

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting March 11, 2023

School Board Members: Mr. Jim Kofalt (Chair), Ms. Brianne Lavallee (Vice Chair), Ms. Tiffany Cloutier-Cabral, Mr. Alexander LoVerme, Mr. Charlie Post, Mr. Dennis Golding, Mr. Matt Mannarino. Ms. Darlene Anzalone, Mr. Geoffrey Allen

Budget Committee Members: Mr. Jeffrey Jones (Chair), Ms. Leslie Browne (Vice Chair) Mr. Adam Lavallee, Ms. Lisa Post, Mr. Bill Ryan, Ms. Caitlin Maki, Ms. Jennifer Bernet,

Other: Moderator Mr. Walter Holland, School District Clerk Ms. Mary-Jane Ryan.

Moderator called the meeting to order at 9:03 am, welcomed attendees and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moderator read the proposed rules of the meeting:

Simple parliamentary procedure. There will be discussion and debate, we will not go back to earlier articles once they are voted on. Please come to the microphone and announce your name and the town you are from before speaking. Please use proper respect at all times.

Moderator explained the setup of the room and the area designated for persons preferring social distancing.

We will use voice vote, if the vote cannot be determined with voice vote we will use a hand vote. If paper ballot is requested we need at least five voters to request in writing to use the paper ballots.

Moderator asked for present with voice without vote for Superintendent of Schools Peter Weaver, School District Business Administrator Kristie LaPlante, WLC Principal Sarah Edmunds WLC Assistant Principal Katie Gosselin, Associate Principal FRES/LCS Bridgette Fuller, District Curriculum Coordinator Samantha Dignan, Director of Technology Nicholas Buroker, and Director of Facilities Buddy Erb.

There were no questions. Proposed rules were accepted by voice vote.

Budget Committee Chairman Jeff Jones introduced the budget committee members.
School Board Chairman Jim Kofalt introduced the school board members.

Moderator Holland read the voting announcement as follows:

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT WARRANT
FOR ELECTION OF OFFICERS ON MARCH 14, 2023

To the inhabitants of the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District in the Towns of Wilton and Lyndeborough, in the County of Hillsborough, State of New Hampshire, qualified to vote upon Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District affairs:

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting March 11, 2023

**You are hereby notified to meet on the fourteenth day of March 2023
At the following places in the Town of your residence:**

Wilton	Town Hall	8:00 o'clock in the forenoon
Lyndeborough	Citizens' Hall	10:00 o'clock in the forenoon

Polls will not close before 7:00 P.M.

To vote for District officers:

Article 1: To choose one (1) Moderator, by ballot, for the ensuing year.

Article 2: To choose one (1) At Large Member of the School Board, by ballot, from the Town of Lyndeborough for the ensuing three years; one (1) Member of the School Board, by ballot, from the Town of Lyndeborough for the ensuing three years; one (1) Member of the School Board, by ballot, from the Town of Lyndeborough for the ensuing year; one (1) Member of the School Board, by ballot, from the Town of Wilton for the ensuing three years.

Article 3: To choose one (1) At Large Member of the Budget Committee, by ballot, from the Town of Lyndeborough for the ensuing three years; one (1) Member of the Budget Committee, by ballot, from the Town of Lyndeborough for the ensuing year; one (1) Member of the Budget Committee, by ballot, from the Town of Wilton for the ensuing year; one (1) Member of the Budget Committee, by ballot, from the Town of Lyndeborough for the ensuing three years: one (1) Member of the Budget Committee, by ballot, from the Town of Wilton for the ensuing three years.

Moderator read the annual meeting announcement as follows:

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT WARRANT FOR ANNUAL
DISTRICT MEETING ON MARCH 11, 2023

To the inhabitants of the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District in the towns of Wilton and Lyndeborough, in the County of Hillsborough, in the State of New Hampshire qualified to vote in school district affairs are hereby notified and warned of the Annual Meeting which will be held as follows:

Date: March 11, 2023, Time: 9:00 a.m., Location: WLC Middle/High School, 57 School Road, Wilton, NH 03086, Details: Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative Middle-Senior High School Auditorium

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting March 11, 2023

Moderator read Article 4

Article 4: District Operating Budget

To see if the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee's recommended amount of \$13,839,792 for the support of schools, for the payment of salaries for the school district officials and agents, and for the payment for the statutory obligations of the district. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately.
(Majority vote required)

Recommended by the School Board Recommended by the Budget Committee

Estimated Tax Net Impact Lyndeborough: \$.88/\$1,000 assessed value Estimated Tax Net Impact Wilton:
\$.88/\$1,000 assessed value

Motion was made by Leslie Browne 2nd by Adam LaVallee to accept Article 4 as read

Budget committee Chairman Jeff Jones spoke on article 4 .Mr. Jones stated the budget committee meetings are always open, we value and encourage public feedback, mentioning there is one seat on the budget committee with no one running. Mr. Jones recognized and thanked Lisa Post who is retiring from the budget committee.

Mr. Jones spoke using the attached slide presentation referring to the variable enrollment, the vision of the graduate and the DOE minimum requirements, using the attached long term chart on how WLC has done.

The budget committee is very aware of spending and check amounts that were returned to the towns. Mr. Jones went over the budget process using the slide understanding the process and speaking on what goes into these numbers. Staffing changes, maximizing COVID funds and inflation in the school budget. District transportation is up \$173,000. We have a new bus company. Steve's Bus is no longer providing transportation. There is an increase of 43%.Electricity \$67,290 Increase of 58% from FY23 budget. Oil and Propane \$51,795 Increase of 45% from FY23 budget. Food and Kitchen Supplies \$90,300 Increase of 98% from FY23 budget.

Facilities Maintenance increase \$50,000. Track Repair increase \$26,400. All insurance increase \$81,727.We cannot control what health plan employees choose and they have different costs.

Areas of decrease

Tuition to other Schools (\$92,200) Facilities Vehicle (\$45,800) NH Retirement (\$8,067)
Technology Replacement Equipment (\$52,021)

Ms. Browne gave an ESSER funds summary explaining the federal government gave funds in three separate amounts with specific guidelines and deadlines.

ESSER1 \$45,382 used by 2022.

ESSER 11 \$304,267 used by 2023

ESSER111 \$684,010 by 2024 ESSER111 approved and in progress use by September 2024. As of January 31, 2023 the remaining unallocated balance is \$83,840.

Mr. Jones spoke on the staffing summary proposing a third grade teacher and custodian to get

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting March 11, 2023

caught up on facilities and a technology support person. These increases will be offset by the reduction of WLC science position resulting in an increase of \$132,543

Moderator called for discussion

Ms. LaPlante spoke on the tax rate explaining it is estimated using the assessed value and population.

Alyssa Lavoie of Lyndeborough commented that she appreciated the staffing summary but is disappointed in what appears to be an ongoing gap at LCS, with one principal supporting two buildings. WLC has more administrators and staff than FRES and LCS. We have one kindergarten resignation and possibly another. This is an ongoing problem, teachers are not getting the support. How are we prioritizing tech support at \$50,000 over a critical gap that we have identified? We are losing teachers, please explain why we are ignoring this gap.

Mr. Weaver replied that there is no doubt we need to do a better job. Historically LCS has been left out and what we have now is adequate. To make these changes we need to do a better job in the early stages, but I don't believe adding to the budget will help. We need to look at our admin team and do a better job.

Ms. Lavoie followed up with what are those changes? No financial change increase with Ms. Dignan taking over Assistant Principal role, but LCS is still feeling that lack of support. What changes can we anticipate and when?

Mr. Weaver replied we have already begun to make these changes to provide more boots on the ground at LCS. Is it perfect? No, but we have time to improve it before the next school year. Staffing is only one issue at LCS. The facility needs things too. It is on the radar now. It has been on the back burner. We can do a better job and we will.

Mark Chamberlain of Lyndeborough asked if the school is getting competitive bids for fuel and talking to the towns to see what prices they are getting.

Ms. LaPlante replied they do put it out to bid historically and at the time the price was through the roof. It is put out to bid and based on the best value.

Alyssa Lavoie stated she is not sold on that the ongoing issue at LCS will be resolved. Ms. Lavoie motioned for an amendment to increase the budget by \$50,000. To allow for additional support for LCS and FRES and for the superintendent and school board to see that it is taken care of. 2nd by Deb

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting March 11, 2023

Degan of Wilton.

Moderator called for discussion on the amendment

Jonathan Vanderhoof of Lyndeborough stated he understands the sentiment and suggests the administration and school board move things around. I do not think this position should be added at this meeting, it should be done at the regular meetings, not adding to the budget here at the annual meeting. I do not think amending it here is appropriate.

Mr. Lavallee stated this was just not prioritized. Yes, it was talked about that the curriculum coordinator was the solution but that is not enough going into next year.

Ms. Lavallee asked if it is being requested to put it in the budget.

Ms. Lavoie replied specific for LCS, how you do that is up to you.

Debbie Bass of Lyndeborough stated she has worked at LCS for a year and we lost a good teacher. I fully support this. Suggests board members should be entering the school and see what really goes on and what it is like to be on the receiving end of these decisions we make. Start vetting board members and get them in the school so they can see what actually goes on in the class rooms.

Jonathan Lavoie would like to hear from the administration where they would spend the \$50,000. Will it just sit there or will they hire someone?

Mr. Weaver replied that it is difficult to answer, one thing we did not talk about is how we would spend an extra \$50,000. If the community supports this it would be clearly earmarked for LCS. The bigger issue is LCS is a different school, has its own functions. It's a school in our community, it's a third school. If we increase our expenditures, not opposed but we need time to figure what we could do and we need to work thorough it with the community. I appreciate this conversation and understand we have work as a community so that we are supporting our staff. We have learned how critical early intervention is. We would carefully spend that so it is spent the way the community expects.

Bob Howe of Lyndeborough is inclined to oppose the amendment because of the amount being returned to the towns. If we need \$50,000 maybe we can find it and not return any money to the towns. It's there we can find it.

Judith Klinghoffer of Wilton asked if this would be split with Wilton and Lyndeborough.

Moderator clarified that both towns have students at LCS.

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting March 11, 2023

Mr. Jones clarified including the \$50,000 the total would be \$13,889,792.

Moderator called the vote for the amendment

Voice vote was too close to call

Article 4 amendment passed by hand vote 41/ Yes 32/No

No further discussion on article 4

Moderator read article 4 with amendment

Article 4 with amendment passed by voice vote

Moderator read Article 5

Article 5: Collective Bargaining Agreement between School Board and Support Staff.

To see if the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School Board and the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative Support Staff Association which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

Fiscal Year	Estimated Increase
2023-2024	\$56,305
2024-2025	\$21,750
2025-2026	\$22,495

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$56,305 for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the School Board Recommended by the Budget Committee

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting March 11, 2023

Estimated Tax Net Impact Lyndeborough: \$.07/\$1,000 assessed value Estimated Tax Net Impact Wilton: \$.07/\$1,000 assessed value

Motion by Mr. LoVerme 2nd by Mr. Post to accept Article 5 as read.

Mr. Manarinno and Ms. Anzalone thanked everyone on the negotiating committee for their work. Mr. Mannarino referred to the slide presentation.

Kelly Eshbeck of Wilton stated for years we have had a percentage increase and not changed the starting scale. We start people at \$12.42 an hour, we have kids with afterschool jobs making more than that. Our support staff needs more than that for a base start. I encourage you all to vote for this.

Moderator called to vote for Article 5

Article 5 passed by voice vote.

Moderator read Article 6

Article 6: Special Meeting for Defeated Collective Bargaining Agreement

To see if the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District, if Warrant Article 5 is defeated,

authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Warrant Article 5 cost items only?

(Majority vote required).

Recommended by the School Board Recommended by the Budget Committee

Motion by Jon Lavoie 2nd by Mr. Lavallee to pass over Article 6

Motion passed by voice vote.

Moderator read Article 7

Article 7: Appropriate to Capital Reserve Fund for Building/Equipment & Roadway To see if the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$190,000 to be added to the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative Building/Equipment & Roadway Capital Reserve Fund previously established. This sum is to come from general

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting March 11, 2023

taxation. This article is a special warrant article and is not included in the operating budget.

(Majority vote required)

Recommended by the School Board Recommended by the Budget Committee

***Estimated Tax Impact Lyndeborough: \$.24/\$1,000 assessed value Estimated Tax Impact
Wilton: \$.24/\$1,000 assessed value***

Motion by Ms. Cloutier-Cabral 2nd by Mr. Mannarino to accept Article 7

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral and Mr. Post thanked everyone who worked on this and spoke on Article 7 using the attached slide presentation. A full review was done over the last year, there is a lot of work to be done. Anything under \$20,000 falls into the regular budget. The boilers are through the ESSER funds and the gym window in the CIP.

***Moderator called to vote for Article 7
Article 7 passed by voice vote***

Moderator read Article 8

Article 8: Tennis Court Repairs

To see if the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$75,000 for the purpose of repairing the tennis courts located at the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative Middle-High School. This article is an individual warrant article and is not included in the operating budget.

(Majority vote required).

***The School Board does not recommend this Warrant Article
The Budget Committee does not recommend this Warrant Article***

***Estimated Tax Impact Lyndeborough: \$.10/\$1,000 assessed value Estimated Tax Impact
Wilton: \$.10/\$1,000 assessed value***

Motion to accept Article 8 by Mr. LoVerme 2nd by Ms. Cloutier-Cabral

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral spoke explaining why we have this when it is not recommended by the school board or budget committee, stating we can only recommend or not recommend but we can offer it to the voters as your choice. Last year we voted to tear down the courts and make it something

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting March 11, 2023

else, but after that we heard from many community members that we should be keeping them. Last years meeting was held at the end of school vacation so a lot of people were unable to attend. We have put it out for these people who came to us with their concerns. It is for you the community to decide and we will follow through and respect how you choose to vote.

Mr. LoVerme commented these courts are not just for the students they are for the community to use as well. If we don't repair them no one can use them. They can be used for gym class, after school and weekends.

Scott Dowling of Wilton spoke stating he has three children and is the softball coach. We already agreed last year to get rid of them. I have thought more since we are asking for an additional \$70,000 to repair them. There are only four students that use them. We need to think of other programs, we have baseball, softball and soccer. These core programs compared to the four students that use the tennis courts. I have paid as a coach upwards of \$12,000 out of my own pocket. I think we need to support our core teams.

Mr. LoVerme replied it's not just four students, the gym class uses these too.

Mr. Dowling replied we can use the softball and baseball fields too. I'm looking at the comparison to the core sports.

Mary Golding of Wilton spoke we all voted \$20,000 last year to remove the tennis courts. Why weren't they removed and does this \$70,000 include the \$20,000?

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral responded she doesn't know why they weren't removed, it could be timing and being that they are there now and dangerous we need to decide. This is just an offer to the community as last year's meeting was held at the end of school vacation and some people couldn't attend.

Fran Bujak of Lyndeborough thanked the boards for the opportunity to make this choice. Just so you know that you will be destroying over \$200,000.00 of town property. Yes, it is a small program but if you look at the fine print we bought volley ball nets yet we have no volleyball team, \$27,000. Another

small sport. These sports do support our curriculum and students. As someone just mentioned we voted \$20,000. If we vote no, it will be used to destroy the courts. If you vote yes that \$20,000 will be unexpended funds unless they use it. It remains in the budget. That will offset the \$70,000. So it is a choice of the destruction of \$200,000.00 of town property or \$55,000.00 to repair. It also has to do

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting March 11, 2023

with repairing the fencing and trimming the trees too.

The problem is the asphalt is under the snow and it is cracked because of neglect so the true cost is \$55,000.00 expenditure. The town of Lyndeborough 30% \$16,500. You are being asked a onetime \$22.00 expenditure to retain \$200,000.00 worth of property.

It is used for the curriculum and the community. If you rip them up and then decide at some point to build new ones it will be \$300,000.00. Smaller teams do not get banners to hang in the gym. There was one student who was not a stellar student and he made a remarkable comeback playing tennis. The NHIA gives out the Walter Smith award to one male and one female student who has overcome special circumstances. This student could have never played on the bigger teams and he was nominated for the Walter Smith award for male tennis player and he won. This made an incredible impact on this student, his family and the community. I ask that you support this.

Alyssa Lavoie of Lyndeborough stated she is extremely disappointed that this was presented the way it was. We spent many meetings discussing the tennis courts. Students can use surrounding community tennis courts. This was agreed and we had equal opportunity. I was replaced on the facilities committee without me knowing and the person replacing me just spoke. The process was done properly and should have been respected.

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral responded each year anyone can come forward and volunteer. Mr. Bujak volunteered. Perhaps we can advertise how the process works.

Ms. Post commented that this went through a process. The voters expect that what they vote will be done. The fact that this is being brought up again, the voters will wonder if it will be done. We need to be true to our voters when they vote. Regarding the tennis courts I believe we got an estimate of \$300,000.00 to fix the tennis courts, the \$70,000.00 won't fix it. Those courts are unsafe and crack filler won't fix them.

Jonathan Vanderhoof commented I don't think you can fix them for \$75,000.00 you will end up with the same problems, to do it right you need \$200,000 to \$300,000. Should we spend this money? Where does it benefit our students the most, if you want them for gym class and the community to use.

Sarah Chadzynski of Lyndeborough regarding the court repairs, how long will these repairs last and how will we maintain them?

Ms. Cloutier- Cabral referred to the pictures of the courts in the slide presentation. Ms. Chadzynski replied if we were to vote to repair them, would this benefit the kids.

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting March 11, 2023

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral yes, and it was not a warrant article last year that is why it is a warrant article this year. When we have a warrant article we follow it and anyone can make a warrant article.

Debbie Bass of Lyndeborough my nephew graduated in 2019 and his freshman and junior year he practiced in Hollis. I can appreciate it would be nice to have tennis courts but people need to be aware when we have tiny teams we do have the option to contact other schools.

Ms. Bass urged not to vote for this as the cafeteria is a major priority. The kitchen has been a mess for a very long time.

Julie Lemire of Wilton asked if it is lack of maintenance over the years, this is part of our property why is it not considered as we maintain our basketball court and fields.

Mr. Lavallee responded yes, this is a long term maintenance problem. We need to invest in our sports and maintain them as we go along.

Gisele Daily of Wilton stated her children both played on the tennis teams and the courts have never been maintained. It is very important to have all sports available. The lack of interest in the sport is because they are not maintained.

Ms. Chadzynski to clarify, if we don't vote on this and the \$20,000 is still there is there and what is the cost of putting in new courts?

Mr. LoVerme responded if it doesn't pass they will be demolished and it will be at least half a million to put in new ones.

Mr. Bujak clarified if we said we could just out source to be clear teams only have six players. They will not take extra players in the local area. We talked about long term maintenance. \$4000 a year for existing courts, no money for bussing or officials, hundreds of dollars less on the tennis program. To rebuild would depend on how you want to build them. The discussion last year was not to repair it was to wipe them out. The year is not over the school board will tear the courts down. There is nothing wrong with them giving us this opportunity

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting March 11, 2023

Bob Newton of Lyndeborough if it is true the \$20,000 was a line item, it wasn't a warrant. Last year the discussion was to tear down or completely rebuild with no real vision on what would replace them and how it would benefit them. The argument that baseball and softball is good and nobody plays tennis. It's not lack of tennis players it's lack of repairing the courts. You can't expect kids to play if they aren't taken care of and no one plays on bad courts. Putting this repair out there would tell us who would really play. To coaches and teachers having to pay their own money. Why are we returning money instead of giving it to these teams? Don't leave it on the coach.

Ms. Anzalone asked do we have an option for a team to play at Goss Park or other places. As a school board member I would welcome anyone to come to meetings to address this so they don't have to spend their own money.

Many responded from the body of the meeting that Goss Park courts are in disrepair also.

Mr. LoVerme stated you need three courts, currently the courts in Wilton center are private and are clay.

Laura Bujak of Lyndeborough clarified that for over 20 years Mr. Bujak has put in community service and hundreds of hours to clear those courts not just for four kids, this is our curriculum. I can't believe we are questioning getting kids outside. Last year we were not offered this. I am glad you brought this back to us.

Bill Ryan of Lyndeborough stated being on the budget committee, when we are building the budget this isn't brought to us. That's why it is so important to have individual community members come to our meetings to let us know what your budget is. If these things are not brought to us we cannot fix them.

I worked for this school district for 28 years. In 1989 we had the renovation and it was guaranteed we would never have another maintenance problem. Maintenance budgets are crossed off. We do a terrible job taking care of support staff. The school board should be taking care of maintenance, taking care of our students and making it safe. We have not taken care of the maintenance.

Mr. Lavalley reiterated that we have had no participation at our meetings.

Judith Klinghoffer stated people have spoken of going to other schools to play tennis, if we don't provide tennis courts how will they know if they want to play tennis.

Barry Kemmerer of Lyndeborough it seems the core of the problem is maintenance. You are fixing boilers that have been a problem for years using COVID funds. We should have paid for those ourselves a long time ago instead of relying on hand outs.

Moderator called the question, clarified it is \$55,000 because of the \$20,000 we already have.

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting March 11, 2023

Article 8 passed by voice vote. Alyssa Lavoie of Lyndeborough requested a hand vote

Article 8 passed by hand vote 47 /Yes 15/ No

Moderator read Article 9

Article 9: Transact Other Business

To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

Moderator thanked everyone and the custodial and technology staff for setting up the room.

Ms. Cloutier -Cabral thanked retiring school board chair Jim Kofalt and retiring school board member Charlie Post.

Motion to adjourn was made and seconded at 11:28 am

Respectfully submitted



Mary-Jane Ryan
School District Clerk