

## **KIMBALL UNION ACADEMY STUDY COMMITTEE**

The charge of this committee is to meet with representatives of the KUA administration and maintain an ongoing review of the relationship between the academy and the town, and to report its findings at annual town meeting. This year's group held four meetings between Thanksgiving and late January.

The following bears repeating from this committee's report of 2008: "Recognizing the current difficult economic times, the committee felt it was more important than ever to keep in mind the previously stated goal of 'working as a collective community to maximize all of our local resources to enhance opportunities for all and at the same time reduce or control property tax increases.'" Kimball Union is an integral part of our community: it is the town's third largest tax payer, our community's largest employer and definitely contributes to Plainfield's quality of life.

### **Summary of the Committee's Finding:**

Based on all that your committee was able to learn and discuss, a majority of this year's committee continues to support granting a one-hundred percent abatement of the taxes assessed on dormitories, dining halls and kitchens as permitted by RSA 72:23. This year, the committee discussed the merits of a partial exemption and has agreed to continue this discussion into the coming year.

The committee was successful in having Kimball Union agree to make some enhancements to Main Street lighting (specifically at the crosswalks). This work should be completed in the coming months.

### **In detail, your committee reports the following:**

- **KUA Tax Abatement** For tax year 2010, KUA assets (dormitory, dining hall and kitchen) were valued at \$7,132,798, thus the discretionary exemption was \$169,400 (i.e., tax abatement). Contributing to the discussions of granting a partial exemption are the realities of declining local student enrollment, rising property taxes, the increased value of the exemption (\$169,404), and the impact that the private school has on our local school population (15 students).
- During the 2010/11 academic year, KUA provided \$270,200 worth of financial aid to Plainfield students attending KUA. This aid exceeded the tax abated last year by \$113,300.
- While recognizing that KUA has no obligation to return the tax abatement money to the community, your study committee supports the continuation of a need-based distribution of local financial aid provided by the academy.
- **Streetlights:** At the request of the Selectboard, your committee spent time discussing the streetlights on Main Street. The Selectboard has received numerous concerns from residents about the limited visibility when students are

crossing the roadway during low-light conditions. Kimball Union has agreed to enhance the campus streetlights along Main Street with input from the town's Energy Committee, the Highway Department and the Police Department.

- **Kimball Union Academy remains Plainfield's largest employer.**  
More than 30 KUA employees, making up some 27 Plainfield households, own homes in the community.
- **Kimball Union Academy is now the Town's third largest taxpayer.**  
In 2010 KUA paid \$51,367 in local property taxes.
- **Plainfield Students**
  - Twenty-eight (exclusive of KUA faculty students) Plainfield students attend the academy.
  - Ten (10) Plainfield seniors will graduate in the coming spring.
  - Three to five (3-5) Plainfield eighth graders are expected to begin attending KUA for the 2011/12 school year.
- **Tuitions: KUA and Lebanon High School (LHS)**
  - KUA day-student tuition will be \$28,850 for the next (2011/12) academic year
  - LHS tuition for Plainfield students this year is \$13,249/per student.
  - Due to the estimated twenty-three Plainfield students attending KUA in 2011/12, \$304,727 in tuition payment to LHS will be avoided. The town does not pay any portion of the KUA tuition for local students.
  - The KUA administration has again, in an effort to alleviate uncertainty, agreed to guarantee that at least three local students from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade will attend the academy. If not, the academy will reimburse the school district the cost of the difference in the Lebanon tuition.
- **Facility Access**

Access times and directions to KUA facilities for Plainfield residents is available on the KUA website [www.kua.org](http://www.kua.org)

Those facilities are:

  1. Skating rink
  2. Cross-country ski trails
  3. Tennis courts
  4. Athletic fields and track
  5. Meeting rooms with advanced approval
  6. Soccer fields This part should be listed under the events supported by KUA, not facilities. RH

**New for 2011 residents are encouraged to visit the town's web site and follow the "KUA Invites you link" for an always up-to-date listing of events and happenings open to the public.**

- **KUA Supports the Following Events**
  - **Annual holiday luncheon for seniors**
  - **Plainfield Elementary School Graduation**
  - **Annual Plainfield Elementary School-sponsored soccer tournament**

- **Meriden Fire Department Annual wild game dinner**
- **Town Energy Expo**
- **Provides public access to theatrical performances and art exhibits**
- **Provides meeting places for local nonprofit organizations**
- **Livingston Taylor Fund Raising concert for the Plainfield Elementary School**

- **Meriden Post Office**

KUA has now renewed the lease for the Meriden Post Office which should guarantee the post office stays in the village for at least the next five years.

Respectfully Submitted, *James Bonney, Myra Ferguson-SB, Gordon DeJae, Betay Duany, , James Gray-KUA, Robyn Hadlock, Rob Hewett, Shelley Andrews, and John Yacavone*, Plainfield KUA Committee  
2010/11