

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, September 24, 2019
Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative M/H School-Media Room
6:30 p.m.**

Present: *Matt Ballou, Miriam Lemire, Carol LeBlanc, Jonathan Vanderhoof, Mark Legere, Alex LoVerme (6:33pm), Tiffany Cloutier-Cabral and John Clark*

Superintendent Bryan Lane, Director of Student Support Services Ned Pratt, Technology Director Mark Kline, and Clerk Kristina Fowler

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ballou called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.

II. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Request to add second and third public comment. Request to move up agenda item 8 (FY19-20 budget review) to the joint session. All agreed.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Ballou reviewed the public comment section of the agenda and reminded the public that comments should be kept to 3 minutes with a total of 15 minutes for public comment.

Ms. Julie Lemire, Wilton, requested to have the woodchips on the playground added prior to school starting. She explained since last spring the woodchips have been sliding off the embankment and it is a safety hazard. The areas under the swings and monkey bars have deep "wells". She notes the swings were taken care of today but would like to ensure this happens prior to school starting in the future.

Ms. Brianne Lavalley, Lyndeborough, spoke regarding agenda item 7 (5th grade discussion). She has reviewed the information the Superintendent provided regarding para-educators and teachers in the classroom and questioned how many minutes are the students getting and questioned if it is something legally we can do. Superintendent to respond later this evening when the topic is discussed.

IV. BOARD CORRESPONDENCE

a. Reports

i. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent reports working with staff regarding finances; a presentation is scheduled for this evening. Essentially there is a budget freeze for 2019-2020. A letter will go out to the towns officials tomorrow regarding the financial situation and the DOE and DRA will be notified. We are working through the process and determining what is required and what is needed for purchases. He confirms woodchips are on their way. He is watching the bottom line and will give updates on a regular basis. At the last board meeting he made a statement he knew about retirements in April and wanted to clarify that he did know in February or March about possible areas in cost savings and one person did indicate in February they would be retiring. He adds, I did not speak accurately on that topic last meeting. He reports there was a bus incident on September 6 which received media attention. He spoke with the bus company and the parent multiple times. He had informed the Board of the options; the incident resolved itself. The first grade t-shirt event was held and went over well. He sent a letter to Police Chief Olesen regarding an SRO (school resource officer). The Wilton Board is interested in looking at this and Chief Olesen will schedule a time for discussion. It will be suggested he attend the next Strategic Planning Committee meeting on Oct. 15 if available. Ms. Baker confirms letting the towns know of the district's financial issue was a recommendation by NHASBO. Superintendent confirms looking into creating warrant articles for deficit but is in the process of gathering information.

ii. Director of Student Support Services Report

Mr. Pratt provided an overview of his report which included spending time with staff and others in the building. Meeting schedules have been established with all student support staff in each building for the year and similar schedules are planned for para-educators and AB staff. In addition to those, quarterly meetings will be established for all student support services staff. He spent the majority of the month on financial aspects, looking at the current

fiscal year, planning for the next, communicating with the DOE, SPED aid and learning about the DOE. Tomorrow the entire support staff will meet with MSB to discuss Medicaid submission; there have been new rules and temporary rules put into place but still a lack of clarity in terms of what will happen next. He will continue to analyze and be part of discussion on a state wide basis. Working toward electronic submissions; its more efficient, accurate and generates reimbursement faster. Meeting with individual staff and making sure necessary resources are there. Is appreciative of the webinars offered by the DOE and has attended several. He meets with his mentor Larry Elliot who will work with him during his first year; this has been very helpful. He briefly spoke regarding the changes in Medicaid reimbursement and noted the biggest issue is who can provide services for our students. He notes a real lack of clarity in terms of who can prescribe. Doctors and nurse practitioners are the main drivers here and there is a real concern due to much our Medicaid reimbursement comes from our licensed providers. Will continue with temporary rules; how long, it is unclear but will continue to be involved and will submit to gain the maximum reimbursement we can.

iii. Director of Technology's Report

Mr. Kline provided an overview of his report which included organizing equipment for recycling, obtaining passwords, account names, renewals for software that was overdue. Inventory was not complete and work was done to improve the process. There are bar code labels on almost everything; this will be complete next week. IVisions (financial software) is not something that he has had experience administering; normally there is training but this didn't happen and new accounts needed to be created and changes needed to be made. He attended 4 days of PowerSchool University in Boston. The training was more on the advanced side and doesn't include the day to day types of things. The server at the business office failed. Once he was able to "get in" he moved through the process of replacing an obsolete machine and software; also came up with a redundant solution which one backs up the other plus there is off site backup as well. Fortunately, no data was lost. The 2 servers purchased are refurbished. He notes seeing more and more servers going away; most schools won't even have them. In the past software was installed and now most is web based. Mobile device management system was added for iPads which allows for software installs to be done remotely. He voiced appreciation for the help of Mr. Andrew Stevens, (desk top support) getting the devices ready and helping in general. He had recommended purchasing 9th grade Chromebooks and thought he would also be able to replace some teacher laptops that are in need of replacement as well but this is not the case currently with the budget freeze. An external scan of the network was completed 1 ½ weeks ago as part of the technology audit; no results to date and interviews were completed. Data was collected and an internal scan is yet to be done; the audit is progressing. He confirmed the Chromebooks are about 4 years old and the replacement cycle is normally 3-4 years. He confirmed the teacher laptops are capable of doing what is needed for curriculum but are pretty old and slow. As far as a priority for replacement he believes the student Chromebooks should take priority over the teacher laptops. A question was raised if there is anything that is inhibiting instruction and is there anything we may need to look at the capital reserve technology fund for. Superintendent will look into this. Mr. Kline reports the cost for 50 Chromebooks (Acer similar to what they have now) with a 3-year warranty and harder shell case is approximately \$15,750. Superintendent reports the technology budget is frozen at this time and teachers can implement the curriculum. The replacement cycle is something we need to consider but are holding "status quo" at this time. Ms. LeBlanc questioned how much was in the tech capital reserve. This information is not available tonight; \$18,000 was taken for the technology audit previously.

b. Letters/Information

i. Letter to Chief Olesen-SRO

Superintendent provided a copy of the letter to Chief Olesen which describes the possibilities. We will need to see if the town is willing and interested in a 260-day annual working calendar with about 70% of the time with the school district. We would have to negotiate the split and the key things is the SRO is not an employee of the school district but of the police department. The town of Wilton, if agreed to, would hire a new officer and contract them out to us for a percentage of salary and benefits. A letter of agreement would be needed and things of that nature. He is glad the town is willing to look at this.

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

Present: *Bill Ryan, Jennifer Bernet, Dennis Golding, Lisa Post, Kevin Boette, Jeff Jones, Adam Lavallee, Leslie Browne (7:00pm), and Christine Tiedemann (7:00pm)*

The meeting was called to order at 6:59pm by Bill Ryan, Vice Chairman.

- FY2019-20 Budget Review**

The order was changed and started with the review of FY 2019-20.

Ms. Baker provided a PowerPoint presentation which can be found with the minutes. She notes last year was a challenging year for this district. When she closed out FY19 and changed focus to FY20 she saw a shortfall and thought it was payroll encumbrances in the system; re-ran those and it was not. She has built a spread sheet of every district employee and benefits attached to that employee; cross referenced it with a paper contract and still saw a shortfall in salaries and benefits for this year. She went through the PowerPoint slide by slide including historical data noting the school budget is made up of 3 funds, grants, food service and the general fund. Slide 3 shows a decrease for FY19 which she believes is an anomaly. FY17 starts off ok (slide 4), spent \$5,000 more than budgeted but was offset with benefits. Slide 5 shows FY18 salaries and benefits; budget increased \$32,941 and increased \$34,385 over actual prior year expenditures for salaries; projected increases (FY18) were \$70,228. This was 1st year of 3-year teacher contract and NHRS rates increased significantly. Slide 6 looks at FY18 budget to actual and shows the spirit of the teacher contract; salaries offset by benefits and budget. Slide 7 is where things start to go awry; salary and benefits budget increased \$155,175 between FY18 and FY19; she does not believe this was accurate budgeting. The budget increased \$20,347 over actual prior year expenditures for salaries and FY19 projected increases were \$160,745. Slide 8 shows FY19 budget vs. actual with \$210,309 overspent in salaries and benefits. The error was carried forward in FY20 and now in year 3 of teachers' contract and support staff contract; there is an issue. Slide 9 compares budget FY19 to FY20 and indicates in salary and benefits the budget increased \$191,855. The budget decreased \$5,746 over actual prior year expenditures and FY20 projected increase was \$191,855. NHRS rates increased. Slide 10 shows a shortfall of \$305,663 and in her opinion it is a dynamic number subject to change. There are 5 open positions and this doesn't include any supplemental pays and she is not sure of curriculum work etc. This is not a conservative number and will only go up from here in terms of shortfall. She looked at other remaining areas of the budget to cover the shortfall and is coming up with concerns. She reviewed the remainder of the slides. In effect we have been spending down our fund balance and special education capital reserve. The district is now in a place for no options for overspending the budget. This is a known shortfall in salary and benefits category of \$306,000. It appears the remainder of the budget may be insufficient as well and the special education capital reserve is down to \$46,000. There is no unassigned fund balance available to absorb over-expenditures. Recommendations are to formally freeze the budget, notify all of the issue and consult a lawyer (resounding opinion of NH Association of School Business Officials NHASBO). There was discussion at NHASBO meeting that another district went through something similar in regard to transportation and they proposed an additional warrant article to obtain deficit appropriations. Looking forward to FY21; need to create a realistic budget based on actual expenditures that has sufficient contingencies built in, pursue RSA 198:4b which allows the district to retain 2.5% of current year's net assessment for emergency expenditures, develop process to monitor budget, the School Board could say no budget transfers for a year and if Ms. Baker sees any negatives she can report this by a certain threshold and this would flush out any errors or spending that occurred after the budget was voted and build capital reserve funds back up. She has asked the department heads when coming up with their budgets to look at actual spending for the last few years and nothing extra to see what that number looks like and start a side list of any extras that can be added later if approved. A question was raised if Ms. Baker can tell what went wrong and why the numbers were so skewed that they were inaccurate. Ms. Baker replies all she can think of is that FY18 was an anomaly because teachers got raises but everyone was also switching to consumer driven health plan and the savings and benefits offset those increases and its possible in FY19 there were inaccurate salary figures that were used and not actual contractual amounts. She was asked, "and that continued from year to year". She responded yes. There was much discussion regarding the deficit topic which included many questioning how this happened given that the budget is gone over in detail for several months, many had looked at it including both the School Board and Budget Committee and did not see numbers like this. It was noted there was back and forth last year about cutting money out but were cutting on things that were in addition to such as books. A question was raised how did the spread sheet and numbers get to the Budget Committee and how did this massive drop happen. A question was raised regarding why this was not picked up on during the audit. Superintendent confirmed the numbers that were presented to the School Board and Budget Committee came from the Business Administrator. Concern was raised that accounting is an exact science and it should have come out. Ms. Baker responded that it did, you see the unassigned fund balance and that would be revealed in an audit. A discussion was had regarding having additional oversight to ensure this doesn't happen again. A suggestion was made to have the Budget Committee go through the numbers monthly. A question was raised if consideration has been given to outsource the billing and payroll as many companies don't pay their own bills anymore. Discussion was had regarding moving forward and being able to come up with a good budget and the need for real numbers. It was suggested to look at SPED tuition. A question was raised if there was a known problem (or employee) that was not followed through on or taken care of and got wrong numbers. A request was made to see the budget as it was presented to the voters with those numbers, where we started and where we are at; how did we get from point A to point B. It was noted it was not just bad numbers that other things happened especially the fund balance that the Board took action on; there needs to be an accounting and people need to know

why it happened. A question was raised how much was spent on SPED capital reserve this year. Ms. Baker confirmed none this year; expense was from FY19 and there is \$46,000 left in the account. Superintendent confirmed items that were not budgeted in FY19 that should have been: kindergarten screenings (\$1,500), summer custodial (\$10,000), and an aba therapist. Mr. Pratt reported SPED is in good shape; it's a moving target (if one student moves in/has an IEP generated from another school district...). We try to plan as best as we can and sometime can bring a student back to offset costs but it is challenging every week. He confirmed there are para-educator openings currently and Superintendent confirmed 3 positions are included in the \$306,000 accounting but not the others. All positions are in SPED (4) except one. A request was made to research when we had 1st year of the WLCTA contract and how the savings of healthcare offset salary lines and was there some issue with that being carried forward. Ms. Baker reports on slide 6 of the PowerPoint –actuals spent in FY18; we overspent salary and underspent benefits. She questions if the actual salaries were carried over properly into the FY19 budget. A comment was made talking about the FY20-21 budget process seems a waste of time and it is questioned when will they see everything else. Superintendent responds that the process is moving forward and Ms. Baker has a spread sheet and lists and we are willing to provide it with benefits, positions and salary as contracted. As we move forward (FY20-21 budgeting) teacher salaries will remain flat and interest would be obtained through the CBA; para-educators would get a 2.5% increase. Ms. Baker confirms the whole budget will have FY18, FY19 and FY20 and its tied out to an audit. A concern was raised that they looked at these prior and has anything been changed, what is different. Superintendent clarifies the actual numbers are real when you look at FY19 but if you look at (for example) ESY, \$12,000 that was budgeted was not accurate; it was the projection in the budget of \$12,000 that was not accurate. We overspent ESY by \$21,000, we know that and will let those numbers drive as we move forward. It is a projection because we don't know that those are the people who will be there; if staff leaves they could be replaced with higher or lower associated costs. Superintendent confirms he did request for summer custodial costs to be in the budget he is unclear why it was not put in. He is working on a spread sheet at the request of a board member that will delineate from last year's budget to what we will predict is the necessary dollars; he will share that after it is reviewed by administration. Discussion was had regarding options at this point. Superintendent reports one option is to call a special town meeting. Discussion was had that this shouldn't wait. Superintendent notes as we get through the rest of the analysis of the budget and have an accurate number collectively; everyone will have that number and the Board will make a decision in consultation with the Budget Committee. a concern was raised that the first meeting after the Board decided to eliminate \$82,000 from the budget but really only eliminated \$9,000 from expenses as places were cut that were known or told would have savings; this should be looked at. Another area suggested to look at is the school psychologist. Ms. Baker suggests not allowing transfers and have her report accounts that are over which would flush it out and become transparent and make both she and the Superintendent accountable. She also suggests a lawyer be consulted. Superintendent confirmed if we cut or freeze expected services or promises that are not delivered we are opening ourselves up to being sued. Superintendent confirmed that as far as he was able to look back, since he has been here, to the best of his knowledge summer custodial expense was not in the budget; there is a line for substitute custodial but the summer expense was not in there. Mr. Ryan disagrees that it was not budgeted prior. Discussion was had regarding fixing the problem going forward, something in the process broke down, an explanation is needed for FY18 and FY19. It was suggested to not wait to call a special meeting and this should be separate from next year's budget and should be upfront about it. A question was raised is there something we can do with what we have left. Superintendent responds yes, we can freeze the budget and not do expenditures except safety related or required by contract. The process right now is the principals or department heads look at every piece, give to the Superintendent and he determines if its required by law, for safety or SPED or contractually obligated. Ms. Bernet spoke of some good news regarding the state budget and the legislature has come to a decision and it will be voted on tomorrow. If approved the towns will see an increase total over biennium. It would start this FY. She spoke of the Medicaid situation and read information that was provided by Kermit Williams. One of the Medicaid changes is limiting who can order or refer for services and excludes school psychologists and school counselors from providing billable services. Superintendent notes, Mr. Pratt has indicated we would anticipate a reduction of \$20,000 and will put in a proposed \$25,000 compared to the \$60,000 we budgeted. Ms. Baker will reach out to department heads to make sure they have fully encumbered funds for the rest of the year; it becomes a district wide push to get it all properly covered. Superintendent confirms it will be a priority for us to get that information for the next meeting and contact a lawyer to be sure we are proceeding appropriately. He confirms the dollars budgeted for legal fees will be even further behind. A discussion was had regarding the need to consider the students and things such as the score board lights that are out need to be serviced and to ensure they have the same experiences as all other students. A concern was raised regarding how department heads purchase things and if they get monthly reports. The process was discussed and it was confirmed they have access to reports. Mr. Lavallee requested to have electronic copies of every purchase order. A request was made to move on to the rest of the meeting as everyone has had a chance to speak.

227 **i. FY2020-2021 Overview**

228 Superintendent provided an overview and reports there is an addition of a 2nd grade teacher, a modification of an
229 existing position to have an ABA teacher, (not therapist) to help with the autism program. We are projecting 5%
230 increase in health and will not have actual numbers until November which could be higher or lower. Projecting 3%
231 increase in dental as a place holder. Supply accounts will have a 2% increase across the board unless there is a
232 specific reason and the department heads or principals need to explain why. There is the SRO piece, one facilities
233 piece for a pulley system in the gym (create a multi-year plan for replacement). Ms. Baker provided a PowerPoint
234 presentation (can be found with the minutes) on enrollment and staffing. Enrollment includes pre-k and kindergarten
235 (totals-FY17 575, FY 18 538, FY19 553, FY20 current 565). Staffing slide show since FY17 the district is up 4 staff
236 members (FY17 134, FY18 134, FY19 136, FY20 138.5 includes 5 vacancies to be filled). She reviews cost per
237 pupil (FY15 \$17,929, FY16 \$18,680, FY17 \$18,247, FY18 \$20,275) which does not include the cost of
238 transportation, SPED tuition or debt cost. Discussion was had regarding cost per pupil and staffing. A suggestion was
239 made to include a slide that shows the cost per pupil with all expenditures included even though the DOE does not
240 calculate it this way. Superintendent notes the cost per pupil increased when we started the RISE program. It was
241 noted the RISE program saves in out of district costs which would be much more. Ms. Baker notes the overall
242 conclusion is increasing staff is not a good thing when you have declining enrollment; most of the increases are from
243 SPED and likely required. It was noted that it would be nice to see RISE student enrollment; a concern was raised
244 regarding attracting the most expensive students to the district. Superintendent confirms other towns in our areas
245 have similar programs such as Milford, Mascenic, and Jaffrey, Rindge. A suggestion was made to perhaps put the
246 pulley system on the CIP. Responding to a question it was clarified the CIP is not a capital reserve account, it is a
247 capital improvement plan with projected expenses. Discussion was had regarding the need for a 2nd grade teacher.
248 Discussion was had regarding in March what will we be asking for. Superintendent clarifies that is unknown until the
249 process is completed. He confirms at this time there are no known retirements. A request was made to know the
250 items that were carried over from last year's requests. Ms. Baker was thanked for her efforts and it was agreed
251 finding this out now is far preferable than in February. The next joint meeting is October 8; agenda items will be
252 salary, benefits, SAU and transportation. There will be a FY19-20 discussion as well.

253 **VI. PUBIC COMMENTS**

254 Chairman Ballou reminded the group there is 15 minutes for public comment and to keep comments to 3 minutes.
255 Mr. Charlie Post spoke regarding the deficit and notes he is stunned. He voiced appreciation for Ms. Baker and
256 believes her work is accurate. He notes he has a degree in finance and could not make sense of it, all he can make out
257 is the Superintendent brought inaccurate information and it continued to be faulty. He thinks the School Board owes
258 the town an apology. He notes people were going to be upset at \$205,000 but now you are talking \$500,000; this is
259 almost 10% of the budget. He notes when this hits the press; it is embarrassing for you, the towns of Wilton and
260 Lyndeborough and you put teachers and students at risk. This is really, really bad. He notes, I think the Budget
261 Committee needs more power; the Superintendent refused to meet with them for the last couple of years. He adds
262 had the Superintendent come they may have got more questions, instead to come here controlled by the School
263 Board, I think you overreached and its time you give the Budget Committee the respect it deserves.

264
265 Ms. Brianne Lavalley thanked Ms. Baker, as a member of the public we asked for real numbers and as we know now,
266 the ones we were getting were wrong. As a member of the public she is disgusted and fearful for the children. She is
267 fearing that what happened in Milford with a mass exodus, and is not the only one in the community who wants to
268 know who is responsible because she is "done". She notes if services are not provided for her child, there will be
269 legal action. "Action needs to be taken and needs to be taken now!" Regarding enrollment, she requests it all be
270 broken down; we need to equal out on both sides, if its going down in HS and not elementary we should look to
271 make those adjustments as well.

272
273 *Chair Browne recessed the Budget Committee to reconvene in the cafeteria at 8:38pm.*

274
275 **VII. 5th GRADE DISCUSSION**

276 Superintendent provided a document showing elementary enrollment numbers noting as of tomorrow the 2nd grade
277 would have 38. Grades 6-11 are between 40-45 with the senior class having 29. He reviewed the district policy
278 which strives to have no more than 25 per class; grade 5 has 2 sections of 26. In speaking with Principal LaRoche, he
279 doesn't feel at 6-8 weeks in; disrupting the classes is appropriate. He notes regarding a public comment earlier in the
280 evening, that the ABA's are not assigned to teach other students but socialization is a piece of it and an important
281 part of the IEP. The staff person would have some contact with other students and be able to help. An ABA/RBT or a
282 para-educator is not a certified teacher and not to give instruction to students but he wanted it known that there is
283 another person in the room. He reviewed options for the 5th grade classes and is working with Ms. Loiselle, Media

Generalist to see if she can assist with reading and writing; she is not certified in math and could work as an assistant to the classroom teacher. There is always the Board's option to hire another teacher at a cost of approximately \$60,000-\$70,000 but that does not seem prudent at this time. It was noted we have not had good experience hiring late and wondered if there has been thought given to having a MS teacher that perhaps could teach math. Superintendent is looking at a HS person and the certification would be "pretty much Ok" and if there were 5-6 accelerated students it may be a good option. He is exploring options to support the program. Superintendent confirms regarding when we know the number of students in the 5th grade; he provided the numbers to the Board as he got them and doesn't know who is showing up and not showing up but knows the first day of school. Discussion was had regarding the policy indicating a recommended number and should class size be explored. It was noted that the Principal should keep an eye on it. There was no Board action on this.

VIII. FY2019-2020 BUDGET REVIEW

See above joint session.

IX. CONSENT AGENDA

There was no consent agenda to report.

X. ACTION ITEMS

a. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

A MOTION was made by Mr. Vanderhoof and SECONDED by Ms. Lemire to approve the minutes of September 24, 2019 as amended.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

b. Attorney Decision

Superintendent questioned if the Board had direction for him in regard to the attorney information he had provided. There was discussion regarding putting this off to the next meeting although Mr. Vanderhoof noted he would like to make a change. A request was made to the Superintendent to provide a list of the attorneys at Soule, Leslie, Kidder. Superintendent reports each firm has individuals who are more attuned to special education or budget; each firm has people who have levels of proficiency in various areas. Ms. Baker notes NHASBO recommends Gordon Graham to handle deficit related matters (firm of Soule, Leslie, Kidder). Superintendent notes this is the firm we have been using. A question was raised if the Board does not take action would the Superintendent be contacting attorney Graham; Superintendent confirms we would.

*A MOTION was made by Mr. Vanderhoof and SECONDED by Mr. LoVerme to table this (attorney decision). **

Discussion was had if it would be wise to use this attorney (Graham) and then possibly switch later. Superintendent confirms we have used multiple firms and there is no retainer fee or contract. We have used Soule, Leslie, Kidder and Drummond Woodsum (for SPED). A question was raised if other firms have retainer fee's or contracts. Superintendent responds, not to the best of my knowledge.

**Voting: six ayes; two nays from Mr. Ballou and Ms. Lemire, motion carried.*

c. Policies-2nd Readings

i. JICJ-Unauthorized Communication Devices

Superintendent reviewed changes to this policy. This is the 2nd reading.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Lemire and SECONDED by Mr. LoVerme to accept policy JICJ-Unauthorized Communication Devices.

Voting: seven ayes; one nay from Mr. Vanderhoof, motion carried.

Superintendent confirms protocols will be available for the next meeting.

ii. BEDH-Public Participation at Board Meetings

Superintendent reviewed the changes to this policy. This is the 2nd reading. Discussion was had regarding combining 1 and 2. A suggestion was made to strike the "other than the Superintendent"; this doesn't change it but makes it

more clear. Superintendent to make amendments and send it out to everyone to be sure we have the changes correct. No action was taken; policy will return for a 3rd reading.

iii. BDE-Committees and Delegates

Superintendent reviewed the changes. It was suggested to add “not to exceed the number for a Board quorum” to the 2nd page, last bullet and to add the Negotiations Committee charge. The questions at the bottom of the policy can be removed and this policy will return for a 3rd reading.

iv. BDB-Board Officers

Superintendent reviewed the changes; this is the 2nd reading. Discussion was had regarding rethinking this and if it would be more appropriate going to Strategic Planning or Policy Committee. Discussion was had if there was a vote to have a group email for the School Board or not and why it was brought up originally. Mr. Vanderhoof is not in favor of one individual having the authority to respond. It was noted a number of other school boards follow this practice. All members have individual email addresses posted on the website for anyone to email them. A question was raised if having this would create additional “traffic” for members on items they will see anyway.

Superintendent reminded the group that the identified person responding to one of the group emails would be responding not to give an opinion and only to let the person know it was received and would be part of correspondence in the next agenda. He believes there was an issue with a timely response when this originally came up. The Board can script the response if they wish. It was also noted it was to inform the person it would be sent to the appropriate person to handle the matter such as teacher, principal, superintendent etc. It was noted if all emails are printed out it may be a lot of paper.

*A MOTION was made by Mr. LoVerme and SECONDED by Ms. Cloutier-Cabral to send policy BDB-Board Officers back to the Policy Committee. **

Discussion was had if Board correspondence is the right place on the agenda for the emails and if it should say next agenda (timing). Mr. LoVerme noted he would like an acknowledgement for the person that the email was received and that it will be brought to the Board.

**Voting: seven ayes; one nay from Mr. Vanderhoof motion carried.*

XI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

i. Facilities

Mr. Legere is Chair of the Facilities Committee. He reports the committee went through items on the CIP, there is a sink hole in WLC parking lot that needs to be addressed, ceiling tiles have been taken care of but there was discussion about having a system to replace the tiles on the CIP. Superintendent added a future agenda item will be the size of the LCS nurse’s office as she has a concern. Ms. Lemire added that LED lighting for WLC was discussed. A question was raised if the Facilities Committee has a check list of items that needs to be done such as preventative maintenance etc. They do not however Ms. Baker or the Facilities Director may have. Superintendent will look at the Facilities Manual Mr. Button put together and in coordination with the Facilities Director we can bring something back to you to show the preventative maintenance pieces have been completed and become part of the annual process.

ii. Strategic Planning

Ms. Lemire reported items were prioritized last meeting. First are SRO and televising board meetings as they have a financial impact. The committee is hoping to meet with Chief Olesen at the next meeting and to obtain a better feel and get information from Ms. Edmunds on referrals and types of issues that may require an SRO. The committee is reaching out to Mr. Clark to compile the data he has gathered regarding televising the Board meetings. She will email him directly.

Mr. Vanderhoof noted moving forward the Budget Committee will meet prior to the joint sessions so that he can attend. He requests no votes be taken until he is present.

iii. Negotiations

This will be addressed in non-public session.

XII. RESIGNATIONS / APPOINTMENTS / LEAVES

There were none to report.

XIII. BOARD BUDGET DISCUSSION

Chairman Ballou commented he is glad there was a robust discussion and is thankful the agenda was adjusted.

Mr. Legere voiced appreciate for Ms. Baker's effort and knows this is not what she anticipated when she took this position. He notes some of the discussion may come off that she is the target but that is not the case.

Mr. Vanderhoof spoke regarding the deficit information and questioned Ms. Baker as to what was the one thing that made her stop and say this didn't look right and I have to look into it. Ms. Baker responded when she finished FY19 and went into IVisions and saw a bunch of accounts over budget; you don't want to see that and most are salary and benefits.

Ms. LeBlanc spoke regarding the deficit and notes as painful as this all is to have it revealed and not know what the cause of it is, we will probably come out of it stronger if there were mistakes on our part. I think we will be a better Board and will have this situation clarified.

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral spoke regarding Ms. Baker commented that the work she has done was instilling some confidence in allowing us to present these numbers and hopefully preventing us from making mistakes in the future.

XIV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Ballou reviewed the public comment section of the agenda and reminded the public that comments should be kept to 3 minutes.

Chair Leslie Browne informed the Board that the Budget Committee unanimously agreed that the School Board should hire a forensic accountant to start looking into this and not waiting any amount of time; it is not fair to tax payers and they need to have this information as soon as possible. It is not easy to stand in front of the public and not feel like we know what happened. They are hoping the Board will look into this.

Ms. Brianne Lavallee spoke in regard to the 5th grade class and is appreciative for the suggestion from Ms. Lemire and knows there will not be any action on it. She is hoping when the Superintendent does his update at the next meeting she would like to hear what he decided on and hopes he speaks to the teachers to find out what they need.

Ms. Jo Anne Dufour commented that she knows the Board is talking about striving for a particular number and questioned is they consider the needs of the students in those grades as there could be higher needs in certain grades. She was asked to clarify if she meant the number of students with specific needs or the grade level in general; the emotional needs based on the grade. Ms. Dufour replies both.

XV. SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral commented that this was an informative meeting with a lot to think about and work to do. She voiced appreciation for everyone and is looking forward to the meetings to work on this.

Ms. Lemire questioned when we will student testing scores be available. Superintendent responds the next meeting and he confirmed Principal Bagley will be back to talk about the MS the second week of Oct.

Mr. Clark thanked members for being frank and although it is unpleasant he feels energized to hear everyone and wants to do good things for the district.

Chairman Ballou commented that he thinks everyone understands the situation is willing to look back and see where the problem occurred. A lot of people had eyes on this and thinks there will be substantial changes on how we build budgets and relationships between boards.

Mr. LoVerme commented this has been unpleasant; has known for a while and it is tearing him apart. It is embarrassing.

Mr. Legere had questions regarding a forensic accountant; is it an audit and does Ms. Baker have any recommendations. Superintendent responded we will bring that to you next meeting. Ms. Baker responded we can reach out to our auditors; they are a very good firm. She noted tonight was her attempt at that role; she needed to look back to see the fluctuations in the accounts. Mr. Legere believes it is a good idea to bring in an outside

“something”. Superintendent responds I think we need to figure out what that means and agrees timeliness is a good thing, we need to make sure they know what the Board is looking for.

Mr. Clark questioned if there should be another meeting scheduled. Superintendent responded it will take some time and won’t come up with an answer tomorrow, it will take a few days at least. The idea is to have it with the board packet. He confirmed they can reach out to Attorney Graham and NHASBO. Ms. Baker will inform the audit firm of the situation.

Ms. LeBlanc commented the bottom line is for everyone’s satisfaction we need to find out what brought it on so we don’t repeat it in the future. If we don’t know what went wrong, we can’t correct it.

Mr. Vanderhoof commented he has spent a ton of time with this and he reports he is fine with a forensic accountant depending the cost. Budget is one thing but accounting is something else. We met on December 11 to discuss salary and benefits. Whatever the information you had at that time; you can’t tell me what teacher x salary was, it just seems simple. To have to expend money to get that answer he finds absurd. There is something odd here to get that number; you are looking at a half a million dollars. He doesn’t understand why it is such a hard calculation to get; these are past numbers; we are not trying to project numbers out. Superintendent responds, I can do part of this work; I know there are factors that exist that call my abilities into questions as well. He has the information on a spread sheet and can cross reference it with budget numbers but doesn’t know that will satisfy the need of the Budget Committee. Mr. Vanderhoof noted you are not looking at what the staff was, you are looking at what the staff is now. There are holes in the reasons behind it, the reasons are not clear; this is what it was, this is what you said it was budgeted. It doesn’t seem hard to obtain that. If we are going to ask the public for half a million dollars we need to have that information available.

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

A MOTION was made by Mr. LoVerme and SECONDED by Ms. Lemire to enter Non-Public Session to discuss negotiation matters RSA 91-A: 3 II (A) (C) at 9:49pm.

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

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

The Board entered public session at 10:48pm.

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

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Mr. LoVerme and SECONDED by Ms. Cloutier-Cabral to adjourn the Board meeting at 10:48pm.

Voting: all aye; motion carried unanimously.

*Respectfully submitted,
Kristina Fowler*