

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting March 08, 2025

School Board Members: Mr. Dennis Golding (Chair), Ms. Brianne Lavallee (Vice Chair), Ms. Tiffany Cloutier-Cabral, Ms. Darlene Anzalone, Mr. Geoffrey Allen, Ms. Cynthia Diane Foss, Mr. John Zavgren, Ms. Michelle Alley.

Absent Mr. Jonathan Lavoie,

Budget Committee Members: Mr. Jeffrey Jones (Chair), Mr. Adam Lavelle, (Vice Chair) Mr. Bill Ryan, Ms. Jennifer Bernet, Ms. Bridget Mooney, Ms. Deb Delworth,

Absent Mr. Jonathan Vanderhoof, Mr. Phil Brooks, Mr. Alex LoVerme.

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

Moderator called the meeting to order at 9:19 am, welcomed attendees, thanking everyone for the good turnout asking that everyone have patience with discussions and debate.

Moderator introduced the boards and the SAU Administrators and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

School Board Chair Dennis Golding introduced the School Board members.
Budget Committee members introduced themselves.

Moderator announced the meeting is being recorded and read the proposed rules of the meeting:

Simple parliamentary procedure. Please come to the microphone and announce your name and the town you are from before speaking. Please respect each other's choice and use proper decorum respecting each other's view and opinions. Please do not speak from your seat, all comments go through the moderator.

Any five voters may request a vote be by paper ballot. The request must be submitted to the moderator. Moderator gave instructions on paper ballots and to leave them on the way out.

Moderator asked for present with voice without vote for Superintendent of Schools Peter Weaver, Director of Special Education Ned Pratt, School District Business Administrator Kristie LaPlante, WLC Principal Tom Ronning WLC Assistant Principal Katie Gosselin, Principal FRES/LCS Bridgette Fuller, District Curriculum Coordinator Samantha Dignan, Director of Technology Nicholas Buroker, Director of Facilities Buddy Erb and Attorney Abby Tucker.

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

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Moderator Holland read the voting announcement as follows:

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT WARRANT
FOR ELECTION OF OFFICERS ON MARCH 11, 2025

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:

You are hereby notified to meet on the eleventh day of March 2025 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; two (2) Members 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; two (2) Members of the Budget Committee, by ballot, from the Town of Wilton for the ensuing three years; one (1) Member of the Budget Committee, by ballot, from the Town of Wilton for the ensuing two years; one (1) Member of the Budget Committee, by ballot, from the Town of Wilton for the ensuing year.

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Moderator stated he did not sign up for moderator and there is a name on the ballot Bob Newton.

Moderator read the annual meeting announcement as follows:

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT WARRANT
FOR ANNUAL DISTRICT MEETING ON MARCH 8, 2025

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 8, 2025**, 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**

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 \$15,841,908 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)

School Board recommends this Warrant Article 9-0
Budget Committee recommends this Warrant Article 7-2

Estimated Tax Net Impact Lyndeborough: \$.73/\$1,000 assessed value
Estimated Tax Net Impact Wilton: \$.75/\$1,000 assessed value

Article 5: 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 \$275,000 to be added to the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative Building/Equipment & Roadway Capital Reserve Fund previously established. This sum is to come from general taxation. This article is a special warrant article and is not included in the operating budget.

(Majority vote required)

School Board recommends this Warrant Article 9-0
Budget Committee recommends this Warrant Article 9-0

Estimated Tax Impact Lyndeborough: \$.34/\$1,000 assessed value
Estimated Tax Impact Wilton: \$.35/\$1,000 assessed value

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
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Article 6: School Resource Officer

To see if the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$124,740 for the purpose of contracting with the Town of Wilton to fund a School Resource Officer for the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District. The total cost of this contract is \$166,320, with the Town of Wilton funding \$41,580 of the total cost and the District funding \$124,740. This article shall be contingent upon the passage of a Warrant Article by the Town of Wilton, approving their appropriation in the sum of \$41,580. If the Town's Warrant Article does not pass, then this Warrant Article shall not take effect.

School Board recommends this Warrant Article 5-4

Budget Committee does not recommend this Warrant Article 7-2

Estimated Tax Net Impact Lyndeborough: \$.15/\$1,000 assessed value

Estimated Tax Net Impact Wilton: \$.16/\$1,000 assessed value

Article 7: Transact Other Business

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

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 \$15,841,908 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)

School Board recommends this Warrant Article 9-0

Budget Committee recommends this Warrant Article 7-2

Estimated Tax Net Impact Lyndeborough: \$.73/\$1,000 assessed value

Estimated Tax Net Impact Wilton: \$.75/\$1,000 assessed value

Motion by Adam Lavallee to accept Article 4

2nd by Jeff Jones

Jeff Jones spoke on Article 4 using a slide show presentation. There's a lot that goes into this process. It starts very early on and we spend about six months total. We spend a lot of time talking about the needs of the school but we spend an equal amount of time talking about the impact to the taxpayers.

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Mr. Jones referred to the slide presentation for minimum standards. NH Dept. of Education requires that every school district must do the following;

- ✓ Offer a curriculum that meets the minimum standards
- ✓ Provide instructional resources
- ✓ Provide a food service program
- ✓ Approve a professional development program
- ✓ Prepare students to be college/career ready
- ✓ Meet safety regulations in maintaining facilities
- ✓ Have school nurses
- ✓ Fund required positions
- ✓ Create policies as required
- ✓ Create culture and climate in schools that create a shared ownership by students, staff and community.

An overview of the district was presented.

- 3 buildings
- 527 students
- 57.1 classroom teachers
- 23.7 instructional support staff
- 103.6 total staff

A breakdown of current district enrollment. Lyndeborough 141 and Wilton 386. Mr. Jones stated enrollment has been up and down creating a difficult environment for staffing in the budget.

FY'26 Operating Budget is an increase of **\$591,242** or 3.97% vs. FY'25 Operating Budget. The following information was presented for understanding the process:

- ✓ May: Set Budget Calendar for Public Meetings (nine)
- ✓ September: Budget First Draft provided by Administration
- ✓ September – December:
- ✓ Department Budget Presentations
- ✓ Budget Refinement
- ✓ January: Proposed Budget Finalized
- ✓ February: Public Hearing
- ✓ March: District Meeting (Public Vote)

Mr. Jones spoke on what items impacted the budget. Employee health insurance, salaries, transportation, special education, FICA/Medicare and workers comp.

Notable areas of decrease were food service replacement equipment, electricity, propane (FRES), books/printed materials (reg. ed), interest on the debt and oil.

A summary of staffing reductions/efficiencies was presented

- Reduction of 2.4 FTE teaching staff
- Reduction of 1.0 FTE instructional aid
- Reduction of .4 FTE administrative staff
- Reduction of .25 FTE technology staff

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A breakdown of the health insurance total increase of \$296,508.

- Impact from collective bargaining agreement \$27,400
- \$ Impact from employee plan changes (district wide) \$167,440
- \$ Impact from rate increase \$127,738
- \$ Impact from staffing changes (\$26,070)

FY 26 State Funding for Adequate Education

\$4,265 NH Base Adequacy Aid x Average Daily Membership (ADM) of student population from 2024-2025

+ \$2,346 per student qualifying for Free and Reduced Lunch
+ \$2,184 per student with IEP

A comparison was presented for SAU63 and state reported expenditures per pupil.

Moderator called for discussion on Article 4

Bob Spear Wilton stated there are a lot of seniors here on a fixed income and property taxes are up over \$2000 in a year. This is fast becoming a hardship. You can say we could sell our home and leave but young people are struggling to afford homes in any of these towns. I spent 44 years working in high-tech. Most people would say that's a pretty good job. I've never had a 3.97% increase at any time in those 45 years. We should do a better job with this budget.

David Fraser Lyndeborough. I understand the burden but it is our legal responsibility and the frustration should be directed at the state not the local schools.

Don Rankin Wilton. A few years ago we were in disrepair and it was addressed. Things are being repaired. We voted the money to fix everything and the results are the schools look much better. We have created an environment conducive to learning. We have staff that will remain due to competitive pay. Our teachers are the core of education. I agree the state is responsible for our taxes being so high. Our problem is the way we fund education through the state. It is our responsibility to educate our children.

Stanley Bason Lyndeborough. I am a senior citizen and my tax bill is more than one quarter of my income and will be more this year. I will not be able to live here next year with the increase in my taxes. I have to pay this out of my savings.

Mike Steel Wilton. On your presentation, you're cutting 2.4 for full-time staff or teachers. I'd like to know the dollars associated with that and what the effect on the tax rate would be if we reinstitute those positions. The more we cut back on education from the teaching perspective is a negative impact on our children.

Moderator asked if they retired or were the positions eliminated.

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Business Administrator Kristie LaPlante responded \$168,300. .64 cents Lyndeborough, .77 cents Wilton.

Andy Roper asked if there is a contingency plan if the state funds go away.

Adam Lavallee responded we have capital reserves to help.

A resident stated if we are writing letters to the state we should write letters to the federal government as well. They only pay 9%. I did a little research recently and back in 1984, they passed the Assistance for Disabled Americans Act and they said that all children with special disabilities should be funded through regular education to streamline them. That was a great idea. The federal government said they would pay 40%. I'm telling everybody in the audience, you want to write letters, the federal government said they would pay 40%. Charlie Bass got it up to 14%. Right now, I did a little Google research. The federal government funds special education for 9% across state. If we were getting our full 40% reimbursement, that's a half a million dollars a year extra money that towns of Lyndeborough and Wilton would be getting for our school systems.

Karen Grybko Lyndeborough. We have 525 kids and when we voted on the bond there were 630 students. All of our students could fit in this one building. If we consolidated into two buildings we could close Lyndeborough and put the SAU here and FRES for the PreK. By consolidating three schools into two we could have a big savings. Right now with the student population here, we have half the population less than this school is made for so you can't tell me we don't have extra room to close Lyndeborough and to put the SAU in here. We could spend the money to reconfigure the school for a new use and also Florence Rideout for the preschool and kindergarten. I think that we can't sustain this current model and by consolidating three schools into two, we would start saving money without affecting the education. I think that's probably the direction we want to go in because we don't want to stop the progress that we've been making toward proficiency, but we really need to stop the spending somewhere and this would be a good first step.

Stanley Bason Lyndeborough asked if anyone knew about the lottery for the state. Proceeds that were supposed to go for education. Seniors are trying to stay here, there should be some discount for seniors.

Tiffany Cloutier-Cabral responded as a community member I do have empathy for seniors and would like to see a fund to alleviate the burden for them and see the state help more. Running a school board we work very hard. Our product is education and our goal is to produce adults who contribute to our society. In 2020 the budget was cut by \$400,000. It was really hard, then COVID which came with its own issues. Staffing became very difficult. This year is the first year we have fully staffed our district.

Don Rankin Wilton. The fight is at the state and federal government. We have to take the fight to them.

A WLC student stated concern for losing teachers and how it will affect her and other students.

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Erin Collins Wilton thanked the student for speaking up stating we should not be taking anything away from the students. We can support without having to take things away.

David Fraser Lyndeborough A lot of the increases are out of our control and we have to honor our agreements. We are legally responsible to provide an education.

Mike Steele Wilton motioned an amendment that was 2nd to raise to \$168,300 for the purpose of keeping the proposed staffing cuts.

Moderator announced motion and 2nd to amend by \$168,300 to put the proposed staff cuts back in the budget.

Superintendent Peter Weaver commented that one of the positions was a MS science teacher. This will impact another teacher. If we remove the teacher and it will have an adverse impact.

Principal Tom Ronning When we think about cutting staff it matters. Ms. Gosselin and I can do it if we have to but there will be impact from it. Any cuts made will make a difference and it won't be a positive one.

Principal Fuller I want to echo Mr. Ronning and also say that yes, we do have lower enrollment and lower class sizes, but we are building the foundation of our student's futures at LCS and FRES.

A high school senior talked about teachers helping him get into colleges and how hard it is to apply and these teachers help him.

A student said there has been a great change in our school the past two years and she has formed a bond with her teachers.

Shane Meltzer asked if the cuts were monetary or due to redundancy in staff.

Superintendent Weaver responded we wouldn't have made those cuts if there wasn't pressure to do so. The cuts are not ideal. One of the .2 cuts is to reduce a PE teacher from a full-time teacher to a four-fifths teacher. By doing that, we have to revisit the need for our middle school students to have PE that's a really critical need at that age, especially the boys. I have two boys' so I can speak from experience. They have got to let that energy out. We have to reconfigure, like Mr. Ronning said, how our schedule flows in the middle school. Is that going to have an adverse impact on them? I think so. The other position we reduced the nurse from a .8 to a .6 again, we were able to do that at LCS because we've got a team there that's willing to sort of pick up the pace. But these cuts are not ideal. We have to actually reconfigure how we deliver education.

Bill Keefe Wilton you've got to make some adjustments because as some of the other people have expressed today people are getting taxed out of this town. I thought the budget committee's number was high because I went to one of the hearings and there was a lot of funds that were not directly connected to students. One of the things that stood out is there's \$5,000 in this budget for transportation for a field trip to Europe.

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Adam Lavallee stated that's not in the budget anymore. It was removed. I donated it.

Mr. Keefe responded thank you. I appreciate that because at the meeting I spoke against it and you guys voted for it and said, it stays in the budget. You were really quite adamant.

There's a lot of funds that are really not necessary. The slides show that we're spending \$21,000 and change per student. That's not the right number. It's really \$30,000. You divide the total budget you are asking for without this increase by the number of students you have, it works out to about \$30,000 per student. That's a lot. So, I'm opposed to this increase. I think the budget is high enough. I think people are getting taxed out of their homes in this town. And I think we should vote no on the amendment. Thank you.

Darlene Anzalone Lyndeborough stated the last two years have been great. Let's not cut from our kids.

Rebecca Raymond Wilton. Spoke on her child needing a one on one to keep her safe, she needs OT, speech and cutting these means she doesn't get an education. When you cut budgets you cut education.

Emily Hall Wilton stated there has been a lot of talk about this school and people are starting to consider this school because of the changes we've made.

Reducing the budget results in loss for our students. A competitive well supported school benefits everyone.

As an educator, I'm speaking on behalf of many colleagues who are deeply concerned about the potential budget cuts and their impact on our students. We all understand the need for fiscal responsibility, but we also need to recognize that cutting the budget too aggressively threatens the very foundation of a strong, stable education for our children. We've already heard this today from many voices, but I just want to continue to reiterate the importance of this. One of our biggest challenges our school has faced in recent years is teacher retention.

The effects of that instability are clear in the academic performance as we have shared today. More recently we've worked hard alongside the school board to establish a contract that attracts and retains quality educators. This progress is now at risk, as we have shared today, reducing the budget means potential reductions in force.

Adam Caragher called the question.

Moderator allowed one more comment Clinton Holcomb Lyndeborough asked to keep in mind the student to staff ratio. When you cut staff you are reducing the choices students have.

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Moderator read amendment and 2nd to increase the budget by \$168,300

Voice vote was to close to call. Hand vote was 164 yes. No votes were not physically counted but were visibly less than yes votes.

Moderator called amendment passed by hand vote.

Discussion on original ballot question resumed.

Nancy Howe Lyndeborough Do we now have authority to say what positions get cut or not.

Brianne Lavallee replied that lies with the board.

Ms. Howe stated I think that we really need to start looking outside of the box as far as cutting teachers or cutting programs and that type of thing.

I was on the school board 20 years ago and at the time the SAU consisted of four people, superintendent, assistant superintendent one woman who was the business consultant and one was a secretary. Now we have 500 kids and at the time we had seven schools that we represented we did Mascenic, New Ipswich, Mason Elementary Schools, and Wilton/Lyndeborough. They're all separate at that time. So, we had seven schools. We now have three actual schools and one district, but we have more people. Do they actually provide a service that we can say is good?

The other thing I wanted to know, Karen Grybko spoke of combining the schools. We were talked into combining Wilton and Lyndeborough Elementary School down in Wilton and we paid and it was going to be cheaper. That was what they told us. Since then it keeps going up and everything goes up and everything is so big that you don't know which part is the school from elementary school, which part is the Lyndeborough kindergarten, SAU. It's not broken down at all. And I think that would be really nice to have that clarified and so we could always understand that.

About what Karen Grybko said about combining the elementary school in Wilton was meant for 700 kids. You could allegedly put everybody down there, but we should be moving the SAU down there and the kindergarten. We wouldn't have to worry about the teachers and cutting teachers. Just make some common sense, in my opinion, common sense decisions based on closing the elementary school in Lyndeborough and moving everybody down here and then go that way. That's my opinion.

The question was called

Moderator read article 4.

Article 4 passed by voice vote

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Moderator read Article 5

Article 5: 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 \$275,000 to be added to the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative Building/Equipment & Roadway Capital Reserve Fund previously established. This sum is to come from general taxation. This article is a special warrant article and is not included in the operating budget. (Majority vote required)

School Board recommends this Warrant Article 9-0
Budget Committee recommends this Warrant Article 9-0

Estimated Tax Impact Lyndeborough: \$.34/\$1,000 assessed value
Estimated Tax Impact Wilton: \$.35/\$1,000 assessed value

Tiffany Cloutier- Cabral motioned to accept Article 5

2nd by Geoffrey Allen

Karen Grybko Lyndeborough asked why the numbers are kind of even when Lyndeborough has less than half.

Point of order was called as Article has already passed.

Kristie LaPlante replied per the articles of agreement, we break out per community is based on 50% of our student population as well as 50% of the assessed property values. Currently, based on the 2024 property taxes, Lyndeborough has 28% of that value. Wilton has 71% of that value. When we look at the enrollment, 25.3% of the students are in Lyndeborough 69% are in Wilton. 269% of the property value is from 72.30% is from Wilton. When you combine those and you break that out at the end of the day, Lyndeborough is paying 27.69 Wilton ends up paying 72.309% of those costs. So, it's the way that the articles of agreement are written and the cost share when you break it out and you apply it to the current student enrollment or the applicable student enrollment as well as the current property taxes. So, that's how we come up with that value.

Ms. Cloutier Cabral and Mr. Allen spoke on Article 5. Using a slide show presentation

Mr. Allen stated what we have today is something that we feel very proud of and when you walk around our schools you see the differences and the locker rooms were a big concern and they remain a big concern and it is something that the board and the administration is actively working on that requires engineering and re-planning because this school was built I think in 1968.

The locker rooms are in need of update since they haven't been dealt with and they need to be ADA compliant among several other things. But that's a big project that is going to be improved and listed within your documents. You will see many other projects that have been improved.

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The total cost of the Warrant Article is \$275,000

Using the current apportionment formula:

- **LYNDEBOROUGH** is responsible for 27.69% of this amount, or \$76,150
 - This represents an increase of \$.3392 / \$1,000 of assessed value
 - For the average home in Lyndeborough valued at \$307,500, the *estimated tax impact is \$104.40*
- **WILTON** is responsible for 72.31% of this amount, or \$198,850
 - This represents an increase of \$.3489 / \$1,000 of assessed value
 - For the average home in Wilton valued at \$359,779, the *estimated tax impact is \$125.51*

Facilities Projects Completed/In-Progress since 2024 District Meeting

- **LCS**
 - *Installed key fob access into building and throughout the building*
 - *Siding Replacement and Roof Replacement (Spring 2023)*
- **FRES**
 - *Newer infrastructure/mechanical equipment has not necessitated investment in large projects.*
 - *Smaller projects are completed with funding in the Operating Budget*
- **WLC**
 - *Replaced two additional boilers (ESSER funds)*
 - *Pave parking lot*
 - *Install key fob access*
 - *Replace gym windows*
 - *Replace Fire Alarm Control Panel*
 - *Replace second grease trap in kitchen*
 - *Rehab dish room and replace dishwasher*
 - *Tennis Courts substantially complete*
 - *Track improvements (Summer 2023)*

Facilities Projects to be completed over the Next Year from Capital Improvement Plan (funded by Capital Reserve Fund)

- *Pavement Wear Coat at WLC*
- *Paint Exterior Stucco & Metal Roof at WLC*
- *Replace VCT Tiles (Year 2 of 3) at WLC*
- *Replace VCT Tiles in Cafeteria at WLC (insurance claim)*
- *Replace Boiler at LCS*

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Stanley Bason Lyndeborough asked about LCS who is in that building and who owns the building. We could save money if we moved our town offices there.

Mr. Allen responded the SAU offices and the preschool and Kindergarten are housed there. The building is also the emergency station for the town of Lyndeborough.

Mr. Allen suggested maybe the town administrator in Lyndeborough reach out to the district with questions on using the building.

Mr. Lavallee asked if all the rooms are full at LCS. Mr. Weaver replied yes, they are all being used.

Tatiana Franko Lyndeborough expressed concern about being pushed out of town because of taxes. Asking why can't we combine the schools. On behalf of retirees and low income people we need to consider there is a population that is being forced out. How can we consolidate? I have a question for the administration because this is the third comment I've heard. I was never aware that FRES could hold 700 students. I thought this was the only building that had that kind of capacity.

Mr. Lavallee asked if FRES can hold 700 students.

Ms. LaPlante replied we need to look into that before we can speak on it.

Mr. Allen stated we need to recognize that even if that was originally built for 700 students, some of the classrooms have been turned into other purpose rooms. It may have changed based on the laws that have changed in education and how we educate our students. We hear you when you say budgets are tight and facilities is something we can look at, but we still need to maintain these facilities.

There was discussion on the capacity of the buildings. Bill Ryan stated the buildings were designed to hold a certain amount, changes have occurred and the fire chief should be consulted regarding the buildings capacity.

David Fraser Lyndeborough Is the plan for this fiscal year to zero out the capital reserve account for the roadways Correct?

Mr. Allen replied no, we never zero that out because we're also budgeting. If you look down at some of the things we're raising money for, the replacement tiles on the second floor at FRES, for example, this is the first year of raising money for that. We're going to raise money again for that next year. Then we'll have enough and the project will become due. So, some of these projects are becoming due and that line item in the capital reserve fund that line item may be zeroed out, but there should always be money in there because we're always budgeting for projects that are on the capital improvement plan.

David Fraser Lyndeborough To accommodate and consider the increase that we just voted on for the school budget. Can we look at a compromise and cutting potentially \$100,000 out of this article to make up that difference?

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Mr. Allen replied any cuts that we make have direct impact. One of the reasons that these couple of years are frontloaded and higher is because we've done that in the past. We've deferred maintenance. We've deferred raising funds for things.

Anything that we don't raise money for this year will eventually need to be fixed. That just means we're doubling up next year. And so if you cut \$100,000, we will we find a way to make it work but it'll also be at deferred costs that we're going to be paying later or deferred maintenance, which a good example is the windows that were leaking. We didn't repair those and because we didn't repair those, because we kept deferring that maintenance, it caused further damage and ended up costing us more in the long run. We feel that this capital improvement plan addresses all of our present concerns and future concerns. I would not recommend cutting it, but we'll deal with whatever you give us.

Bill Ryan, Lyndeborough I'd like to address the occupancy of the buildings that Miss Grybko talked about. The schools were designed for this but as everyone knows, RSAs gets changed every year. The building facilities director has the grand pleasure of marching around with the fire chiefs and the fire chief has the ultimate answer of how many people you can put in any common place or any room. The Superintendent and the Principals can all say we're going to put 30 kids in this room. That doesn't make it true.

Don Rankin Wilton Anytime you plan a major project at your house, you've got two choices. You either save up the money before you start the project or you put it on Credit and credit cost money.

Andy Roper Lyndeborough relative to LCS, if you look at the articles of agreement there was no simple mechanism for transferring that building back to the town. I think we looked at that when we were looking for fire department and emergency facilities. So that's something that would very likely end up costing a great deal. Not as easy as it sounds.

Joe Torey Wilton I would like to make an amendment that changes the amount from \$275,000 to \$272,000, which is what the CIP plan calls for.

Moderator motion on the floor to reduce this from \$275.000 to \$272.000 we have a second. Called for discussion.

Mr. Allen and Ms. Cloutier- Cabral stated they would have no issue with that.

Amendment passed by voice vote

Moderator read Article 5

Article 5 passed by voice vote

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Moderator read Article 6

Article 6: School Resource Officer

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School Board recommends this Warrant Article 5-4
Budget Committee does not recommend this Warrant Article 7-2

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Estimated Tax Net Impact Wilton: \$.16/\$1,000 assessed value

Motion to accept Article 6 by Ms. Cloutier-Cabral

2nd by Ms. Anzalone

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral spoke using a slide show and video presentation of a school resource officer.
The total cost of the Warrant Article is \$124,740
Using the current apportionment formula:

- **LYNDEBOROUGH** is responsible for 27.69% of this amount, or \$34,542
 - This represents an increase of \$.1539 / \$1,000 of assessed value
 - For the average home in Lyndeborough valued at \$307,500, the *estimated tax impact is \$47.35*
- **WILTON** is responsible for 72.31% of this amount, or \$90,198
 - This represents an increase of \$.1582 / \$1,000 of assessed value
 - For the average home in Wilton valued at \$359,779, the *estimated tax impact is \$56.93*

A school resource officer is a sworn law-enforcement officer with arrest powers who works in a school setting. Special training working with youth separates an SRO from other police officers. They receive 40 hours of special training, including but not limited to: ethics and school law, adolescent brain development, adolescent mental health, cyber safety, and violence prevention in schools.

The goals of a well-founded SRO program include providing safe learning environments in our nation's schools, providing valuable resources to school staff members, fostering positive relationships with youth, developing strategies to resolve problems affecting youth and protecting all students, so that they can reach their fullest potentials."

Source: <https://www.nasro.org/faq/>

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- The position of School Resource Officer (SRO) has been discussed intermittently since 2004; in 2023 another effort was made to consider providing an SRO in SAU 63.
- A community survey was distributed in 2023 (201 respondents). About 60% agreed that it was "important" to have a SRO in the school district. About 52% supported funding the position via a combination of local and school budgets
- Because an SRO is a sworn law enforcement officer, the District has to contract with the municipality for these services. Accordingly, the District has contracted with the Town of Wilton and their Police Department
- During the school year 2024 -25, the Wilton Select Board and SAU 63 School Board agreed to place
- both a Wilton Warrant Article and School District Warrant Article to allow the community to discuss and vote to support/not support the SRO position in SAU 63.

The purpose of a MOU is to formalize and clarify the partnership between the Wilton Police Department and the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District (SAU 63) to develop and implement a School Resource Officer (SRO) program in SAU 63. The MOU agreement will cover the following areas:

- Goals and Objectives
- Process for selecting an SRO, training, roles & responsibilities
- Supervision and chain of command, standard operating procedures, information sharing
- Integration of SRO into school community, confidentiality requirements
- Complaint resolution
- Annual performance review
- Effective dates and modification agreements

How will an SRO be funded?

- Requires partnership w/Wilton PD
- Budget estimate range: \$160,000 - \$172,000 depending on experience
- 180 days/260 (70%) SRO work year
- 30% work year with Wilton PD

Cost include

- Employee benefits such as health, dental, NH Retirement, tuition, life insurance
- Additional costs such as sign on bonus, training, tuition, outfitting, vehicle maintenance, vehicle fuel, holiday payout

SAU pays proportionate share

- 180 days at a cost of \$124,740
- Traditional school district/community approach
- Requires support of Wilton Community & PD

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral explained there has been a lot of meetings on this and based on the research it is a good thing. The town of Wilton will have to pass this. They will be a working member of the Wilton PD. In the summer they will work for the town of Wilton.

Tammy Smith Wilton stated the whole video that was showed is already what our PD is currently doing along with the staff of the schools. The kids are already getting this support and they trust the people we have now.

Deb Morvert Wilton stated we did have an officer in the large school where I grew up and there was all kinds of serious things that went on. Our PD does have a good relationship with the students and schools. I don't think we are large enough for this. Would this officer also be a truant officer?

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral replied yes, they would help with truancy.

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A Lyndeborough resident stated he liked the idea that we are already doing this with current staff and asked about the 40 hours of specialized training.

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral stated it is an offer for the community to consider. You may vote for or against anything here today.

Don Rankin Wilton referred to an AI search that suggest SROs don't prevent school shooting and sometimes increase the likelihood of death. The SRO needs to develop a rapport with the students in all three schools. Contrast that to the stable teaching and facility staff that they see every day. In every event of our worst nightmare the SRO can't cover all three schools.

Sarah Spittle Wilton In order for this to pass it has to pass at the town level. At the town level we have to pay for a car and other things you are not seeing here today.

Tom Shultz Wilton thanked the boards for putting this together. Many communities around us have SROs. Three generations of police chiefs have supported this. We need to take it seriously. It is ultimately our decision but it is also Wilton voters at town meeting.

Bill Ryan stated Wilton residents have two opportunities to discuss and vote on this today and at their town meeting. Lyndeborough citizens have one opportunity here today.

A Lyndeborough resident stated he is a military combat veteran and a survivor of a shooting on a military base. Ultimately the teachers have to step up. If we are going to protect our students we need to think about this. It's not always good to have an SRO in the school.

Mary Golding Wilton thanked him for this service and sacrifice. Stating all teachers have gone through extensive ALICE training and we know what to do and are willing to do it.

DJ Garcia Wilton addressed Mr. Ryan on Wilton having two chances to address this article. That is because this officer will be working for Wilton in the summer. The biggest concern is how stretched the PD is and is this a sustainable position with the numbers we have today.

Tatina Franko Lyndeborough Two years ago this was a concern but now with the changes Mr. Ronning has implemented things have changed. Can we table this for a couple of years?

Moderator stated we need to vote on this today.

Becky Sours Wilton. A lot of this is already being taught here maybe we could look into volunteers.

Bill Crouse Lyndeborough. Are there any federal funds for this?

Ms. LaPlante responded funding is available to supplement but not to implement.

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral stated that in 2019 it would have been grant funded.

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Adam Carragher called the question.

Moderator read Article 6

Article 6 failed by voice vote

Moderator read Article 7

Article 7: Transact Other Business

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

Ms. Lavalley recognized Ms. Cloutier-Cabral for her last meeting on the schoolboard and presented her with the Star Fish Award.

Moderator Holland was recognized on his last meeting as Moderator and for his many years of service.

Moderator Holland thanked the towns and commended the community for having good discussions and when we walk out the door ending up as friends.

Motion to adjourn was made and 2nd at 12:29pm

Motion to adjourn passed by voice vote

Respectfully submitted,



Mary-Jane Ryan
School District Clerk