

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
Annual District Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2019

Present:

School Board Members: Mr. Harry Dailey, (Chair), Mr. Matthew Ballou, Ms. Joyce Fisk, Ms. Carol LeBlanc, Mr. Mark Legere, Ms. Miriam Lemire, Mr. Alexander LoVerme. Mr. Charlie Post, Mr. Jonathan Vanderhoof.

Budget Committee Members: Ms. Leslie Browne(Chair), Ms. Pamela Altner, Ms. Edwina Hastings, Ms. Lisa C.M. Post, Mr. Bill Ryan, Ms. Christine Tiedemann, Ms. Jennifer Bernet, Mr. Kevin Boette, Mr. Dennis Golding,

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

Moderator Holland called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM.

WLC student Hadi Lancaric sang the National Anthem.

Moderator Holland welcomed attendees.

Mr. Dailey introduced the members of the school board.
Ms. Browne introduced the members of the budget committee.

Moderator Holland introduced the SAU staff, made the following announcements and explained the rules of the meeting.

There is a Girl Scout cookie sale outside the meeting room.

There is a need for volunteers to help count ballots in both towns at Tuesday's election. Registered voters over the age of 18 may volunteer to help count ballots.

Moderator Holland explained voice vote and hand vote, informed the attendees of a request for paper ballot for Article 4.

Gail Proctor of Wilton requested the five names on the request for paper ballot be read:

- Pamela Altner
- Charlie Post
- William Ryan
- Lisa Post
- Jonathan Vanderhoof

Rules of the meeting were approved.

Moderator Holland read the voting announcement as follows:

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 twelfth day of March 2019

At the following places in the Town of your residence:

| | | |
|--------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Wilton | Wilton Town Hall | 8:00 o'clock in the forenoon |
| Lyndeborough | Lyndeborough Old Town Hall (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.

Moderator Holland read Article 4:

Warrant Article 4: The Operating Budget

To see if the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee's recommended amount of \$12,598,674 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 impact

Lyndeborough – (\$0.23)

Estimated Tax impact

Wilton – (\$0.25)

A MOTION was made by Mr. Harry Dailey and SECONDED Mr. Alex LoVerme to approve article 4.

Mr. Dailey spoke to Article 4

The proposed budget for the coming school year is \$12,598,674 which is an increase to the current approved budget in the amount of \$129,669 which is a 1.03% increase.

For Lyndeborough, the estimated tax impact of 23 cents would create an annual tax increase of \$54.74 for a home valued at \$238,000. For Wilton, the estimated tax impact of 25 cents would create an annual tax increase of \$52.25 for a home valued at \$209,000.

The actual rate for next year will be determined in the fall which is the reason we are estimating the potential tax impact for each town.

Approximately 95 % of the total budget goes toward funding:

Special Education
Salaries and Benefits
Debt Services Facilities
Utilities and
transportation

The remaining funds are about \$685,000 which funds the implementation of curriculum and the items that support that curriculum.

The enrollment for the district has been declining in recent years. With the addition of full day kindergarten, there is an anticipated enrollment for the 2019-20 school year of 36 students. Using the current adequacy formula, the additional 36 students will generate approximately \$129,000 with no real increase in expenditures.

Full day kindergarten was approved by the voters last March with an anticipated enrollment of 40 students. The current enrollment is 54 students.

The district receives approximately \$2,900 per kindergarten student creating an unanticipated revenue of about \$40,600.

Students enrolled in full day kindergarten are showing a marked increase in their student achievement compared to the students in the half day program we offered in the past.

Students take part in an early literacy test that helps teachers to determine their readiness to read. Half way through the school year, 21 % more of the students are currently or are just about ready to read right now compared to last year. That number will grow throughout the spring.

We also have data in comparison to national norms. Using statistics from the same time last year compared to January of this year, more than half of our students are at or above the national benchmark for their age compared to about one third from last year. There are also fewer students who are significantly at a deficit for reading compared to the half day program.

The proposed budget funds the collective bargaining agreements that were approved by the voters.

The budget supports curriculum and professional development to implement a new math curriculum in grades K-5, advanced placement courses for students to earn college credit while at WLC and a new science curriculum called Project Lead the Way which will be funded through grant funds.

There is also a budgeted request to update the library collection at FRES.

The budget that was approved by the budget committee and the school board is \$163,289 less than the SAU requested budget.

The decisions on what areas of the budget will be reduced from the requests made by the SAU staff has not been finalized. The school board will have discussions and make the final decision in the spring if the proposed budget of \$12,598,674 is approved by the voters.

Areas for the school board to consider to meet the approved budget figure could include but not be limited to:

- Waiting to implement the math curriculum
- Replacing the library collection at FRES over a longer time
- Considering eliminating the tennis program at WLC which has been declining in interest.
- Reductions in salaries and potential salary increases for non-union staff.
- Not funding the athletic trainer that the district was not able to find in the current school year
- Not funding requests for new and replacement equipment, as well as furniture
- Reductions in maintenance, this would not include preventative maintenance

- Put a hold in replacement programs for technology and furniture
- A reduction in supplies
- A decrease in salaries and benefits that could be realized through the hiring of new staff or reductions of staff
- Reducing the Consumer Price Index indicator in calculating utility increases

Discussion:

Fran Bujak of Lyndeborough referred to RSA 32 which governs the budget committee to be prudent .Mr. Bujak questioned the line under 910 *budget committee reduction (163,289)*. Stating it is highly irregular for the voters to be asked to vote for a reduction without knowing what will be cut from the budget.

Mr. Bujak asked if that number only includes contractual obligations. Mr. Dailey answered yes.

Mr. Bujak asked about lines 411 page 47 and lines 622, 624 and 626 on page 48; questioning why these lines contain a significant increase.

Mr. Lane explained the current budget was underestimated by \$20,000.00. These numbers were created in August using the consumer price index of 3.4% increase.

Mr. Bujak asked what amount the SAU would be comfortable with to be sure the utilities are paid.

Mr. Lane replied between 10-15,000.00

Mr. Bujak referred to Lines 531 and 532 telephones and data communications, approx. 12,500, where will that money come from; under this budget it would not be approved; money would have to come from somewhere else to pay for that.

Mr. Bujak expressed his opinion of a lack of fairness as to why raises are proposed for only contractual employees and a select group of individuals will not get raises and could someone please speak to why these individuals are not worthy of a raise.

Mr. Lane referred to line item SAU incentive salary for non-union salary increases; that number was reduced by 25% not eliminated. Raises would be there but not as much as anticipated for non-union employees.

Mr. Bujak asked for clarification as to where that money is coming from.

Mr. Lane replied the collective bargaining agreement was voted on, those are the contractual obligations and are in the proposed budget, non-union raises will come from the salary pool; that line will decrease by 25%.

Mr. Bujak referred to line 641, books that would be used to educate, nearly 35,000.00, there is no contractual obligation in this line.

Mr. Lane replied no specific decision has been made at this time on which areas to cut; of the possible options the only books and materials potentially not funded would be the additional books for FRES library.

Mr. Bujak made a motion to amend the proposed budget with an increase of \$81,000.00 to be \$12, 679,674.00. 2nd by Mr. LaVallee.

Discussion:

Geoff Brock of Lyndeborough spoke in favor of the amendment stating that since they are not able to determine where the cuts will come from and recognizing everything costs more each year. He is in favor of supporting the increase.

Matt Black of Wilton spoke in favor of the amendment and expressed concerns of staff and supply reductions.

Matt Simard of Lyndeborough, spoke against the amendment asking what the overage was in last year's budget.

Mr. Dailey answered 460,000, which 260,000 was from a bond; typically, 140 to 200,000.00 is left over.

A Lyndeborough resident spoke in favor of the proposed budget without the amendment to increase so as to not increase taxes.

Matt Mannarino of Wilton suggested making the superintendent a part time position.

Malcom Nixon of Lyndeborough asked about the computer reduction.

Mr. Dailey explained we have gone to a one to one computer model, every student has access to a chrome book, we are spending less money now.

Bob Howe of Lyndeborough asked what the cost per pupil is.

Mr. Dailey answered \$20,275.24

Mr. Post stated the state average is \$15,865

Mr. Howe expressed we are spending approximately \$5000.00 more than the state average.

Mr. Bujak stated our costs are high because we maintain the buildings.

David Roemer of Lyndeborough thanked the boards and commented this is a perfect budget that was passed by a majority with a lot of effort and time.

Adam Carragher of Wilton called for a ballot vote on the amendment.

The following names on the request for paper ballot on the amendment:

- Adam Carragher
- Mike Ruouthier
- Matt Mannarino
- Erin Mannarino
- Matthew Black

Voting on Amendment to the budget with \$81,000.00 increase

Passed by paper ballot vote

52 yes/ 46 no

Thomas Schutz of Wilton asked will the committees consider a school resource officer next year.

Mr. Daily suggested this be brought to a school board meeting.

Moderator Holland put Article 4 with the proposed budget to be \$12, 679,674.00 to a paper ballot vote.

Voting on Article 4

Article 4 passed by paper ballot

72 yes, 27 no

Moderator Holland read Article 5

Warrant Article 5- Adding Funds to Building/Equipment & Roadway Fund

To see if the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$60,000 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 warrant article.
(Majority vote required)

Recommended by the School Board

Recommended by the Budget Committee

Estimated Tax impact Lyndeborough - \$0.10

Estimated Tax impact Wilton - \$0.11

Ms. Lemire motioned to accept Warrant Article 5, 2nd by Mr. Legere

Ms. Lemire spoke to Article 5

For Lyndeborough, the estimated tax impact of 10 cents would create an annual tax increase of \$23.80 for a home valued at \$238,000.

For Wilton, the estimated tax impact of 11 cents would create an annual tax increase of \$22.99 for a home valued at \$209,000.

The actual rate for next year will be determined in the fall which is the reason we are estimating the potential tax impact for each town.

A copy of the Capital Improvement Plan is on page 40 of your annual report.

This capital reserve fund was established to create a funding plan to complete a planned set of repairs and upgrades to the facilities within the district.

The recommendation of the budget committee and the school board will be to add \$60,000 to this fund. This will fulfill the financial requirements to continue the Capital Improvement Plan.

The plan in the 2019 -20 school year is to continue the roof replacement at WLC, renovate bathrooms at WLC and repoint the chimney at FRES.

The balance in the fund as of October 31, 2018 is \$90,451.

No discussion

Moderator Holland put Article 5 to a voice vote

Voting Article 5

Article 5 passed by voice vote

No further business to come before the meeting.

Mr. Dailey and Ms. Browne thanked the committees. Ms. Browne recognized and thanked Ms. Hastings for her service on the budget committee.

A MOTION was made to adjourn the meeting and was SECONDED

The motion passed by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 10:54 AM

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary-Jane Ryan".

Mary-Jane Ryan
School District Clerk