

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE  
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING  
Tuesday, November 14, 2023  
Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative M/H School  
6:30 p.m.**

The videoconferencing link was published several places including on the meeting agenda.

Present: *Dennis Golding, Brianne Lavallee (6:38pm), Alex LoVerme (in and out online), Matt Mannarino (6:55pm), Tiffany Cloutier-Cabral, Darlene Anzalone (online/in person), Geoffrey Allen, Diane Foss, Jonathan Lavoie, and school board student representative Hannah Hamilton*

*Superintendent Peter Weaver, Business Administrator Kristie LaPlante, Principal Tom Ronning and Associate Principal Bridgette Fuller, Assistant Principal Katie Gosselin, Director of Student Support Services Ned Pratt, and Clerk Kristina Fowler*

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**III. STAFF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Principal Ronning honored teacher, Stephanie Erickson with the Starfish Award. There were 3 other WLC nominees, Nancy Rykken, Olympia Clark and Taryn Anderson for this award. The nominations all came from their colleagues. He spoke of Ms. Erickson taking on a lot of responsibility with providing PSAT, SAT information for students and staff, and speaking about the importance of these tests and taking hours to analyze the data. She is a leader among the staff and using Universal Design in lesson planning which are engaging and hands on. Her knowledge and expertise is appreciated. Congratulations was voiced to Ms. Erickson.

**IV. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA**

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

**V. BOARD CORRESPONDENCE**

**a. Reports**

**i. Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent spoke regarding the SRO surveys and voiced appreciation for everyone who took the time to fill it out and some even providing supporting evidence. Ms. Anzalone questioned now that we have the survey results what is the next step. Superintendent confirms the next step is for the Board to provide direction. He spoke of the results being reflective of a community without consensus one way or another although not a 50/50 split; it is not a position leaning strongly one way or another. We have talked about the cost of an SRO, trying to keep the budget down, if we could fund it, it would increase the proposed budget from about 3% to 4% roughly. He reiterates he would not move forward without direction from the Board, any direction is helpful.

*A MOTION was made by Ms. Anzalone to continue to pursue an SRO and do more research and ways to fund it.*

Superintendent voiced that Ms. LaPlante did look into funding it through a grant and it did not allow funding for a new SRO but only an existing one. We have asked the Police Chiefs to see if there are any other grants to help fund this as a start-up as we have not seen any. He adds that we would still need to reconcile a partnership with the Town of Wilton as they would be an employee of the town and work with us for only 180 days. Ms. Cloutier-Cabral questioned the emails she has received about NH Safety Resources and the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of grants. Superintendent responded that does not fund a start-up but we are applying for 3 grants for replacement of camera systems. Ms. Cloutier-Cabral read part of the survey question and the responses; she believes it shows a larger group agreeing than disagreeing. She spoke of being in budget season and the same had happened before. We need to build this for next year and the future and that requires taking the step forward. She wants to know how we get more information out and what do we need to bring to our community to show it is a benefit. It is not just for security; it is someone who will work with our kids in our communities and assisting both towns.

*Motion SECONDED by Ms. Cloutier-Cabral.*

Discussion was had regarding the motion and not wanting to continue to kick the can down the road, it should be more specific with a plan, how to do it and involve administration and the towns. Suggestion to amend the motion were made.

62 *Ms. Anzalone AMMENDS her MOTION to include administration works with the Wilton Select Board to see how we can get the*  
63 *funding. Ms. Cloutier-Cabral Seconds.*

64  
65 Ms. LaPlante voiced that if she remembers correctly, the Selectman didn't feel we had a consensus of the full Board to move  
66 forward. Ms. Foss spoke to this and agrees. She added that they were having a hard time with the idea of an SRO and had  
67 different philosophies. She feels if we will work with the Select Board, she wants a more positive feeling from them, is an SRO a  
68 possibility. She felt they were not sold on it. Ms. LaPlante read the minutes from the Select Board. She adds, instead of just  
69 directing us to do it, they want a consensus from the Board. Mr. Allen spoke about wanting to see what it will look like, cost, tax  
70 burden, and job description before he would vote either way. However, given that the consensus seems to be the majority of the  
71 Board being onboard, if our intent is to support it, he wants an amendment to the motion directing administration to approach  
72 both towns and come up with firm cost, job description but direct them to do it with the assumption it is our intent to move  
73 forward. He wants a clearer directive. As long as these boxes are checked, we would move forward.

74  
75 *Ms. Anzalone WITHDREW her MOTION.*

76  
77 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Allen and SECONDED by Ms. Anzalone to direct administration to return to the Board with firm*  
78 *cost for an SRO to included benefits, cost to district and firm job duties and job description.*

79  
80 Discussion was had including the need to bring in the Select Board, needing to figure out funding, there is support should all the  
81 numbers align and the Select Board has said they wouldn't do it because we did not support it. Superintendent voiced that he did  
82 speak to the Town Administration and told him the Board supports it, the Town Administrator was going to get back to him but  
83 has not. The Superintendent felt last time it was discussed that the Board had supported it and if the cost was out of reach we  
84 would walk that back. We are now just waiting for the Select Board to meet with us for a joint meeting. They were adamant it  
85 was more than just a budget issue; we didn't talk about the cost much. We looked at the split in costs but it was more  
86 philosophical. He heard them say they were more inclined to support us to seek other ways to support students in terms of mental  
87 health. We will follow up as the motion described, we can look at cost more and we can share it with the Town Administrator to  
88 see if they are more willing to sit down with the Board to see if there are possibilities. Ms. Lavallee noted the Board had already  
89 taken a vote to support it we need more information. Until we can get the Select Board to participate with us we are at a  
90 standstill but if they will, we need to have everything in order, job description, financials, input from our student board  
91 representative and how the students feel about it, gather all before the meeting and hope they get back to us about having a  
92 meeting. Discussion continued including an SRO is more of a partner and not about violence. Violence is not out of control at  
93 WLC, what we want is a partner. Superintendent will reach out to the town tomorrow and see if we can get a date set. Ms.  
94 Anzalone spoke of her frustration, we had someone come to the meeting in June or July, the next step was supposed to be Ms.  
95 Cloutier-Cabral and I meet with the Select Board. It never happened but the meeting happened. The next step now is that we  
96 (Ms. Cloutier-Cabral and Ms. Anzalone) meet with the Select Board. Superintendent voiced he believes it needs to be more than  
97 2 board members meeting with them.

98  
99 *Mr. Allen AMMENDS his MOTION to have administration schedule a meeting with the Wilton Select Board and School Board*  
100 *about an SRO position based on the following points. The School Board supports the addition of a School Resource Officer*  
101 *(SRO) based on the feedback received by the community wide survey, a proper job description and pay scale to be established,*  
102 *an agreed split on payment between the SAU and Town, Ms. Anzalone SECONDS.*  
103 *Voting: all aye; motion carried.*

## 104 105 **ii. Student Board Representative Report**

106 Ms. Hannah Hamilton reviewed her report which included October 23-27 was Red Ribbon Week; each day was a different  
107 theme all based on drug prevention. November 9<sup>th</sup> was the Veterans Tribute with the WLC Choir and guest speaker. Fall sports  
108 have been a great success; all seniors received an award on Sports Night. Winter sports begins on November 13. The Dance  
109 Team is heading off to Boston on November 11<sup>th</sup> for their first competition of the season. We are actively looking for a MS  
110 Board Representative and are hoping to have someone for the next meeting. Drama Club auditions are tomorrow, that is  
111 exciting. The MS Robotics Team will be going to Nashua on November 11<sup>th</sup> for their robotics competition.

## 112 **iii. Principal's Report**

113 Principal Fuller reported the Turkey Trot is November 21 in the afternoon. She has spoken a little about bus safety, and will be  
114 rolling out a program with expectations after Thanksgiving; representatives from Butler Bus and drivers will come. We want to  
115 add an incentive program, we will choose the bus who has the best behavior; we will have popsicles or something like that.

116  
117 Principal Ronning voiced that at the last meeting, there was a recommendation to provide updated coaching stipends, and Mr.  
118 Cam Tabor is present with those recommendations, which were passed out. Mr. Tabor reviewed the process he used which was  
119 looking at comparable districts not just in size but the history of districts that are able to keep coaches and winning coaches; it  
120 was not a blanket increase across the board. He talked about MS coaching requiring the biggest commitment and it is difficult to  
121 find those able to do it and fill the 2:30PM requirement of MS sports and this is why he is recommending the largest increase  
122 there. We don't have a population for JV sports, we did have one but at this time he is not suggesting an increase there, if we  
123 increase the MS budget and create some long lasting coaches we may see that JV piece come into play. We were 18-20% lower

in our area and schools of our size and especially those who win and have these programs, they pay their coaches accordingly but he didn't find it was drastic. We want to convince coaches to come here and not go to the bigger districts and bigger facilities. It is not just about the pay but it is a reality if the money is not there they may not make the commitment. The varsity level is where we are most comparable; he doesn't suggest a big shift but believes that if you want to see athletics raised, they won't come here if it is not financially viable even if they want to. A question was raised what is the difference in the levels. Mr. Tabor responded he did not initiate that it was already established. A question was raised if the years of coaching is in general or years of coaching in our district. Mr. Tabor believes it is the years of coaching in our program, Principal Ronning confirms this. The increases are being requested for next year. Chairman Golding asked Ms. LaPlante to figure out how to add this to the next budget meeting for discussion.

Principal Ronning reported at the student council meeting they talked about athletics and how our students can be involved in the community and WJAA. He spoke of the October PSAT results, the results are a direct result of the work of Ms. Erickson, and everyone did working together. There is a lot of talk regarding if we are doing our job here and are the students getting what they need; students took some practice tests, worked with W.I.N., and teachers and students have been working hard. In the report, 3 students gained over 200 points from the practice test to the PSAT. Sixty-five percent increased their scores on average of 123 points and the highest score was 1240. The most impressive is we had 27 out of 31 students qualify to be considered for the first round of the National Merit Scholarship. The lowest score is 207 and NH score is 215. With regard to that, our students did quite well, 79% of students who took this test qualify for the Merit Scholarship. We celebrated the hard work everyone has been doing. He recognized several staff for their longevity in the district, Mel Jones, food services 21 years, Ann Bird, custodian, 22 years, Linda Draper, administrative assistant, 22 years, Olympia Clark, FACS teacher, 29 years, and Scott Hasu custodian, 32 years. He thanked Lynn Crouse who took the wonderful pictures of athletes in the hall, she did all the printing too and it didn't cost the district anything, she donates her time and money. He wanted to be sure she gets the recognition. He spoke of additional donations to the district including Hannaford donating pumpkins; Wilton Legion helped the seniors with class dues and purchased 15 turkeys for the Thanksgiving baskets. The MS was presented with awards; the Dance Team won their competition and the Robotics Team. Ms. Gosselin presented discipline data. September and October totals are listed; the number has gone down a bit but doesn't want to be misleading. In talking with Principal Ronning about what we want to show, there are a lot of things logged as discipline that are tier 1 interventions that teachers handle in the classroom. Initially the number was 44 and after looking at them one by one, we realized the tier 1 issue. Once we removed those it now is a better representation with tier 2 and 3 where you are sent to the office, and we are calling home etc. At the HS 8 out of 132 had the privilege of speaking with Principal Ronning and I and at the MS 7 out of 118, she has listed the break out for review. Some offences are name-calling, we are seeing an increase in that, repeated offence, skipping class or taking personal property.

#### **iv. WLCTA Report**

Ms. Erin Rosana and Ms. Morgan Kudlich reported being in the thick of it. At FRES/LCS, first quarter has just ended and reports cards have gone home. Parent/teacher conferences were held yesterday. They thanked all the teachers who brought food to share and got through a long day of meetings with parents. The Scholastic Book Fair will start November 27-December 1. Check out the PTO site to see what days it will be open in the evening. The FRES holiday concert will be on December 7 at 6pm. It will feature third, fourth and fifth grade students singing a selection of seasonal and holiday songs and it will be less than an hour. The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade will have a field trip to Mt. Kearsarge on November 17<sup>th</sup>. At WLC, we are at the halfway point. Parent/teacher conferences were yesterday and parents were thanked who came out, it is the key to students finding success and great to have parent support. We did it differently this year and held in the classrooms. The sophomore class held a MS Halloween Dance last month and raised about \$500 to put towards prom next year. The WLC Fall Showcase will be November 16 at 6pm. A shout out to Taryn Anderson was given for organizing that, she goes above and beyond and the kids are lucky to have her. There is an online popcorn fundraiser for the Italy field trip; November 25-29 with 50% of proceeds each student sells will go toward the cost of their trip. It was asked to have it put on the website they will work on this.

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

Present: *Jeff Jones, Leslie Browne, Charlie Post, Caitlin Maki, Michelle Alley, Adam Lavallee, Jennifer Bernet, and Jonathan Vanderhoof*

Chairman Jones called the joint session to order at 7:05pm.

#### **a. FY 2024-2025 Budget**

##### **i. Prior Follow Up**

Ms. LaPlante spoke of receiving inquiries from board members and committee members. Since the budget was approved in March 2023, she was asked if there are any new positions or projects added that are now recurring costs. She confirms no new projects or positions. It has been asked if the mental health position was in the operating budget. She confirms it is not in the operating budget. She looked back at what the Board approved for ESSER funding. Eight hours were approved for the curriculum coordinator to act as an Assistant Principal or Dean of Students at FRES. In the current budget, we see those hours added in. It is not a new costs, it is \$15,000-\$16,000 to cover that role. There was support to fund the IT position, when the budget was built for FY 24 that was called out and identified and the Board approved to move forward at \$87,500. It is in the budget for \$76,000 for FY 25. The only newish thing in FY 25 is the during the budget process last year there was discussion of IXL Instructional Pathways which was paid for with ESSER funds for this year and \$18,500 has been added to the FY 25

budget. Tonight there is no change to the dollar value, no changes besides the heading. She listed items for discussion based on the last meeting's discussion. Wages and benefits will be moved to the next meeting; she received the health benefit increases and should have that for the next meeting. Chairman Jones voiced that the Budget Committee wants a date that the teacher's contract numbers would be available. Ms. Anzalone voiced there is another meeting tomorrow and she will let you know. Chairman Jones asked if we are a month away or more or less, we want an idea because it will affect some of decisions and want a ballpark so we can react to those. Chairman Golding responded we are trying to get things done by December 12; we want to wrap it up assuming all parties are agreeing. Ms. LaPlante was asked for a total of the items she discussed. Ms. LaPlante reviewed \$16,000 for the 8 hours with curriculum coordinator, \$76,000 for the IT help desk and \$18,500 for IXL Instructional Pathways. Responding to a question, she reports the \$16,000 is in the curriculum coordinator line and it is the same person.

## **ii. Facilities Director**

Mr. Erb reported there were things pulled out of the budget on this 2<sup>nd</sup> draft due to budget reductions. The reductions are for the following, snowplow and lights for the truck, \$10,000, replacing vacuums at WLC and FRES (left one in at LCS), and replacement of broken manlift that we cannot get parts for and in the 3 year maintenance plan we removed the hallway locker repairs and replacement based on students not using them. He reviewed in his budget the notables are \$10,000 to replace door locks and crash bars at WLC and FRES as part of ALICE and lockdown procedures, increases in water and sewer, and increases for FRES propane based on prior years and gallons used. A question was raised if the basketball court will be done by the first game (repairs are currently being done). Mr. Erb responded he is not sure but is hopeful. Superintendent added the first few games would be away. There are other uses for the gym too, we are sharing the FRES court with WJAA and need to be sure everyone's needs are being met. We spoke to the Boys and Girls Club and they are open to us using theirs when we know the dates. If we can't use it, we will need to move home games to away. We are hopeful the worst-case scenario is the first or second week of December but do not know. Mr. Erb added there is not much he can do; this is the group the insurance company told us to use and there have been added expenses. We had to put another membrane down and the insurance company has allowed that. A questions was raised what the impact would be on him if the manlift is not replaced. Mr. Erb responded that any time that work is done on the heaters or the fans are cleaned in the gym or café, we need to rent a manlift, which can cost \$300-\$400 or up to \$800 for the day. He rented one last week for the ceiling tiles at FRES. We had to wait for a small one; it was used less than 4 hours and cost \$180. A question was raised if we could use grant money for the locks. There was a brief discussion of the increase in disposal services. Mr. Erb explained they allow more things in the dumpster than most. A question was raised if we had projects going on that required additional dumpsters. Mr. Erb replied the dumpster for the gym floor is not our dumpster it is theirs. Ms. Browne noted that MD's did go up in price overall and perhaps it is a good time to get some estimates. Mr. Post spoke of some of the current projects, windows, heating and tennis courts. Mr. Erb responded we are looking at propane. He has been working on that and the Board will have to decide if we buy the propane tanks or not. We looked at wood pellets and it is not cheap. Regarding the windows, he has 2 quotes, one for fiberglass and one for glass. We are still waiting on Granite for the glass and he talked to Portland who were out the other day but they sent the wrong person; we don't need double hung windows. He is hoping they return soon. Regarding the tennis courts, some of the drainage has been done and some fence work; the person will be back to finish it. We are probably getting New England Courts here but doesn't want to pull the piping out and leave it exposed over the winter if the company cannot guarantee to be here therefore it may be the first of spring. He confirms the delay has been all the rain we had and he doesn't want to take a chance of any more water getting underneath. Mr. Post noted the point of the warrant article was to have it done for the kids to play in the spring. Mr. Erb responded that he could not get another company to come. Ms. LaPlante added regarding the quotes, we have the original quotes from last season, we updated those in August and it is current. She confirms it did go up from the original quote. She does not have that with her; the original cost was \$61,000. Mr. Allen voiced that Mr. Erb has been briefing the Facilities Committee and he has all the stuff we discussed which he would present at the next meeting. There was a brief discussion regarding grounds care, which includes roadside mowing. Mr. Erb voiced we fixed the drainage up on the hill and it was decided it should be done yearly, clear up the brush growing in drainage areas and straight through and even in the trench in the back of school was cleaned up and it should be done yearly especially with all the rain. The water table was up to the slab. By cleaning it out and back, it lowered the water level and it eased off by summer. It was done about 8 years ago. Chris Carter will come back with a machine he has to take care of it. A question was raised if there are quotes on the dishwasher. Ms. LaPlante confirms she does not.

## **iii. Food Service**

Ms. Nantel reviewed that food services did not see a huge increase, \$1,967 (.96%). There has not been many changes but wants to monitor the maintenance and routine upkeep of the equipment. She reviewed her budget including \$4,000 for repairs and maintenance at the HS, \$4,000 at the MS, \$3,000 for FRES and \$100 at LCS, as there is not much equipment up there. She wants the grease traps pumped 3 times a year at each school and the hoods cleaned no less than 1-2 times a year and any routine inspections completed. Maintaining will mean less replacing as often. She decreased travel and conferences as she does not have a need to go too far but wants staff to maintain their serve safe training and has included travel cost for food transport up to LCS. She doesn't see that changing any time soon. She hopes the paper products will decrease after they have a new dishwasher. She took out the cost for shoes for staff; sneakers will work but hoped for a \$50 dollar allowance for safe shoes to offset cost of injury. There is no need for new knives (replaced recently) or new pots or pans. She is increasing the food budget but still has to be smart on how she purchases. She decreased the milk at HS and MS as they are enjoying the water and other beverages more than milk. At FRES, she needs to maintain what they have. There is a big increase for the dishwasher, which we are in desperate need of. She has quotes that range from \$10,000-\$15,000 which is mid-grade, not top of the line but will still allow us to be more efficient. There would be less labor and staff hours. It entails having an electrician and plumber come in at install and removal. She is budgeting \$30,000 overall for that. She has not received any quotes from electricians or plumbers yet as they will need the

model etc. first but has vendors ready to work with us once we provide more information. She confirms she has 3 full time staff with 4 afternoon prep cooks plus a student worker. Chairman Golding requested she put the \$50 allowance for shoes back in, as he would rather have safe shoes than workers comp claims. She intends for this to be for the full time staff only. There was a discussion about the challenges of collecting overdue balances. Ms. Nantel confirms it is challenging and we are sitting at about \$28,000 and some have balances over \$500 or more, some are not students any longer, it is a variety of families in the area. We do have the ability to send out memos but she has not worked out the email portion yet and would like to start sending out monthly updates to all who, she believes if there is no payment it should go to collections. Ms. Anzalone noted it would be helpful if there more frequent notices. A question was raised if the student balance is severely in the rears are they still allowed to purchase ala cart items like ice cream. Ms. Nantel responded they can't charge snacks or drinks but can purchase a meal. If they pay in cash, she will allow it. A question was raised how far back are the balances as there was an anonymous donation to pay it off. It was noted it didn't zero it out. It was further noted the federal government was paying for it during COVID. Ms. LaPlante responded federal government only paid for reimbursement and neither she nor Ms. Nantel can speak to what the prior food services did. A question was raised if the meal prices are covering the cost to produce it. Ms. Nantel responded it is on her radar but does not have a good grasp on that yet. A question was raised regarding some balances are for students who no longer are in school, how do we write that off. Ms. LaPlante responded she would like to start the process of sending out certified mail but there will come a time that we have to recognize we can't collect it. It was suggested we should do that sooner and was asked what percentage is that. Ms. Nantel did not know this but will get it and send it out. A question was raised regarding the debt of students no longer in the district, is that the type of debt we would send to collections. Ms. LaPlante responded we would figure out what our options are. Mr. Lavoie commented that we hear many good things about Ms. Nantel from staff and administration. She is doing a great job and looking forward to seeing her in the future.

#### **iv. Special Education**

Mr. Pratt reviewed the special education proposed budget is up \$303,850. He reviewed the memo he gave in October. Areas of increase include SPED tuition, increasing \$129,000, for a total of \$424,000, contracted services school psychologist (not including the licensed social worker) increasing \$56,100 total of \$175,000, contracted services speech and language increasing \$56,000, contracted services reading specialist increasing \$47,800, contracted services physical therapy increasing \$6,900, and contracted services occupational therapy increasing \$8,400. These all add up to about \$300,000. Some small increases and decreases offset each other. Looking at that total and those items he talked about, part of the increase is moving money from the IDEA grant to the local account, which accounts for about \$135,000 of it. The reason he suggests we do that is because last June when we got our allocation from the state for the SPED grant we noticed we were getting about \$40,000 less for this year. He contacted the state and they said they made a mistake and funded it almost 100%. He is concerned because he started to do some digging into that and there is a trend and prediction that the IDEA grant will be cut this year. That was part of the rationale he used for bringing some of the grant money into the budget, which makes the huge increase. He has sat here before the Board's 5 times and it is the first time he has come with a huge increase. He is doing what he feels is responsible as a SPED director as the services are mandated; we have 116 students receiving funding and 116 legal contracts we must uphold. To compound the issue he has to come up with the budget 7-8 months in advance and as an experienced SPED director does not know what will happen next week. His approach here is that there are 4 things we can do. He outlined a few options for consideration. Options included are, absorb the \$303,850 increase in general fund, put back some of the money moved from grant (\$134,634) to IDEA grant and hope for no reductions in grant, use some of the \$300,000 cap reserve to offset increase or use a combination of IDEA grant and cap reserve to offset increase in budget. He does not make any preferences for these that is up to the Boards. He is basing this on services the students need. We have a tremendous increase in the number of services our kids are getting. He has said to the Board before coming out of COVID, that we had a whole bunch of kids who didn't interact with other kids and that is part of language development. We have seen the highest in prek-3 grade needing speech and language services. He feels uncomfortable coming to you with this but it is where we are. Discussions were had including, putting all the grant money back to the grant so that if the federal government shifts it back to the taxpayers they will all know. A question was raised if he is saying 1/3 of our students have services and is that consistent with other districts. Mr. Pratt responded we are a little higher than the average but we are also a small district so every student coming will skew the numbers a bit. A question was raised if we had an increase from the vendor for school psychologist or are you planning to enroll more students or is it a mix, what is the breakdown. Mr. Pratt responded yes and no. Twenty seven percent of students have IEPs and see a school psychologist or mental health provider, that is an increase from 2022-2024. There is a 38% increase of kids seeing one of those folks. Every year the vendors do go up a little bit, we try to keep them happy and provide minimal increases and they are not outlandish. We also need to keep them here because there are shortages across the country. It is a fine line. A question was raised if the hourly rate went up. Mr. Pratt responded it varies for each depending on the position. He gave a range for school psychologist \$80 per hour, licensed mental health clinician \$65 per hour, and school social worker \$70 per hour. He confirms he is projecting next year with a dollar more per hour and new students who will require services remember some of that was in the grant. It was noted speech and language was a huge jump. Mr. Pratt confirms we have more vendors because we have more kids. He provided a break down when asked, out of 116 students, 58 receive speech and language (S/L), and last year it was about 35, it has gone up especially at the lower levels. A question was raised if that accounts for the \$56,000 in next year's budget. Mr. Pratt explained because we have more

kids doesn't mean it went up \$56,000, we took some of the money from the grant that we paid the S/L and shifted it to local funding because of the grant issue he talked about. He was asked to confirm that the grant was subsidizing part of this and now it is questionable for next year and was put into the budget. He was asked what percent that was. Mr. Pratt responded for S/L he would break down all the areas he talked about and give you the amount we transferred and the net percent increase. It was noted that a minor one like physical therapy, those fees didn't go up they went down actually. Mr. Pratt responded they are going up. He was questioned if he added more students. A brief discussion was had about Medicaid and Mr. Pratt confirmed that Medicaid rates have nothing to do with schools. We employ our contracted services on whom we can get and how we can get them; we are paying \$106 per hour for services. He confirms there was an increase because we are adding another 2 students to the caseload. The \$134,000 we are shifting from the grant is all because of his concern that he does not want to leave us high and dry but leaves it to the Committee and Board to make the best decision. He confirms we will not know if they are pulling the money until June 2024, one month before he gets the grant the money, which does not give him much lead-time. He confirms his concern is coming from national level that he has been involved with in the past and feels what happened last year was the state was going to pull the money. The grant will still fund certain things; he is assuming we will get \$130,000. He confirms some of the grant is spent. He was asked if there is any benefit to the S/L working with the student every day. He responded in terms of our folks, we have occupational therapist and physical therapist who are direct with us; one of our reading specialist is hired as a contracted service vendor through an agency. He notes he is running the contract for the school psychologist, mental health clinician and one of the S/L himself and would prefer to contract with them directly but could not find any. There are no benefits. He confirms it would cost more money to bring in an employee because we would pay benefits etc. He confirms the contract is based on student need, we sit down every year with the contracted services and review each student and scope out how much services we need from them based on the needs of each student. Mr. Vanderhoof spoke that he was confused about Mr. Pratt's format for SPED; he thought he would see all his expenses and at the bottom the offset of grant funds, the way he is talking he didn't include all his expenses. Mr. Pratt confirms that there are expenses covered in the grant not listed in the operating budget. There was a discussion regarding this including not understanding not including all the expenses, when you have expenses in the grant it is hard to remove them, and this is nothing new it is the same way the budget has been presented each year. Mr. Pratt has been doing this for 15 years this is first time anyone has asked him to do it differently but he is happy to do that. Mr. Vanderhoof voiced if you have a grant project for \$50,000 and you don't get it, you just don't do the project because it is not in the budget and we don't have funds for it. Mr. Pratt voiced if that is the way you would like it, he would need \$300,000 for the SPED budget. He has been in situations where grant funding does not come through. Requests were made to provide a more detailed break down and totals he expects to get in the grants and the historical hourly rates for contracted services and other positions. It was noted it might be that this is the first time for this because it was not understood it was done that way and the budget is not a true budget without it and does not reflect what we are fully spending. A request was made for a complete operating budget of what goes out of our school system because if these grants don't come through we do not know what we are spending. It was noted that it is reported out every year and you can isolate it by function and budget code. Discussions continued with several agreeing with Mr. Vanderhoof. Ms. LaPlante voiced the only fees you see are what comes from taxation and does not show totals of all departments. To confirm, she is hearing you want to see all of it and back out the grants and that is different from how it has been done since she has been here. Mr. Vanderhoof voiced what you are saying is all those revenues are counted aside from this money; they are just other projects that we don't talk about or hear about. Discussion continued including, we need to see this as if we don't get grant money. It was noted we don't have a choice and need to fund it and there may be a lot of things we want to do and can't. Last year we had money left over and didn't talk about it and need to talk about what to do with any extra money now. Mr. Pratt voiced we will get grant money, he knows we will it is a matter of how much. In a perfect world if he could start at zero and had the first grant he would have zero dollars of salaries in there but unfortunately it happens in many districts that over time as budgets get squeezed it is used to offset increase and it comes down to this moment. If you decide to fund \$300,000 and we had an extra \$120,000 there are two things that would happen, yes, you could do other projects, and the unique part of the SPED grant is it has a 2-year range. He has raised the concern and however you do it, great he just doesn't want us to be in a position next June where we are going oh no, we don't have enough money. A question was raised where the social worker listed (for mental health program). Mr. Pratt confirms in the grant, one part is the licensed mental health social worker. He is looking at the program and changing hours. He is doing it this way because we are looking closely at the needs of FRES and streamlined any money so that person is only being used for that it's about \$47,000, it is still a contracted service. We don't have one right now and are looking for one for just FRES. Ms. Cloutier-Cabral voiced that over the years that Mr. Pratt has been here, he puts a lot of thought into what he is asking for and doesn't not ask for more than what he needs. When he is asking for something, she thinks we should listen and lean on that and go with what he asks. We are mandated to provide these services and he puts a lot of work into being prepared. Mr. Vanderhoof asked if the licensed mental health social worker he talked about is for the mental health program. Mr. Pratt confirms it is. Mr. Vanderhoof asked if that was the only position that is funded that way or can it go to something else, if it was all in the budget it would reduce the

359 complication of it. Mr. Pratt responded this is how he has presented the budget for the last 5 years; he is not trying to offend  
360 anyone or cause an upheaval. However the Superintendent and Business Administrator instruct him to do it he is happy to do so.  
361 Mr. Vanderhoof asked him if that is the only thing, the grant could be used for. Mr. Pratt confirms it is not. Mr. Vanderhoof  
362 voiced that the Board added this new thing after the budget last year, it doesn't show anywhere in this budget. This expense, it is  
363 still a dollar for dollar expense because the grant money could go for something else. It seems very nontransparent and is eating  
364 up money. Mr. Pratt asked for clarification of what he is saying. Mr. Vanderhoof voiced the \$46,000 could be used for  
365 something else. Discussions continued. Mr. Pratt voiced he has been instructed to do it a certain way for 5 years, if on the 6<sup>th</sup>  
366 year you want it done differently, just tell him. Mr. Vanderhoof voiced he thought he would see any off setting expense at the  
367 bottom of the report and did not expect it would have been done differently. Ms. LaPlante responded that is a budgeting practice  
368 she inherited that the Board and Budget Committee did for years. Chairman Jones expressed he thinks it can be part of a  
369 worksheet, we are not saying to do budgeting differently today, and we could have a sheet of what we are spending and what the  
370 anticipated revenue is. Mr. Vanderhoof voiced he is saying the way it is being done currently there are grant funds not being  
371 presented. Maybe the Budget Committee wants to question that position but are looking at a budget and we don't know it  
372 existed. If we can do it a different way and save \$20,000 to go to a different expense we don't have a full accounting is all. Mr.  
373 Lavallee commented that it still comes out to zero, it is the same number; it doesn't change anything it is just something we see.  
374 Chairman Jones asked Ms. LaPlante how she feels about providing a breakdown of positions and whether it is funded form a  
375 grant or what, 3 columns to keep it simple. Mr. Pratt noted there are no other positions, at this point in time, as he doesn't know  
376 what will happen in the future. Ms. Foss spoke that she has worked in SPED for a long time and one thing she knows about it is  
377 that it is not black and white it is extremely messy. She thanked Mr. Pratt for doing it, it is an extremely difficult job, and we are  
378 still feeling the kickback from COVID and is probably why you have so many students on the rolls. Mr. Pratt has always been  
379 frugal, does the right thing for the students, and watches out for the district. He has a lot of experience that we should be grateful  
380 for and we will have to live with some discomfort. He doesn't know what will happen tomorrow or next week. She thanked him  
381 for what he did and supports his recommendations. Mr. Pratt expressed he wishes it was more black and white, there is a lot of  
382 juggling that goes on. He appreciates the depth and broadness of the committee and Board to make sure every penny is counted.  
383 One of the issues with SPED is sometimes people think SPED takes money away; we want to make sure it doesn't. You can roll  
384 the dice and if it works out, it was a nice activity. The information that was requested he will work with Ms. LaPlante and be  
385 sure it comes out timely. He notes he trusts their judgement. Chairman Jones voiced that he appreciates Mr. Pratt's candidness  
386 tonight. It was suggested to use last year's grant this year so that you know what funds you are getting and no questions in the  
387 budget. He agrees that is a good suggestion.

388  
389 Ms. LaPlante confirms there are no other items she wanted to go over tonight.

390  
391 Chairman Jones spoke that there are a couple of things discussed earlier by the Budget Committee that he wanted to bring up.  
392 The student numbers for October is there a way we can have a one-time break down vs. number of teachers and something at the  
393 HS, MS level in terms of which teachers support which programs of study. Ms. LaPlante noted it is tough to do it historically. It  
394 was suggested to have a roster for FY 25 and average daily attendance, as we have not seen enrollment since August. Chairman  
395 Jones voiced that this is not an implication of anything, more for the Strategic Planning Committee to take a look at the overall  
396 district and long-term viability of us a coop district, taking a top down view. That is something the Budget Committee is  
397 interested in exploring if anything else, and put it out there. Mr. Vanderhoof voiced that with where the budget is headed and in  
398 the next several years at what point does it cost too much. Is what we are getting what we are paying for, are there opportunities  
399 to portion students out. We are looking at trends, looking at this years, the next and at some point our population doesn't expand  
400 is it even viable, maybe it will cost more but we want to look at it. Chairman Golding responded we would discuss it.  
401 Superintendent voiced he will follow up on the request for data. Mr. Lavallee expressed he can come up with questions, it would  
402 be a thick list of questions, what does it do to our property values if we don't have a school, if you look at all the questions that  
403 need to be answered; it may not be a School Board issue but should be taken up with the towns. He doesn't think the School  
404 Board can dissolve the district. Mr. Post added the School Board can tuition children out of the district without town approval.

## 405 406 **VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

407 The public comment section of the agenda was read. Superintendent called out all the phone numbers and names joined in the  
408 meeting asking if they wanted to comment.

409  
410 Ms. Mary Golding gave a whoop, whoop to Ms. Erickson for being awarded the Starfish Award. She commented that Ms.  
411 Nantel gave a wonderful presentation. She voiced that she can understand Ms. Anzalone's frustration with the SRO and Select  
412 Board, she hopes both Board's will come together and sort this out since the survey was already done and the questions have

been answered. She thanked the Board and gave a shout out to the Chairman for visiting the schools. She had the pleasure of showing him around the school and recommends it to everyone. She thanked everyone and gave a shout out to Ms. LaPlante.

*A MOTION was made by Mr. Lavallee and SECONDED by Mr. Post to adjourn the Budget Committee session at 8:49pm.*

Chairman Jones thanked the members of the public, it has been a long meeting and appreciate their attendance and thinking about the questions, they are raising. He hopes that you will come out to vote.

*Voting: all aye, motion carried.*

## **VIII. BOARD BUDGET DISCUSSION**

Chairman Golding questioned if there was anything from the joint session the members wanted to discuss. Mr. Allen voiced he hopes the stuff discussed with the SPED funding changes in the layout so that it is clear what is going out each month. We don't have a choice with those and in case the grants don't come through especially if they are putting in new positions in the grant. We should know they exist and can be aware of all the staff. Ms. LaPlante will make sure she has that. A question was raised, touching on the long-term viability, is that something you want to discuss now. Chairman Golding responded that we should probably make a directive to the Strategic Planning Committee to analyze that. There was a brief discussion about that. Ms. Lavallee voiced when the district took on the project of the MS it was not set up that way and the work that went into the proposal when we became a true coop and we did the renovation; we need that level of oversight. We need the committee to look at that level of oversight to the point that all the details are analyzed to put forth a true presentation. Both towns were present and we voted on it. It is very important to have all the details presented to both towns and everyone it will effect. She does not support one way or another. Chairman Golding suggested at the next meeting we bring ideas we want for the Strategic Planning Committee. Superintendent noted 2 board members are on the committee, Ms. Cloutier-Cabral and Chairman Golding. Ms. Anzalone voiced interest.

*Ms. Lavallee made a MOTION to nominate Ms. Anzalone to be on the Strategic Planning Committee, SECONDED by Mr. Mannarino*

*Voting: all aye, motion carried.*

The Strategic Planning Committee will meet on December 20 at 6pm.

Discussion was had regarding the SPED budget. Ms. Anzalone spoke of concern. Ms. LaPlante commented she is not comfortable going back before FY 22 as she cannot confirm the numbers. She will show FY 22 budget and expenses, 2022 and 2024 showing everything. There will be caveats, as some are multi-year grants. She wants to paint the picture of all the programs we offer and from what buckets of money. Ms. Anzalone wants to show all the things we have to do and services we provide to students in case one day the grants dry up.

## **IX. ACTION ITEMS**

### **a. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting**

*A MOTION was made by Ms. Cloutier-Cabral and SECONDED by Ms. Foss to approve the minutes of October 24, 2023 as written.*

*Voting: eight ayes; one abstention from Mr. Allen, motion carried.*

### **b. Request for Funds-Building/Equipment & Roadway Capital Reserve-WLC Roof**

Ms. LaPlante reviewed the School Board are the agents to expend from the capital reserve. She has an invoice for \$91,670 for phase 8 of the WLC roof project. She is requesting the funds be withdrawn from the capital reserve so she can be reimbursed from the trustee of the trust fund.

*A MOTION was made by Mr. Mannarino and SECONDED by Mr. Allen to authorize the withdrawal of \$91,670 from the Building/Equipment & Roadway Capital Reserve fund for the WLC roof project.*

*Voting: all aye, motion carried.*

Ms. LaPlante noted once she has incurred the expenses for the locker room B-wing bathrooms, gym windows and art cabinets she will come back with those requests, they are on her radar.

## **X. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **i. Budget Liaison**

Ms. Foss reported forwarding the Board minutes of the last Budget Committee meeting to members. She reviewed them including that there was a new proposal for \$416,233 increase with no cuts to staff and programing. Ms. LaPlante has been working hard to provide lists that include staff and programs. Ms. LaPlante had been asked about ESSER funding in FY 24, she said there were no incremental positions in from the FY 23 budget. There was some discussion of the minutes reflecting the intent of the Vice Chair, there were some things that were not clear and will be taken out. She expects the final minutes would be



out in a couple of weeks. A question was asked if the meetings are recorded, it was reported they are not and questioned if they could be. Ms. Foss noted that did come up tonight. Superintendent confirms they could be if the technology is working, for example tonight it is not. It was noted they might need microphones for audio.

**ii. Negotiations**

Ms. Anzalone reviewed they met on October 30, there were a few more requests which we will go over tonight. The next meeting is tomorrow at 5:30pm, it is going well.

Chairman Golding noted the Technology Committee was to meet yesterday and it was postponed to February 13.

**XI. RESIGNATIONS / APPOINTMENTS / LEAVES**

**a. Resignation-Kathleen Mukavetz-ABA Therapist-WLC**

Superintendent reviewed the resignation.

**XII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The public comment section of the agenda was read. Superintendent called out all the phone numbers and names joined in the meeting asking if they wanted to comment.

Ms. Mary Golding gave big cheers to WLC for the PSATs, 27 out of 31 students, great job. To the School Board, she noted it is a long night and she really appreciates you, you are doing a phenomenal job.

**XIII. SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mr. Allen thanked all for covering in his absence. He gave a shout out to the Starfish Award winner Ms. Erickson. Ms. Nantel is doing an awesome job and kudos to the students who rocked the PSAT tests and the teachers who guided them. We are on an upswing and he hopes it lasts. Good luck to the Robotics Team. He thanked the school board members and community for keeping him on his toes and sharing their thoughts.

Mr. Mannarino echoed the shout outs given by Mr. Allen with the students taking the PSATs and congratulated the Dance Team and Robotics Team.

Ms. Anzalone thanked Principal Ronning for his reports, she appreciates the details he shares and is doing a great job with sharing the good things we are doing at the schools. She thanked all the teachers for the parent/teacher conferences yesterday, she had good chats and it was good experience going to all the classes. She congratulated Mr. and Mrs. Wiley who have a new baby.

Mr. Lavoie thanked the teachers for being there for parent/teacher conferences; it is a good opportunity to talk. He would like to stress to the Wilton Select Board we will put a solid effort into talking about an SRO position because the town/community seem to be in a majority behind it, 60% in favor but 50% split of people who want to pay for it. He echoes the shout-outs to the staff and students.

Ms. Lavallee echoed the shout-outs to the students and staff.

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral voiced it was another great night of reporting, she appreciates Mr. Tabor's input and likes that it is being taken seriously. She congratulated the teachers.

Ms. Foss voiced we had a lot of great reports tonight. She is really happy about the PSATs. They are very hard to do and it is hard to keep the kids motivated, yay to our teachers for doing that.

Chairman Golding echoed all the shout-outs. He had a great visit at FRES, walking into all the classrooms, checking out what they are all doing and suggests everyone set aside some time to do that. He toured the HS with Principal Ronning and ran into one child who had their phone out, Principal Ronning was on top of that, and he put it right away. He will have Assistant Principal Gosselin give him a tour of the MS sometime this month and go back to FRES to check out the Student Support Center.

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

*A MOTION was made by Mr. Allen and SECONDED by Ms. Foss to enter Non-Public Session to review the non-public minutes and discuss personnel matters RSA 91-A: 3 II (A) (B) (C) at 9:38pm.*

*Voting: via roll call vote, all aye, motion carried.*

**RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION**

The Board entered public session at 10:15pm.

536 *A MOTION was made to seal the non-public session minutes by Mr. Mannarino and SECONDED by Mr. Allen.*  
537 *Voting: via roll call vote, all aye, motion carried.*

538

539 **XV. ADJOURNMENT**

540 *A MOTION was made by Mr. Mannarino and SECONDED by Mr. Lavoie to adjourn the Board meeting at 10:16pm.*  
541 *Voting: all aye, motion carried.*

542

543 **XVI. NON-MEETING-NEGOTIATIONS**

544 A non-meeting was held for negotiations.

545

546 *Respectfully submitted,*

547 *Kristina Fowler*

548