June 3, 2009

Dear President McIntyre;

Unfortunately, we are unable to attend Thursday's joint meeting between the School Committee and the Town Council due to the fact that we both have a family commitment.  We would appreciate it if you could be our voices tonight by reading this letter aloud at the start of tonight's meeting.  As you are aware the School Committee met Monday, June 1st, to once again discuss the Prudence Island budget issue.
After giving the issue more thought we would like it to be known that we no longer support asking the Town Council to 'loan' the School Department monies needed to fund the Prudence Island School. We feel that it is the School Committee's responsibility to find the appropriate monies in our own budget to fund the Prudence Island School. We want to make it clear that we did understand the motion and most importantly we do understand the English Language. But after a careful review of the budget again, we looked again at the information that fellow committee member, Ms. Perrotti, presented to the School Committee the four line items where monies could be used to fund the Prudence Island School.  They are as listed:

1. $8190 School Committee expenses (#56800). Funds used to honor retiring
personnel and advisory committees. Eliminate expenses for honoring retiring
personnel - savings $8,190

2. $5616 excess funds in #53310 Transportation. Ms. Tague had assumed 8 kids @
$7.50/day, she has budgeted 8 x $7.50 x 180 days = 10800. Using the correct
ferry prices:6 x $684 + 2 x $540 = 5184.
Therefore, there is 10800-5184=$5616 excess funds inappropriately budgeted
in that line item.- savings $5,616.00

3. $4839 excess in #52200 Retirement Certified. Take 14.17% of the pay raises
given up by principal/asst principal/superintendent line items - savings $4,839.00

4. $3000 Attendance (Truant) Officer.  It was suggested that the Vice Prinicipal job description be changed to include truant officer duties - savings $3,000.00

When these budgetary changes were suggested, Chairmen Carpender responded without any hesitation, "we are not going to re write the budget", leading me to realize that the School Committee majority are closed minded, not receptive to change, refuse to take responsibility,and are misleading the public (funding is available as stated above in items 1-4).  Although this may not be the full $27,000 needed, it is a good start ($21, 645).

Thank You and again and we do apologize for not being in attendance tonight.
 Marilyn King & Angela Volpicelli

Portsmouth School Committee Members