committee received tonight, because they had already made that move. The net effect of all the others, yes they are adding **\$300,000** for tuition reimbursement and **\$237,000** for Professional Development, but this is also assuming that the Committee is going to:

- award the food service contract (to Aramark Education Services, LLC)
- take the circuit breaker offset, and
- the non-resident student tuition offset

All of these have a net zero effect on the budget.

Ms. Doherty questioned the health insurance. They were counting on a savings of \$300,000, but only **\$70,203** was realized. Won't the Committee have to put that **\$229,747** back?

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, responded in the affirmative. It was the top item on page 2 of their *Superintendent's Recommended FY2011 Budget Adjustments of June 29, 2010* spreadsheets (page 22 of the Lowell School Committee FY2011 Budget)

Ms. Doherty stated that the Committee has made movements in the last few years to give our students fresh fruit and vegetables, apples, carrot sticks, and things like that. She wanted to know if there was some language in the food service contract with Aramark Education Services, LLC, to make sure they continue on that path of level of quality.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, responded in the affirmative. He stated that they (Aramark Education Services, LLC) looked at our proposed menus and he has looked at their proposed menus. They are going to work together on that. The USDOE (United States Department of Education) guidelines, Food Group guidelines, and the state (Commonwealth of Massachusetts) guidelines are incredibly stringent. There will be no issue with quality. They have the same standards if not higher than some of the ones we use now.

Ms. Laraba stated that she wasn't concerned about that. Aramark Education Services, LLC have the national access for purchasing for food. They also have their corporate headquarters that help them with menu planning. They have their own guidelines, and they match that up with whatever state they are in to make sure they are following not only their own guidelines but that

state's guidelines. If they do not have high quality guidelines, they are not going to get new accounts.

Mr. Leahy wanted to know why they were putting Professional Development back in. He understands that it is important, but why couldn't they do without it for one year?

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that a lot of thought went into that. Right now the **\$237,940** is not a lot of money for Professional Development in a district our size. We can at least keep that line item alive going into the future for FY12. It is extremely important for the quality of instruction and moving our district forward. It is not a lot of money given the size of our district. To zero that (Professional Development) line item out, she thinks would do considerable long term Professional Development harm to our district, which obviously impacts quality of instruction and student achievement. It is her recommendation at this time that Professional Development stays in. She is also asking the Committee to reinstate the Library Media Specialists at the high school as well as a K through 12 person to look after our collections and also our technology needs. What is in front of the Committee tonight is better than what they originally thought.

Mr. Leahy stated that he was looking at:

- no Arts Chair at the high school
- no Library Media Specialists
- no Instructional Technology Specialists
- took a quarter of a million dollars out of the sports program
  - nobody wants to put back

If they eliminate Professional Development for one year, they can put back some of those things. He wanted to know if the Superintendent was talking about classes, seminars; people coming into the buildings.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that she was talking, basically, about Professional Development for our workforce. There are other options she could make (as Mr. Leahy just suggested), but at this point in time our recommendation is that our workforce have the minimum Professional Development that is in the budget at this time.

Mr. Leahy stated that he understood that it was important. He knows the Superintendent has worked very hard to come up with these recommendations. He was just frustrated with the situation they were in. He can't understand spending money on Professional Development when they need to reinstate so much more.

Ms. Laraba stated that she thinks Lowell will run the risk of backsliding and losing all the progress that has been made if Professional Development is eliminated. In the scheme of things this is not a lot of money. Next year they will probably have to look at this again. Right now it will keep them status quo; keeping the gains they have made. This is how she reviews it.

Ms. Martin stated that as she looks through the budget, the numbers can be confusing when you are looking at the context. For herself and for her own clarity on this, she has come to the

conclusion that **\$135,476,925** is what it is going to cost us to run our school system for FY11. She is going straight from the Assistant Superintendent Lang's memorandum. That includes the **\$511,203** so that is in the **\$135,476,925**. If you go to the next one, which includes the changes in the management of the food service that basically adds in **\$340,863**. Making the assumptions that we are going to spend that **\$511,203**, we are now **\$340,863** to the good. The adjustments to the Circuit Breaker give us an additional **\$146,083** to the positive. The adjustments to the health insurance then take us down. She asked Assistant Superintendent Lang if he anticipated that \$300,000 when he budgeted.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that the \$300,000 was included in the current budget. The first line item on the second page (of the *Superintendent's Recommended FY2011 Budget Adjustments* dated June 29, 2010) adds back **\$229,797**.

Ms. Martin stated that they were at the third line item, the non-resident student tuition receipts.

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that a lot of this current budget is reallocated. The first line item (of the *Superintendent's Recommended FY2011 Budget Adjustments* dated June 29, 2010) for **\$46,421** is a direct offset to the Riverside Alternative School's contract with Middlesex Community College. If you want to take that aside, there was **\$100,000** cut from the Middlesex Community College contract with Riverside Alternative School so **\$59,753** is reallocated from the Molloy Alternative School Program back to Middlesex Community College. He suggested for Ms. Martin's purposes that she should just skip number 1 (the **\$46,421** from the Molloy Alternative School). If she goes to the first savings line item 2, the FY2010 Final Circuit Breaker reimbursement:

- for the amount of **\$146,083**

The second savings is Line item 3, Non-Resident Student Tuition

- for the amount of **\$100,962**

Line item 4, the \$59,753 he is going to skip because that is just an offset. Their first real add is Line item 5, Tuition Reimbursement:

- for the amount of **\$300,000**

Ms. Martin stated that now they have eliminated all of the savings and then some. They are under again.

Mayor Milinazzo stated that at this point they were negative by **\$52,955**.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that was correct. They were now **\$52,955** overspent.

Ms. Martin stated Line item 6, reinstate Professional Development:

- for the amount of **\$237,940**

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that now they are **\$290,895** overspent.

Line item 7, food service management company (Aramark Education Services, LLC):

- for the amount of **\$340,863**

Now there is a savings of **\$49,968**. You go to the top of the next page, and we are going to go back in the red again.

Line item 8, Health Insurance Premiums added:

- for the amount of **\$229,797**

Now we are **\$179,829** overspent. You have Line item 9, the Molloy Alternative High School adjustment, which we are not going to take again, because that was part of the first page so we go to Line item 10. We need to balance. During the budget process **\$370,723** was moved to the Suspense Account. For us to balance the budget, he wants the Committee to take:

- from the Suspense Account **\$179,829**

This will balance the budget leaving **\$190,894** in the Suspense Account for the School Committee to appropriate.

Ms. Martin stated that everything being equal and the School Committee accepted the recommendations, they would be looking at **\$190,894** to the good, under-spent, that they would be able to allocate as a Committee.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, responded in the affirmative.

Ms. Martin stated that the entire process makes a huge assumption. It means the Committee is going to accept the **\$511,203** spending of one-time money that they cannot count on. It is taking a huge risk to do that. When she looks at that **\$511,203** it seems unreasonable to her to spend it all in one year when they do not know what the reality is going to be. It is going to be a tight year. They can look at some of the decisions they made last year that they had to go back and revisit. The Director of Special Education was one. We found some savings, but was it really worth it? No, we had to go back and reinstate the position, and it costs us money. As she looks at that, she would not be comfortable spending more than half of that **\$511,203**. We know we have to make capital investments when she looks at textbooks. Her greatest concern is technology. All that equipment and fewer and fewer people who know how to manage it. That is going to warrant some further investments.

Mr. Leary stated that he would echo what Ms. Martin said. You are balancing the budget on money that certainly will not be there next year. His first question was how confident are they that they will receive Charter School money this year and what kind of dollar figure can they anticipate? Obviously, it isn't here yet. If the Committee doesn't go along with the recommendations tonight, they have to come up with a quarter of a million dollars of additional cuts. If they go along with the recommendations, they could be sitting here in the middle of the year with no money if something comes up.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that at this time she has been informed that they are awaiting Governor action to be taken. At this point we figure the issue is addressed, but we do not want to officially bring it forward until action has been taken. We feel that would be irresponsible. Steps have been taken in the right direction, definitely, but not a signed deal.

Mr. Leary stated that he appreciated the food service deal and the efforts that went into it. Aramark (Aramark Education Services, LLC) is at UMASS Lowell (University of Massachusetts Lowell) and the Tyngsboro Public School System so they are right here. That was an area two years ago that we were a million dollars in the hole and now we are looking at over a quarter of a million dollars in savings. As tragic as it is, it does cost positions and did cause a lot of hard feelings but now with a \$340,863 savings when we are facing devastating cuts and other school systems including UMASS Lowell, which is a descent size operation here in the city does it, he wanted to commend Assistant Superintendent Lang and his staff for all the trials and tribulations that they did go through. This is a complete night and day switch, which is a positive thing. The taxpayer should be overwhelmed and happy at the efforts the administration put into this. He has to sit here and go through this **\$511,203**, it is not wise budgeting. It is Pollyanna budgeting. If they do get the money from the Charter School, it is fantastic! There are issues here that he would like to see covered as well. The Library Media Specialists, which we are still deficit in the elementary and middle school areas. He would also like to see money for the sports and the clubs. That is an area where he has been tempted time and time again to put money into over and over again, at least try to. He has held off for other issues to resolve. He is still frustrated, he guesses they all are frustrated over that. If the Charter School monies come in, maybe they can put money into those areas. Again, he wanted to commend the administration for putting the effort into this (FY2011 Budget), but he does have concerns over this one-time fund. *"It is not good budgeting to accept the full amount of that."*

Mr. Leahy through the Chair to the Superintendent. If this was just an accounting issues, he wanted to know why they couldn't take the money out of the Sick Leave Buy Back; it is just going to go back in if it is just an accounting situation. Take it out of: Tuition Reimbursement, Sick Leave Buy Back, and Professional Development. Use that money now, and we will put it back later. *"That would make us all feel comfortable, I think."*

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that the budget presented in front of the Committee is based on dollars that they know we have. This budget does not count on any additional funds coming into the city. To your issue of Sick Leave Buy Back, etc., those issues are contractual. This budget she has brought forth to the Committee honors the contracts the Committee has signed.

Mr. Leahy stated that the Committee has commended the work (on the FY2011 Budget) that has been done. He is aggravated that our kids have to go through this. It is just not acceptable so borrow the money out of other accounts.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that she appreciates the frustration of Mr. Leahy. At this point, again, the budget that has been brought forth to the Committee honors the contracts the Committee has signed. If it is the wish of the Committee to undo that at any time, she will. Right now, this budget honors all the Committee's contractual obligations.

Ms. Doherty stated that she shared her colleagues to the left frustrations with the cuts they have already made and her colleagues concern about using this one-time savings of **\$511,203** to build their budget. She simply does not have the stomach to make any deeper cuts right now. She is willing to base their budget on the information that they have today. Maybe she is optimistic and unnecessarily so, but she thinks that they are due money for those Charter School children who are now going to be educated in our schools in September, and the state needs to come through with that money. She doesn't think that they have made an investment in technology in the last three years. The last time they did a report, they knew they had computers and printers that were out in our schools that were 10-years old mostly breaking down. We were investing in software like the Read 180 that was causing problems, because we did not have the hardware to run our software. Those are real issues. We need that **\$511,203** to use. Is it a one-time spending, absolutely! The Committee has made devastating cuts to our staff. As we sit here today, the 4 million dollars we cut a few weeks ago. She just does not have the stomach to go in and make more cuts tonight. She recognizes that it is not good budgeting to take a one-time **\$511,203** savings that we have today and base our budget on it, but she is really optimistic and there is going to be money for the Charter School students. Just for clarification if there isn't, is it going to be too late to make those changes? They make it tonight or they don't make it? That is her question.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that from his perspective, you have to lock into that **\$511,203** tonight. If you (the Committee) cut into that **\$511,203** and you have to think of it for the year in the event that the Charter School monies don't come in, that is a commitment the Committee has to make one way or the other. Quite honestly, we need to lock into our staffing plans and lock into recall of teachers, or we are going to blow that amount of money in unemployment over the course of the summer if we don't start calling back these people to their positions. *"We have to decide tonight if we want to use the \$511,203 as an offset or not. We have to make a commitment one way or the other and commit to a budget July 1<sup>st</sup>."*

Mr. Conway stated through the Chair to the Superintendent one quick question. On the Professional Development money, the **\$237,940**, is any of that money mandated?

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that at one point in time in the state (Commonwealth of Massachusetts) she believes it was mandated by the Department of Education. She cannot say that she has recently seen any mandate that states it. She does know that there are some people who believe that is the case (it is mandated). She is not aware of it.

Mr. Conway stated that he expressed his concern just like his colleagues. Mr. Leahy when he talked about the clubs, the different activities, and the sports that were devastated; they certainly have to make sure that many of those activities are reinstated, because he thinks these added ingredients is what the high school is known for. We need to help all kids. *“Our children certainly need that.”* The other thing, and he wanted to congratulate the Superintendent and her staff, these are very difficult times not just with you and your staff, and it is with the School Committee, the public, the parents, and the voter. Here we are year after year. Some of these School Committee people like Ms. Martin have seen these cuts year, after year, after year. It becomes very frustrating. He has seen these cuts too in a different way. He was on the other side of the fence (as a teacher at Lowell High School). These are very difficult cuts to make. He also agrees with his colleague, Ms. Doherty. He does not want to cut any more. You have come up with solutions, and he would like to go forward on them. This **\$511,203** is one time and he is afraid that is the way things have been in the last few years and will probably be in the next couple of years. We are trying to survive year after year just like some of our people trying to survive paying their bills. He does not think this is a usual situation, but the Committee has to go forward and close this chapter of it. All indications say that the Charter money is coming through. It is just a matter of signing by the Governor. He knows our delegations are pushing very, very hard to make sure of those monies. As far as he is concerned, he is ready to go forward with the proposal (*Superintendent’s Recommended FY2011 Budget Adjustments*, dated June 29, 2010) that the administration has put forward.

Ms. Laraba stated that she could certainly understand the concerns of Committeewoman Martin and Committee member Leary about using one-time funds. She does not think that they have the luxury to follow through with that. The Committee has made 4 million dollars in cuts. We did not see the savings in health insurance that they thought they might see. They didn’t see concessions that they hoped to get. At this point she thinks it is their job as Committee members to stay on top of our state delegation to make sure that those funds do come through. She knows Ms. Doherty is very optimistic. *“We have just got to work hard to make sure that happens.”* In response to Mr. Leahy’s comment about taking it (the money) from Sick Leave Buy Back and Professional Development, we have some contractual obligations that we have to make sure we are fulfilling. She does not think it puts the Committee in a good light when they know they have an expense coming, and the Committee just cuts the spending for that expense. While she understands what some of her colleagues are saying, she thinks that they have to move forward about using that one-time revenue (**\$511,203**). She is not happy about that. She would certainly like to see that money put towards technology as well. As a group (Lowell School Committee) they have to make sure that money (for Charter School students) comes through for Lowell. Their job tonight is to give our administration the tools they need; a completed budget so they can move forward.

At this point Mayor Milinazzo open the meeting up to the public.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no response from the public.

The Chair acknowledged Ms. Doherty.

Ms. Doherty stated that she had one other question on the amount of money (**\$237,940**) the administration has asked to be reinstated for Professional Development. She remembers having a subcommittee meeting where they received a report stating that they could reduce the number (amount of money) for Professional Development. She thought the amount of reduction was \$82,000. She wanted to know if that amount was already subtracted resulting in **\$237,940**.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, responded that the **\$237,940** for Professional Development is in its entirety in the budget. It is the amount without the reduction of the \$82,000.

Ms. Doherty wanted to know if the \$82,000 could be subtracted tonight.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that the whole line item could be subtracted or any part of it, but, yes, Ms. Doherty was correct. That amount (\$82,000) was brought forward at a subcommittee meeting.

Ms. Doherty wanted to know if that was something that could be revisited if they needed that money at a later point.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, responded in the affirmative and stated, "*It would have to be a vote of the Committee.*"

Ms. Martin stated that, again, she was trying to zero in on this (*Superintendent's Recommended FY2011 Budget Adjustments*, dated June 29, 2010). She appreciated her colleagues understanding and concerns as they wrestle around this amount of **\$511,203**. As she has said initially, the idea of spending fifty percent of that seems a more reasonable tact in this current environment as she looks at it. They also need to take into account the **\$190,894** that remains in their Suspense Account if the Committee accepts the change the Superintendent and her administration are recommending (using **\$179,824** of the Suspense Account money to use as this whole offset). There will still remain **\$190,894** in the Suspense Account that the administration is recommending to be used to bring back a Library Media Specialist for the high school and an additional new position to support the K through 8 level. She would propose to her colleagues that **\$511,203** in one fell swoop spent in one budget year is a huge risk to be taking with the public trust. She thinks, certainly, they can be optimistic about Charter School funding but they cannot budget in light of that. It is June 29<sup>th</sup> and the decisions have to be made tonight. If the Charter School funding should come in, our administration is going to be able to recommend to us in very short order where that money should be spent. She has no qualms about that. If that money comes in, they will be able to turn that around very quickly. She knows there is already a plan in place as to where that money would be spent first to get the biggest impact. If the Committee takes that **\$511,203**, cuts it in half, the Committee is looking at basically \$255,000 (\$255,601.50 is the exact amount). If the Committee eliminates that **\$190,894** that is currently in the Suspense Account, it would leave the Committee basically \$65,000 in addition that the Committee would have to cut (from the FY2011 Budget) to get them back to square one, a level-funding budget. "*Is that correct?*"

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that what Ms. Martin stated made sense.

Ms. Martin stated that her plan was to take the **\$511,203**, cut that in half to get \$255,000 (approximately), take and add the **\$190,894** from the Suspense Account, and do an additional \$65,000 in cuts.

Ms. Doherty stated that just for clarification, that **\$190,894** that was to remain in the Suspense Account was to fund a Library Media Specialist at the high school and K-8 technology position. That seemed like a lot.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated for clarification:

- to bring back the Library Media Specialist at the high school (one position)
- to create a new position (2<sup>nd</sup> position) district wide (K-12) to coordinate technology and to protect our libraries
  - job description is still being planned

Superintendent stated that no librarians for selection and no technology specialists for grades K-12 was a big gap for them.

Ms. Doherty stated that with her colleague's suggestion (Ms. Martin), they would not be making the decision tonight to bring back the librarian (Library Media Specialist) at the high school. The Committee would only be using half of the **\$511,203** (\$255,601.50 is exactly half). Ms. Doherty stated that she felt very strongly that the Library Media Specialist was needed at the high school at a very minimum.

Ms. Laraba moved:

To accept the recommendations of the *Superintendent's Recommended FY2011 Budget Adjustments* (dated June 29, 2010) as presented to balance the budget; seconded by Mr. Conway.

In discussion Mr. Leary stated that they just received the *Final Budget Adjustment Recommendations for the June 29, 2010 Budget Hearing* (from Roger, Jay, Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations) tonight. The part that they add back Library Media Specialist at the high school (page 2, bullet 7), it says the Suspense Account is **\$370,723**. So what is the actual amount that we have in the total Suspense Account? Is it the **\$511,203**?

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that the **\$511,203** was used as an offset carried in the salary account for actually the building custodians, included in, totally separate. Today, there is **\$370,723** in the Suspense Account. That is what's left after we moved out some funds to balance the budget on June 16<sup>th</sup>. If you take this vote in its entirety, you will still need **\$179,829** out of that **\$370,723** to balance the budget leaving **\$190,894** in the Suspense Account. At that point, if that actually happened, the Superintendent is recommending two positions, Library Media Specialist at the high school and a new position to coordinate K-12 instructional media/technology needs. That would have to be voted on separately.

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that another issue was that the **\$237,940** recommended for Professional Development was presently still in the Suspense Account. He was recommending

that the Committee move the **\$237,940** out of the Suspense Account and transfer that money to Professional Development, but the Committee hasn't done that transaction yet.

Mr. Leary stated that he was going to put a **Substitute Motion** on the floor:

To move **\$58,111** from the Suspense Account into the budget to balance, which would leave the **\$237,940** in the Suspense Account plus the **\$198,094**; seconded by Mr. Leahy?

Mr. Leary stated that what he was trying to say is not to fund Professional Development (for the amount of **\$237,940** unless or until you receive the Charter School funding. Then we can go back in and fund it.

Mayor Milinazzo stated that Mr. Leary's attempt was to reduce the **\$511,203** by **\$237,940**. He asked Assistant Superintendent Lang if Mr. Leary accomplished that.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that the Suspense Account would have a balance of **\$428,834** if the Committee didn't move that money out into the budget.

Ms. Martin wanted to know how this Professional Development impact the half-day schedules the Committee now has in place.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that basically it wipes out the entire Professional Development in the system. What they would have to do if they didn't get the Charter School money and the motion stood the way it does, she would take this under advisement. She would reallocate the budget with the stimulus money. That is the first place she would look. She would have to balance the budget with the powers to be.

**For clarification**, Mr. Leary's **Substitute Motion** reads as follows:

To move **\$58,111** from the Suspense Account into the budget to balance, which would leave the **\$237,940** in the Suspense Account plus the **\$198,094**; seconded by Mr. Leahy? On roll call the votes were: Ms. Laraba, no; Mr. Leahy, yes; Mr. Leary, yes; Ms. Martin, yes; Mayor Milinazzo, present; Mr. Conway, no and Ms. Doherty, no. Three yeas; three nays and one present.

**DEFEATED**

**For the record**, we are now on the original motion by Ms. Laraba, which reads:

To accept the recommendations of the *Superintendent's Recommended FY2011 Budget Adjustments* (dated June 29, 2010) as presented to balance the budget; seconded by Mr. Conway On roll call the votes were. Ms. Laraba, yes; Mr. Leahy, no; Mr. Leary, no; Ms. Martin, no; Mayor Milinazzo, yes; Mr. Conway, yes and Ms. Doherty, yes. Four yeas; three nays. **APPROVED**

Mayor Milinazzo stated that he believed a motion was needed for the final number. He asked the Superintendent if that was correct.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that she needed clarification from Assistant Superintendent Lang if, in fact, the Committee had to approve each page her recommended FY2011 Budget Adjustments affect or just the final budget amount.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that unfortunately the Committee has to go to each page that was affected and vote the bottom-line figure on each page.

Mr. Leahy moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations and to go through the *Superintendent's Recommended FY2011 Budget Adjustments* (dated June 29, 2010) page by page; seconded by Ms. Laraba. APPROVED

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, requested that the Committee turn to page 6 of the FY2011 Lowell School Department Budget.

Page 6

2300: Regular Education Instruction, Classroom

Total bottom-line amount for approval----- \$ 48,046,112

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that they are reducing line item FTE (Full Time Employee) Social Studies Teachers from 47 to 46, changing the amount of that line item to **\$3,204,235**. The new *adjusted* bottom-line figure for page 6 is **\$47,999,691**.

Ms. Laraba moved:

**For clarification**, Page 6 now reads as follows:

Page 6

2300: Regular Education Instruction Classroom

Total new *adjusted* bottom-line amount for approval.....\$47,999,691

Ms. Laraba moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Lang to cut one full time employee Social Studies Teacher for the amount of **\$46,421** reducing that line item to **\$3,204,235** and to approve the new bottom-line figure for the new total *adjusted* bottom-line amount of **\$47,999,691**; seconded by Ms. Doherty. Unanimously approved on roll call.

APPROVED

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that the next page to be adjusted was:

Page 11

2300: Special Education Instruction *Non-Personnel*

Total bottom-line amount for approval.....\$6,540,300

Assistant Superintendent Lang requested the following changes on page 11:

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated the following:

<b>Line Item</b>	<b>Adjustment Amount</b>
McHugh Riverside Alternative School Program .....	<b>\$ 757,956</b>
Circuit Breaker Reimbursement (savings).....	<b>1,220,801</b>
Non-Resident Student Tuition Receipts (savings).....	<b>130,962</b>

The new *adjusted* bottom-line figure for page 11 is **\$6,353,008**.

**For clarification**, Page 11 now reads as follows:

Page 11

2300: Special Education Instruction *Non-Personnel*

Total new *adjusted* bottom-line amount for approval.....**\$6,353,008**

Mr. Conway moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Lang and to approve the new bottom-line figure for the new total *adjusted* bottom-line amount of **\$6,353,008**; seconded by Ms. Laraba. Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that the next page to be adjusted was:

Page 15

2350: Professional Development

Total bottom-line amount for approval-----**\$ 326,200**

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated the following:

<b>Line Item</b>	<b>Adjustment Amount</b>
Tuition Reimbursement (savings).....	<b>\$ 300,000</b>
Professional Development .....	<b>237,940</b>

The new *adjusted* bottom-line figure for page 15 is **\$864,140**.

Ms. Laraba moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Lang and to approve new bottom-line figure for the new total *adjusted* bottom-line amount of **\$864,140**; seconded by Ms. Doherty. On roll call the votes were: Ms. Laraba, yes; Mr. Leahy, no; Mr. Leary, no; Ms. Martin, no; Mayor Milinazzo, present; Mr. Conway, yes and Ms. Doherty, yes. Three yeas; three nays and one present. DEFEATED

Mayor Milinazzo stated that he voted present because of the Tuition Reimbursement and Professional Development (his wife is a teacher). He asked Assistant Superintendent Lang if he could vote for the bottom-line figure.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, responded in the affirmative.

Ms. Doherty moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Lang and to approve only the new bottom-line figure for the new total *adjusted* bottom-line amount of **\$864,140**; seconded by Ms. Laraba. On roll call the votes were: Ms. Laraba, yes; Mr. Leahy, no; Mr. Leary, no; Ms. Martin, no; Mayor Milinazzo, yes; Mr. Conway, yes and Ms. Doherty, yes. Four yeas; three nays. APPROVED

**For the record**, Tuition Reimbursement and Professional Development was **not** approved. Only the new *adjusted* bottom-line figure was approved. Page 15 now reads:

Page 15  
2350: Professional Development  
Total new *adjusted* bottom-line amount for approval -----\$ **864,140**

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that the next page to be adjusted was:

Page 21  
4000: Custodial & Security  
Total bottom-line amount for approval.....\$ **10,574,222**

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated the following:

This was a situation where there is no good line item in the budget to record this, so under *Non-Personnel* he is going to add a line item entitled: Food Service Contract Receipts and record a negative balance of **\$340,863**. That is going to change the bottom-line figure for *Non-Personnel* to **\$5,434,137**. The new *adjusted* bottom-line figure for page 21 is **\$9,722,156**.

**For clarification**, page 21 now reads as follows:

Page 21  
4000: Custodial & Security  
Total new *adjusted* bottom-line amount for approval.....\$ **9,722,156**

Ms. Doherty moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Lang and to approve the new bottom-line figure for the new total *adjusted* bottom-line amount of **\$9,722,156**; seconded by Ms. Laraba. Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that while the Committee is still on this matter, the last paragraph on page 2 of his memo to the Committee (dated June 28, 2010) reads as follows:

*In conclusion, the RFP (Request for Proposals) review committee will recommend to the Lowell School Committee that a contract for the operation and management of the Lowell Public Schools food service program during the 2010/2011 school year in the amount of \$2,933,919 be awarded to Aramark Education Services, LLC, as outlined in their cost-proposal.*

Assistant Superintendent Lang requested a **Suspension of the Rules** so a motion could be brought on the floor to award the food service contract to Aramark Education Services, LLC for the 2010/2011 school year.

Mr. Leary moved:

For a **Suspension of the Rules** to allow a motion to be brought on the floor; seconded by Ms. Laraba. **Suspension APPROVED**

Ms. Laraba moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Lang to enter into contract with Aramark Education Services, LLC for the operation and management of the Lowell Public Schools food service program during the 2010/2011 school year in the amount of **\$2,933,919**; seconded by Ms. Doherty. Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that the next page to be adjusted was:

Page 22  
 5100/5200: Employee Benefits & Retirement  
 Total bottom-line amount for approval.....\$ 17,264,384

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that he was going to reduce Line item Health Plan Migration Reduction by \$300,000. That number will change to **\$70,203**. He will also reduce one FTE (Full Time Employee) Health Insurance Premium for a reduction of **\$13,332**. The new bottom-line *adjusted* bottom-line amount is now **\$17,480,849**.

**For clarification**, page 22 now reads as follows:

Page 22  
 5100/5200: Employee Benefits & Retirement  
 Total new *adjusted* bottom-line amount for approval.....\$ 17,480,849

Ms. Laraba moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Lang and to approve the new bottom-line figure for the new total *adjusted* bottom-line amount of

**\$17,480,849**; seconded by Ms. Martin. On roll call Mayor Milinazzo voted present. All other members voted in the affirmative. Six yeas; one present. APPROVED

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that the next page to be adjusted was:

Page 25  
 9000: Suspense  
 Total bottom-line amount for approval.....**\$370,723**

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that the new *adjusted* bottom-line figure for this page was **\$190,894**.

**For clarification**, page 24 now reads as follows:

Page 25  
 9000: Suspense  
 Total new *adjusted* bottom-line amount for approval.....**\$190,894**

Ms. Laraba moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Lang and to approve the new bottom-line figure for the new total adjusted bottom-line amount of **\$190,894**; seconded by Ms. Doherty. Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that the last thing he wanted to do was the Superintendent’s recommendation to reinstate one Library Media Specialist position at Lowell High School for the amount of **\$92,393** and hold the balance of **\$98,501** be held in the Suspense Account to fund the salary and benefits of a new position to be established/negotiated which would serve to coordinate the instructional media/technology needs of K-12 students throughout the district at a later date. A job description needs to be developed for that.

Ms. Laraba moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Lang to reinstate one Library Media Specialist position at Lowell High School for the amount of **\$92,393** and hold the balance of **\$98,501** in the Suspense Account; seconded by Mr. Conway.

In discussion, Mr. Leahy wanted to know what the amount was right now in the Suspense Account.

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that right now there was **\$190,893** (the Library Media Specialist at **\$92,393** and the new position K-12 instructional media/technology position at **\$98,501** equals **\$190,894**).

Mr. Leahy wanted to know if there was any update on what they were doing with our sports programs.

Assistant Superintendent Lang responded in the negative.

Mr. Leahy stated that by the time the Committee could do anything with that, the season will already have started. Basically, there are no freshman sports next year. He wanted to know what the cut-off point was, and if they should do something tonight.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that she was hoping to bring this forward at the next regular School Committee meeting to discuss in full in regards to coaches' stipends, the clubs, and hopefully the financial situation.

Mr. Leahy wanted to know if that would be too late for freshman sports in regards to scheduling.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, stated that to her knowledge it was not too late.

Ms. Martin stated that basically they (the Committee) are looking at reinstating one position and creating a new position. If they were to delay in reinstating a Library Media Specialist at the high school she wanted to know if there would be unemployment ramifications.

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that all the Library Media Specialists, just because it is a grouping, they were all eliminated through the budget process. They have all been displaced at this point. They have all been given lay-off notices, and they all would be eligible to collect unemployment. They have been eligible since the last day of school through whenever the Committee acts.

Ms. Martin stated if the Committee looked at this as two separate acts bringing back this Library Media Specialist now instead of waiting until July. It would save us money.

Assistant Superintendent Lang responded in the affirmative. The Library Media Specialist he would suggest doing that now. The second position he doesn't recommend the Committee acting on tonight, because he wants to leave money in the Suspense Account (the **\$98,501**). They still have to create a job description, have a discussion with the union, and it is a new position so there isn't anybody that the Committee could call back to save on unemployment. Only the first position, the Library Media Specialist, affects unemployment benefits.

Ms. Martin stated she was concerned, because the motion is phrased that the remainder of the money (**\$98,501**) goes for this new position and she is not, necessarily, convinced that is where she wants to spend it. She would prefer the motion to say bring back that one position, the Library Media Specialist, where there is savings to be had rather than doing that later, and leaving the **\$98,501** in the Suspense Account so the Committee can determine later what they want to do with that money. She might very well want that position but to bring in a new position right now without discussion and time to think about it; she did not want to do.

Ms. Doherty agreed with Ms. Martin. She wanted a **Substitute Motion** that separates those two things.

Ms. Doherty moved for a **Substitute Motion**:

To reinstate the Library Media Specialist position at Lowell High School at a stipend of **\$92,393** (**\$79,061** in salary and **\$13,332** in benefits); seconded by Mr. Conway.

In discussion, it was determined that Ms. Laraba’s original motion did not specify using the **\$98,501** to create a new position. It simply stated to keep the **\$98,501** in the Suspense Account.

**For clarification**, Ms. Laraba’s original motion reads as follows:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Lang to reinstate one Library Media Specialist position at Lowell High School for the amount of **\$92,393** and hold the balance of **\$98,501** in the Suspense Account; seconded by Mr. Conway.

Ms. Doherty **withdrew** her **Substitute Motion**.

**For the record**, the following motion by Ms. Laraba is now on the floor:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Lang to reinstate one Library Media Specialist position at Lowell High School for the amount of **\$92,393** and hold the balance of **\$98,501** in the Suspense Account; seconded by Mr. Conway.

Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that the above motion triggers two final actions. He asked the Committee to go back to page 13 of Lowell School Committee FY2011 Budget.

Page 13

2300: Library

Total bottom-line amount for approval----- \$ **546,308**

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that on page 13, the Library Media Specialists line item under FY11 FTE (Full Time Employee) will change to one, the salary will be **\$79,061**, with a new *adjusted* bottom-line figure of **\$625,369**.

**For clarification**, page 13 now reads as follows:

Page 13

2300: Library

Total new *adjusted* bottom-line amount for approval----- \$ **625,369**

Ms. Laraba moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Lang and to approve the new bottom-line figure for the new total adjusted bottom-line amount of **\$625,369**; seconded by Mr. Conway. Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that the Committee should go to page 22.

**For the record**, page 22 was previously adjusted this evening on page 22 of these budget-session minutes. It reads as follows:

Page 22  
 5100/5200: Employee Benefits & Retirement  
 Total new *adjusted* bottom-line amount for approval.....\$ **17,480,849**

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that the Health Insurance Premium line item and the Superintendent’s Recommended FY2010 FTE (Full Time Employee Reduction is going to be decreased by **\$13,332**; therefore, the new *adjusted* bottom-line figure is **\$17,494,181**.

**For clarification**, page 22 now reads as follows:

Page 22  
 5100/5200: Employee Benefits & Retirement  
 Total new *re-adjusted* bottom-line amount for approval.....\$ **17,494,181**

Ms. Martin moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Lang and to approve the new bottom-line figure for the new total *adjusted* bottom-line amount of **\$17,494,181**; seconded by Mr. Leary. On roll call Mayor Milinazzo voted present. All other members voted in the affirmative. Six yeas; one present. APPROVED

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that lastly they have to go to page 25.

Page 25  
 9000: Suspense  
 Total bottom-line amount for approval.....\$**370,723**

Assistant Superintendent Lang stated that for the Library Media Specialist position **\$92,393** has to be subtracted from the bottom-line figure leaving a new *adjusted* bottom-line figure of **\$98,501**.

**For clarification**, page 25 now reads as follows:

Page 25  
 9000: Suspense  
 Total new *adjusted* bottom-line amount for approval.....\$**98,501**

Mr. Conway moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Lang and to approve the new bottom-line figure for the new total *adjusted* bottom-line amount of **\$98,501**; seconded by Ms. Doherty. Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

Roger (Jay) Lang IV, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, stated that the last vote the Committee will do tonight is to approve the Lowell School Department FY2011 overall bottom-line operating budget for the total amount of **\$135,476,925**.

Mr. Conway moved:

To accept the recommendation of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Lang and to approve the overall bottom-line figure for the Lowell School Department FY2011 Operating Budget for the amount of **\$135,476,925**; seconded by Mr. Conway. Unanimously approved on roll call. APPROVED

Mayor Milinazzo wanted to congratulate and thank his colleagues for getting us through a number of hearings and finishing up the Lowell School Department FY2011 Budget. He also thanked the public in attendance this evening and those who were with them in the past. It was a rigorous job and he thanked the Superintendent and her administration for putting the budget together. He hoped that it would be a sound budget going forward.

Ms. Laraba stated that Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, was going on vacation. She wanted to know if she was correct in going to Jean Franco, Deputy Superintendent, if any issues came up.

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent, responded in the affirmative.

**ADJOURNMENT** – Ms. Laraba moved to adjourn; seconded by Ms. Doherty. This meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Chris A. Scott, Superintendent and  
Secretary to the Lowell School Committee

CAS:jms

Enclosures