

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, January 7, 2020
Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative M/H School-Media Room
6:30 p.m.**

Present: *Matt Ballou, Miriam Lemire, Carol LeBlanc, Jonathan Vanderhoof (after Budget Co, mtg.), Mark Legere, Alex LoVerme, and Tiffany Cloutier-Cabral*

Superintendent Bryan Lane, Business Administrator Beth Baker, Principals Brian Bagley and Bob LaRoche, Director of Student Support Services Ned Pratt, Curriculum Coordinator Julie Heon, and Clerk Kristina Fowler

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ballou called the meeting to order at 6:34pm.

II. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Request to add the following adjustments to the agenda: Action Item-Principal Position, Committee Report-Facilities Committee, and Non-Public-Personnel Matter.

A MOTION was made to accept the adjustments to the agenda by Mr. LoVerme and SECONDED by Ms. Lemire. Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public comment section of the agenda was read.

Ms. Deb Mortvedt, Wilton, spoke regarding the greenhouse suggesting grants could be written and there are “lots of people with green-thumbs” that would be willing to help facilitate this. She wants the Board to be careful on spending for this. Regarding the previous Board discussion about the budget audit update, as a voter, she is willing to spend \$30,000 to move forward and have a clean slate. She would be interested in a petition warrant article and notes it probably isn’t as hard to do as it appears. Regarding a Safety Resource Officer (SRO), she has been listening to “how that is going down” and wonders if it is an appropriate use. She comes from a large town where they had an SRO and her kids went to a cooperative school of this size that didn’t have one.

Mr. Charlie Post spoke regarding the budget audit. Referring to the draft minutes, he is concerned the Board is not going to act and should consider making the decision now; he just heard the Chairman won’t even be here. He believes the money needs to be spent now and if not, it appears you have something to hide. He questions how you take steps to be sure it doesn’t happen again. He adds, during the last hearing, you wanted to get beyond the vote, get the money in and address it later and you have not done anything at all except think about it, talk about it and kick the can down the road. It’s important you do an audit; it doesn’t need to be a full audit. You are at cross-roads, if you don’t you will be buried in requests. It’s the public’s money, it’s our schools and we will get the answers and you won’t have any control over; it will be referred to the State. Chairman Ballou asked Mr. Post to clarify which audit he is suggesting. Mr. Post replied, an adequate audit, you can start with the light audit and if need more go from there. It needs to be now; you are holding the school’s administration and Board back. It will be an issue.

IV. BOARD CORRESPONDENCE

a. Reports

i. Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent reported working with both towns regarding the delay in setting the tax rate. Wilton had to delay their payment to the district for the month of November and it was received it the first week of Dec. Lyndeborough delayed payment for 9 days and all were able to meet their target goals. He thanked both the Select Board’s and Town Administrators regarding how everyone worked together. He prepared some budget information that has been provided to the Board and Budget Committee. The technology audit should be in shortly. The WLC concert has been rescheduled. There have been 3 snow days; hoping for no more.

ii. Business Administrator’s Report

Ms. Baker’s report focused on a finance review of Food Service. Free and reduced is consistent with last year and also meal counts. She worked with Deb Roske, Food Service Manager to forecast expenditures; is forecasting to

spend just shy of the budgeted amount of \$230,000. This includes the \$25,000 transfer from the general fund. Ms. Roske has had some struggles with equipment repairs. In terms of an early first look, Ms. Baker is encouraged.

iii. Principals' Reports

Principal Bagley reported the Geography Bee will be January 22, 8AM in the WLC cafeteria. Everyone is welcome! STAR 360 testing will take place in the next 2 weeks; this is the 3rd data point and information will be in his next Board Report. WLC seniors took part in a college program called "I am College Bound". Any HS senior who applied on a certain day was able to apply to a NH college of their choosing free of charge. Students saved \$1,750 by participating; several have already received acceptance letters. HS robotics team competed on December 7 at Founders Academy; this was ground breaking. They came in 2nd place! His report included "MS Minutes" which includes a short paragraph from each MS teacher on what is going on during the month. Teachers welcome feedback or comments and members can email Principal Bagley for teacher's contact information. Ms. LeBlanc liked seeing this.

Principal LaRoche reported in November report cards went out and parent/teacher conferences were held. He was impressed with the depth of knowledge the teachers had of students in a short time. In December, regarding recess, he clarified when students do/do not go out in cold weather; below 13 degrees' students do not go out for recess. Regarding STAR 360, there has been discussion about the WIN Program. He reports the greatest scaled score growth was seen in grades K and 1. Students in WIN compared to those not in WIN progress a little faster. Kindergarten WIN students had a score growth of 114 compared to 86 for those not in WIN. Grade 1 WIN students had a score growth of 208 compared to 120 for those not in WIN. In math the greatest scaled growth was in grades 1 and 3. Grade 1 WIN students had 105 compared to 60 for those not in WIN. Grade 3 WIN students had 79 compared to 46 for those not in WIN. He noted if a student is discharged from WIN, this is a good thing; the point is to catch the student up and dismiss them. Students went to the Wilton theater to see a show on social emotional learning. He spoke of the Scripps Spelling Bee model being very difficult. They are looking at different ways to have competitions for students. One idea is having spelling bee's in groups of 3; working together with less anxiety while still promoting the idea of good spelling. LCS has been discussing kindergarten registration. They want to hold it on a specific day in March each year to kick off the registration process with earlier access.

iv. Curriculum Coordinator's Report

Dr. Heon provided an overview of her report including receiving 2 additional grants totaling almost \$10,000 which will support the robotics curriculum and additional training for 2 teachers. Feedback regarding the professional development (PD) on December 5 was well received. Elementary staff had math training and WLC focused on climate and culture. On February 7, PD for LCS and FRES will be additional math training and WLC will focus on school climate. The Student Leadership Team will share information prior at a faculty meeting; teachers will also be analyzing data and work on a plan. Assessments will be planned for spring testing in grades 3-8 and will continue taking topic related modular assessments which is a unique NH State test and grades 5, 8 and 11 will take science designed tests and SAT testing is happening in late April this year.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

There was no consent agenda to report.

A short recess was called at 6:56pm and called back to session at 6:59pm.

VI. 7:00PM JOINT BOARD & BUDGET COMMITTEE SESSION

Present: *Leslie Browne, Christine Tiedemann, Jennifer Bernet, Dennis Golding, Lisa Post, Bill Ryan, Kevin Boette, Jeff Jones and Adam Lavallee*

The Budget Committee joined the Board at 6:59pm. The Budget Committee was already in session as they met prior.

a. FY 2020-2021

Superintendent reported the latest budget is draft 5; reductions have been made for tuition and the double counted café table. The bottom line without any other reductions is a 3.4% increase (\$411,762.56). He confirmed GALE software is used as a foundation for research and it appears half the students use it at one point or another during the school year. He provided previously to the Budget Committee a document showing what was required and not

required to do; also delineates staff that are important to have but not required. Out of the not required items the total is approximately \$549,000; this doesn't mean we shouldn't spend the money as it supports what we do. The document also included scenarios that can be done differently than what we currently do. A suggestion was made to have this document as a handout for district meeting. Superintendent also indicated it can be posted on the website. He reports the Budget Committee requested a project code report; we do not use project codes unless it's for a grant therefore the report will not be provided. Instead he created a document to delineate items in certain areas although this was not what they were looking for.

i. Collective Bargaining Agreement

Superintendent confirmed an agreement had not been reached at this time.

Going back to budget discussions, Superintendent confirmed the slide for FRES is in the budget. The greenhouse is not in the budget but on the "wish list" of items; prior discussion was this be considered by the Facilities Committee. A request was made to have a breakdown of costs for the following lines, 666-669 (computer software/new equipment) and 838-840 (books and other printed material/computer software). A brief discussion was had regarding the RTI coordinator role. Superintendent clarified the RTI coordinator works with students to increase the level of student achievement; if this results in better scores that's a good thing. He referred to Principal LaRoche's report which explained growth scores in kindergarten and 1st grade describing how students are improving. Superintendent confirmed lines 899-902 is for PD this goes along with the new math curriculum (not consultant). He confirmed he is working on the prior issue of "porting the (phone) numbers" and Mr. Kline is working on the viability of using "hardwired (phone) lines". Regarding revenues, he is waiting for one more piece from the DOE to have written confirmation of the amount to put in our budget. He believes the \$102,000 is accurate or possibly higher. Ms. Baker confirmed regarding food service, the estimate of \$25,000 (for general fund transfer) is how it is tracking now (prior years closer to \$40,000) but notes it's an early report; there have been some equipment issues. Ms. Baker confirmed you will see the \$25,000 as a revenue and expense which may have caused some of the confusion at the last meeting when members were questioning if it was doubled; it is not, it's essentially a transfer from one fund to another. Superintendent confirmed warrant articles need to be decided at the next meeting. Superintendent will attend, as requested, the Budget Committee meeting on Jan. 16 and also check in with them at the Jan. 14 meeting after the WLC concert.

ii. Building/Equipment & Roadways Capital Reserve

Superintendent reported the Facilities Committee has just met and are recommending \$150,000 be placed on the Building/Equipment & Roadways warrant; Mr. Legere agrees. Mr. Vanderhoof noted if you are going to stay with the same schedule, that is the minimum you can ask for. A question was raised if the committee discussed what the dollar amount should be used for items to be in the CIP. Mr. Legere confirmed that was not really discussed however they spoke of moving some things around and moving big ticket items to warrants. They also discussed the CIP has grown since it was created and based on that, long term planning is needed; they will be working on this. It was suggested prior to making a decision on this warrant, the SPED warrant be discussed.

iii. Special Education Capital Reserve

Prior discussion was to include costs for two out of district placements at \$100,000 in the warrant (\$100,000 was removed from the proposed budget) and the possibility of including the cost of one ABA Therapist at \$30,000. The ABA Therapist contingency was in the budget but has since been filled to accommodate a new student who moved in. Discussion was had that without the \$30,000 added in the warrant there is no contingency for an ABA Therapist. It was noted the fund is supposed to be an emergency fund. A recommendation was made for the warrant to be \$100,000 only. Superintendent noted the \$187,000 withdrawn from the capital reserve last year was for items not budgeted for as they were unknown; it was noted what was spent for SPED was about \$300,000; not just what was withdrawn from the capital reserve fund. Mr. Pratt confirmed he would be comfortable with the capital reserve fund being \$130,000. Superintendent confirms there is \$40,000 in the fund now; adding \$100,000 brings it to \$140,000. Mr. Pratt is comfortable with this. Concern was raised that if we have a strict or frozen budget we will be in a situation of having to put things off such as basic maintenance etc.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Vanderhoof and SECONDED by Ms. LeBlanc to approve a warrant article for Educating Educationally Disabled Children Capital Reserve for \$100,000.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

*A MOTION was made by Mr. Legere and SECONDED by Ms. LeBlanc to approve a warrant article for Building/Equipment and Roadway Capital Reserve for \$150,000. **

Concerns were raised that this is the minimum amount needed to fund the CIP and something should be done to adjust the CIP now to get it on level spending (acting as a true capital improvement plan); it should be done prior to setting the amount for the warrant. It was reported the Facilities Committee did talk about how the CIP is functioning and the need for shifting/spreading out some of the projects (LED lighting, tennis courts); Mr. Erb is going to do some research. Superintendent confirmed to date there has not been any shifting other than adding items to the CIP. It was suggested to have the CIP updated for the district meeting to hand out if possible.

**Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.*

iv. Establishing a Reserve Fund

Superintendent reports a reserve fund was discussed previously to create a fund to support the district long-term. It was expressed given the other expenses and concerns this may not be priority at this time. No action was taken.

b. Budget Audit

The Board wanted to discuss this with the Budget Committee present. Review-there are 2 options with one costing approximately \$5,000 and one more in depth costing approximately \$30,000. It was discussed at length with varying opinions. Discussions included differences in the 2 options, pros and cons, the need for the public to have confidence, the need to correct things going forward, the feeling that there was no malfeasance, using the funds to create a new system instead, allow the public to decide, warrant vs. budget, timing-cannot act on warrant until at least July 1, the people want to know what happened, how does the knowledge get passed down and the need to prevent it from happening again. The Budget Committee Chair Ms. Browne and Vice Chair Mr. Ryan provided their thoughts with Chair Browne personally feeling that Ms. Baker has uncovered what the issues were and would be more in favor of the \$5,000 audit to review our processes and make sure our current situation is good. However, she knows what the community has asked for and feels it should be a warrant article for the public to decide. Mr. Ryan thinks the professionals they spoke with were clear that Ms. Baker found out what happened and the forensic auditor had already pointed out 3 or 4 things that Ms. Baker had already figured out. Mr. Ryan's concern is also regarding the public. Ms. LeBlanc noted she does not think anything nefarious happened, just errors and feels the warrant would indicate support for further investigation by recommending it and she has concerns about this. Discussion was had perhaps it could be worded in such a way that the Board is requesting an audit for process and practice and a look back over last 3 years. It was noted the \$30,000 audit would give more procedural things and recommendations on best practices so when a new administrator comes in, procedures will be in place. Concern was raised that the \$5,000 audit provides information already uncovered and the \$30,000 would provide information we do not have. Ms. Baker was asked to speak to the value of the \$30,000 audit. She explained she has her own recommendations and a lot is around HR which is 74% of our budget. She notes the School Board should see every hire, a slate approved in the spring, then administrators; salaries, vacation days and have knowledge of all new hires. She spoke of the business office decreasing staff from having 2 long-term, full time employees down to 1 and a lot has suffered; they are still trying to recover. She spoke of requesting an additional .50 staff person in the business office (currently has 1.5) and the need to be adequately staffed and an overhaul to HR. She is open to someone coming in; it's validation. A question was raised if there are internal quality processes in place and are they documented. Superintendent confirmed the policies are the checks and balances; there is a series of budget topics the Policy Committee will discuss on Thursday. Also giving consistent information and monthly YTD expenditures are needed. A question was raised if during the annual audit we have, do they look at procedures. Ms. Baker confirmed it is more "surface" in her opinion; they did have a finding relating the student activity account and not having a second set of eyes on journal entries. She adds it's not real in-depth.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Vanderhoof and SECONDED by Mr. LoVerme to create a warrant article for a \$30,000 audit.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

A suggestion was made to word the warrant that we are not asking for this because we think something is wrong, we are asking because the public asked for it and we are trying to improve our process.

Superintendent noted language will come to the next meeting; DRA will review the language and eventually our attorney. He provided some approximate tax information, just estimated not defined, and will bring back more concrete numbers.

The Budget Committee was asked if they are considering adding into the budget anything from the “wish list”. Chair Browne responded they have had some conversation but will continue to look at this; as a committee they have not defined it. Personally, she left in the .50 position for the business office.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Post commented the Superintendent said the increase would be 3.4% and questioned what the increase in spending is as the bond fell away. Ms. Baker responded the 3.4% is \$411,762.56; the bond principal and interest coming out is around \$329,593. Mr. Post comments, “so the plan is to increase spending over \$800,000 over last year. I think instead of talking about it you should be clear on how much more you are spending.” Ms. Baker noted, she wanted to be clear that if you look at our revised budget it is up 1.26%; it can be confusing for people to see.

Ms. Post commented that everyone is aware funds had to come in for a deficit. Ms. Baker responded they had to come in to cover an inappropriate budget. Mr. Post commented, that’s your opinion, “I think you are overstepping by stating your opinion.”

Ms. Post commented she thinks we need to say “this is what is going up”. People expected they would have the funds to do projects they had been putting off with the bond coming off. They thought they could take care of their town and part of it is the roadways and they need these funds. She thinks we need to be clear to tell people what they are voting on and we need to be upfront with our numbers.

Ms. Deb Mortvedt questioned if this increase in spending includes the CBA. Superintendent confirmed it does not. Ms. Mortvedt commented back in August, when Wilton made a double payment, there was talk of what the budget would be and she had said it looked like it would end up to be \$1,000,000 and she got “shot down”. She adds, so it’s possible it will be up a million dollars. Wilton just increased their spending to the school. It’s interesting we talk about a frozen budget and our payment went up. To be transparent that \$800,000 is without the collective bargaining agreement. That needs to be transparent going forward.

Mr. Boette commented that the CBA will be a warrant article. He questioned how close we are to an agreement. Superintendent responded we are in process and the time line is February 4.

Chairman Ballou thanked everyone for their participation.

The next Budget Committee meeting will be Jan. 14 and another on Jan. 16, both at WLC, 6:30pm.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Boette and SECONDED by Ms. Tiedemann to adjourn the Budget Committee session at 8:11pm.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

a. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

A MOTION was made by Mr. Vanderhoof and SECONDED by Mr. Legere to approve the minutes of January 7, 2020 as amended.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

• PRINCIPAL POSITION

Superintendent explained due to the expansion of the RISE program and the need for the Principal to be in the building, he believes the position of Elementary Principal should be for FRES only. The SPED Director will continue to supervise the RISE and SPED programs and the Superintendent can take on the Principal requirements of LCS. The Superintendent is there daily. It is not a financial reason for the change however there would be a small amount of savings in mileage. He provided the average Principal salaries for NH for comparisons. Prior to posting for an Elementary Principal he thought this should be discussed. Concern was raised that Superintendent’s may not be experts in early childhood. Superintendent agrees however, curriculum support is provided through the Curriculum Coordinator who does spend time at LCS and this will continue. Superintendent can still provide a level of support to teachers and staff and believes it may be more difficult to find a Principal for both buildings. It was suggested to not reduce the pay for the Principal position if this is approved. Superintendent agrees it is reasonable if someone is at the upper end of experience however the salary does not need to be determined tonight. He confirmed

there are very few Superintendents who are not certified as Principals. Also the Principal at FRES could still be designated as the Principal of both schools to the State but the day to day things can be handled by the Superintendent and SPED Director. A question was raised if there was thought to have the SPED Director handle kindergarten as he already handles preschool. Superintendent responded the only issue is that as SPED Director he is out of his office for 2-3 hours a day, preschool is only 3-4 days a week and we can schedule ourselves to be sure we have coverage.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Vanderhoof and SECONDED by Ms. Lemire to move forward with the recommendation of this plan (Elementary Principal for FRES only).

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

Superintendent noted an ad will be posted this week and the WLC MS/HS Principal as well. Committees will be formed for interviewing and he will put together a recommendation on the process.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

i. Negotiations

Mr. LoVerme reported they met today and further discussion will be in the non-public session. Superintendent confirmed an agreement has not been reached at this time.

• Budget Liaison

Mr. Vanderhoof reported the committee met; there was not a lot of discussion. There is a good chance they will agree to the half time position in the business office but may want to remove something to balance it out although nothing is confirmed at this time.

• Facilities

Mr. Legere reported most of this was discussed earlier in the meeting. The committee talked of possibly of next year moving out the dishwasher and partitions depending on the numbers. They want to do the roof. They discussed it would be around \$100,000 for the tennis courts and discussed the fact that it's similar to the greenhouse (\$20,000) and want to put the dollar amounts against the interest level. They also discussed the timing of the \$100,000 and how close are we with having to do something for safety reasons. They asked for the LED lighting to be repriced as its more common now and cost could be lower; also splitting it in phases with the first in the hallways, cafeteria and gym. Mr. Erb was asked for recommendations on the ceiling tiles by staging it in smaller portions; we could look at doing the ceiling tiles at the same time as replacements need to be made. Tiles are approximately \$2,700 per classroom. Concern was raised that we need to stop adding to the CIP until we get a handle on it and the tiles may end up in the budget. Mr. Legere noted the approximate cost for ceiling tiles in the WLC hallways is \$37,000. Concern was raise it may be deceptive to put in \$100,000 then take out \$100,000 from the CIP. Mr. Legere added that the committee did have the discussion of it working as a savings plan instead of a CIP.

X. RESIGNATIONS / APPOINTMENTS / LEAVES

Superintendent reviewed the staffing changes.

i. Denise Shea-Long-term Substitute-LCS Kindergarten

Substituting for kindergarten; parents are aware.

ii. Tracy AuCoin-Transfer to ABA Therapist-LCS

Transferred as Ms. Stephanie Mattson requested to go part-time. Ms. Mattson is an RBT vs. Ms. AuCoin an ABA.

iii. Kieran Kiley-Hired-ABA Therapist-FRES

Hired for a new student at FRES.

iv. Thomas Crowley-Hired Coach Boys JV Basketball

v. Amber Casavant, BCBA-Resignation

There are multiple candidates for the BCBA position; Mr. Pratt is doing interviews. We are looking to increase the position to 260 days vs. 210 days at equal cost. Ms. Casavant has requested if we are able to find someone earlier, she would like to be released from her contract. She will be returning to her prior district with a significant pay increase.

A question was raised if this will be the new format for reporting to the Board staff changes. Superintendent responded yes, you will know about changes. Ms. Baker was asked if she would want salaries listed. She responded

we can indicate what the budgeted amount was and what the new salary is going to be. Superintendent reported in this scenario, the only increase in the budget was for Mr. Kiley who was hired for a new student. He will report the BCBA salary when hired.

XI. BOARD BUDGET DISCUSSION

A question was raised regarding the mileage for the Facilities Director and how much that ends up being. Have we looked at the cost to lease a vehicle and pay for gas instead? Has any analysis been done? Superintendent responded if you look at the van as a concept, a truck costing \$35,000 through the municipal lease, (same scenario as the van), \$7,500 annually plus insurance just under \$10,000 plus gas. The long term benefit is that we could put a plow on it to plow LCS to reduce that cost. He confirmed we do rent vehicles from time to time to move things; he can figure it out but believes it would come close to paying for itself. (Not for this year's budget.) Chairman Ballou noted, it is too bad we do not have some sharing piece with the town and Superintendent added, we could look at something like that.

XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no public comment to report.

XIII. SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Chairman Ballou reported he purchased a gavel for the meetings and is donating it to the district.

Ms. Lemire questioned if we should follow up on the request from Lyndeborough Selectman to have a joint meeting. Chairman Ballou feels it should be Board to Board regarding how and when; someone can be designated to do that. It perhaps should be done by the new Board.

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral reported Chief Olesen provided information (regarding SRO) and they are planning to talk on Monday; she will also attend the next Select Board meeting. This is not for this year's budget but for the following year. Chief Olesen has found from his research the split in cost is usually 50/50.

XIV. NON-PUBLIC SESSION RSA 91-A: 3 II (A) (C)

i. Negotiations

ii. Personnel

A MOTION was made by Mr. LoVerme and SECONDED by Mr. Legere to enter Non-Public Session to discuss negotiations and personnel matters RSA 91-A: 3 II (A) (C) at 8:43pm.

Voting: all aye via roll call vote; motion carried unanimously.

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

The Board entered public session at 9:28pm.

A MOTION was made to seal the non-public session minutes by Mr. LoVerme and SECONDED by Ms. Tiffany Cloutier-Cabral.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Mr. LoVerme and SECONDED by Ms. Cloutier-Cabral to adjourn the Board meeting at 9:28pm.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristina Fowler