

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE  
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING  
Tuesday, December 12, 2023  
Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative M/H School  
6:00 p.m.**

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

Present: *Dennis Golding, Brianne Lavallee, Tiffany Cloutier-Cabral, Darlene Anzalone, Diane Foss, Jonathan Lavoie, and school board student representative Hannah Hamilton (at 6:31PM)*

*Business Administrator Kristie LaPlante, Principal Tom Ronning and Principal Bridgette Fuller, Assistant Principal Katie Gosselin, Director of Student Support Services and Superintendent Pro Tempore, Ned Pratt, Technology Director Nicholas Buroker, Curriculum Coordinator Samantha Dignan, and Clerk Kristina Fowler*

**I. 6:00 PM NON-MEETING-NEGOTIATIONS**

Negotiations were discussed.

**II. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Golding called the meeting to order at 6:32pm.

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**IV. STAFF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Principals Ronning and Fuller reviewed the nominees for the Starfish Award and why they were nominated. Teacher nominees are Erin Rosana, Bill Comerford, Olympia Clark, Heather Desmarais, Jessica Hill and Assistant Principal Katie Gosselin and Food Service Director Megan Nantel. The winner is Jessica Hill who has been nominated two times for this honor. Ms. Hill was congratulated and a round of applause was given.

**V. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA**

Ms. Anzalone requested to add an adjustment to review the 2024-2027 Tentative Agreement WLCTA CBA.

*A MOTION was made by Ms. Anzalone and SECONDED by Ms. Lavallee to accept the adjustment to the agenda.*

*Voting: all aye, motion carried.*

**• 2024-2027 Tentative Agreement WLCTA CBA**

*A MOTION was made by Ms. Anzalone and SECONDED by Ms. Lavallee to accept the negotiated collective bargaining agreement between the SAU 63 School Board and WLCTA for the 2024-2027 school years.*

Ms. Anzalone reviewed that the negotiation process was collaborative and emphasized cooperation and compromise for the benefit of our total school community. It was focused on staff retention and recruitment while also improving our competitiveness in the education marketplace. Both parties understood that recruiting and retaining our teaching staff is foundational and critical to improve the quality of instruction, learning, and consequently, our students' academic performance. She noted this was her first time as Chair and appreciates the support she received from board members and WLCTA negotiating team. She reviewed some specific changes in the agreement which were,

- The school year was reduced from 185 days to 180 days by removing three professional development days and two school days
- The school day increased from seven (7) hours to seven and a half (7.5) hours
- A financial penalty was added to address employee resignations after signing employment contracts
- Parenting leave granting additional 20 days paid leave via available sick days
- Clarity was added to the reduction in force process
- A student loan repayment (limit of \$10,000 total pool) available to eligible employees
- Clarity was added for newly hired compensation, particularly for private sector experience
- Retirement Plan was adjusted to incentivize longevity by reducing to two steps
- The salary schedule was adjusted to help recruit high quality staff, retain their employment, and compete with other school districts for critical staff needs

Ms. Anzalone asked for any questions, none heard.

61 *Voting: all aye, motion carried.*

62  
63 Chairman Golding commented, nice job to the negotiating team. Ms. LaPlante will review cost items during the joint session.

64  
65 **VI. BOARD CORRESPONDENCE**

66 **a. Reports**

67 **i. Superintendent's Report**

68 Due to Superintendent's absence, his report is submitted as written.

69 **ii. Student School Board Report**

70 Ms. Hannah Hamilton reported in November the MS/HS students gathered with their teachers to receive awards for doing their  
71 academic best. Principal Ronning met with the students during this time to give out awards to students who have shown their  
72 academic best. A Veterans Day celebration was held. Ms. Clark and her classes set up the cafeteria, the Choir joined us for  
73 patriotic songs, and students read their Patriot's Pen Essays. It was requested that I invite you all to the Dance Team's Mini  
74 Nutcracker. It will be held on December 20<sup>th</sup> at 7PM in the cafeteria. Winter sports have begun. Thanksgiving baskets were  
75 passed out in November. Students and staff brought in non-perishable food items for the baskets. We had many turkeys donated  
76 and are thankful to all who participated. On behalf of all the students and staff, we are very excited for winter break. Ms.  
77 Lavallee commented she enjoyed the Quarter 1 Awards and was proud of the students, specifically the ones who made  
78 improvements. It is easy for some kids to do well but the real challenge comes when we push ourselves beyond that.

79 **iii. Principal's Report**

80 Principal Ronning reported that one thing he is trying to do is recognize students and staff. The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the WLC  
81 Newsletter is out; contact the school if you need one. He reviewed the November students of the month. In sixth grade, Matt  
82 Caragher, Gabriela Abasciano, in seventh grade, Matthew Hannigan, Andie White, eighth grade, Sydney Beam, Vincenzo  
83 Anzalone, eleventh grade, Eli Fish, Cori Benoit and twelfth grade, Naliia Ingellina-Courtemanche. He reported the gym floor is  
84 installed and today they started putting the lines down. It will be available after break and are looking to make it an evening for  
85 parents and students to come out and celebrate our kids. Parent/teacher conferences were held with 38% of the students  
86 represented at the conferences. He reviewed upcoming dates, MS/HS concert is December 14, 7pm. and the Nutcracker by the  
87 Dance Team on December 20, 7pm. He notes the students and staff work really hard to put these events forward. Principal  
88 Gosselin reviewed discipline numbers, which in the HS are down from 17 to 12. She notes November has a shorter number of  
89 days than most months. The MS is about the same. A question was raised regarding an in-service Assistant Principal Gosselin  
90 attended on new discipline laws. She was asked if there was discussion on what a typical school would have. The DOE only lists  
91 expulsion rates and suspensions. Principal Gosselin responded it was more law focused on what we can do as building  
92 administration, the Superintendent and the School Board. Building Administration can suspend for 10 days, the Superintendent  
93 can add 10 days and then it is at the School Board's discretion. Ms. Lavallee spoke of enjoying the Holiday Fair and was  
94 encouraged when speaking with Ms. Manning and the excitement she had talking about her students being energized getting the  
95 maker space. It was great to hear the students are excited about it and are driving that. Kudos to Ms. Manning and all the  
96 students involved with getting it up and running. Assistant Principal Gosselin noted it is being used all day, every day.

97  
98 Principal Fuller reported the Holiday Concert for grades 3, 4, and 5 is tomorrow night, rescheduled from December 7. The  
99 annual movie viewing tradition will be upheld this year. We are in need of substitutes and anyone interested can go to the  
100 district's website, click on employment opportunities to fill out an application. Chairman Golding noted he was happy to see that  
101 Principal Fuller's Report now reads Principal vs. Assistant Principal. Ms. Lavallee was pleased to see the difference in the  
102 behaviors, she is proud of the students and staff who made that happen. She was there last week and it was great to hear the  
103 conversations taking place when there were behavior issues, great job. Principal Fuller noted it is a collaborative approach. A  
104 question was raised if she thinks the decrease in bus behaviors are due to bus monitors, having an adult on the bus. Principal  
105 Fuller responded proximity control is always a good thing and on the bus for sure.

106 **iv. WLCTA Report**

107 Due to the absence of WLCTA representation, the report is submitted as written.

108  
109 **b. Letters/Information**

110 **i. Newspaper Notice**

111 Chairman Golding reported the notice is for dates to file for candidacy. He asked for any questions, none heard. Mr. Lavoie read  
112 the notice for the record. Public Notice-Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District. Candidates for School District  
113 Office shall file their declaration of candidacy at the SAU Office no earlier than January 24, 2024 or later than 5:00 p.m. on  
114 February 2, 2024. The following officers to be elected are:

- 115 • One (1) School Board Member (Lyndeborough) with a 3-year term
- 116 • Two (2) School Board Members (Wilton) with a 3-year term
- 117 • One (1) School District Moderator with a 1-year term
- 118 • One (1) Budget Committee Member (Lyndeborough) with a 3-year term
- 119 • Two (2) Budget Committee Members (Wilton) with a 3-year term

120  
121 The Board utilized their time by moving up agenda items while they waited for the joint session to start.

122

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

Present: *Jeff Jones (online), Leslie Browne, Michelle Alley, Caitlin Maki, Charlie Post, and Jonathan Vanderhoof*

**a. Budget FY 2024-2025**

**i. Prior Follow Up**

Ms. LaPlante reviewed at the last meeting it was asked what the balance was in each capital reserve account and if the capital reserve accounts were interest bearing and at what rate. Ms. LaPlante reviewed the balances in the capital reserve accounts as of October 31, 2023, Technology Capital Reserve has a balance of \$19,131, Special Education Capital Reserve \$309,296, Building & Roadways (Facilities) Capital Reserve, and the adjustment amount is \$59,509. We have \$416,509 in our accounts minus \$357,000 in projects on the CIP to be completed this year. She followed up with the Wilton Trustees of the Trust Funds and reviewed the interest rate on average of 5.54%. She spoke of warrant article #9. She noted she did not do a great job explaining it at the last meeting. The funds are not intended to give us flexibility beyond June 30. The intent as presented is to build up the Building & Roadways Capital Reserve with unspent funds. Theoretically, if there is a project after July 1 you want to do that you retain funds for there are work a rounds but that is not the true intent of what this warrant article is. She has clarified with the Department of Revenue (DRA), the warrant article as it is right now and as discussed at the last meeting, said a percent up to a dollar value, she did confirm with the DRA that it can be either or. It can be a percent but you do have to put a dollar value cap on that so you can do your financial reporting or it can be a flat amount. She asked for any questions. Mr. Vanderhoof commented that would be 2 warrant articles funding the capital reserve. Ms. LaPlante responded, theoretically. Mr. Post questioned that the DRA said it was appropriate to have that wording. It has to be a fixed number or a percentage with a cap. He questioned if it will be managed as a separate fund. Ms. LaPlante explained no, it would go into the Building & Roadways Capital Reserve, and we are not allowed to retain unspent funds. Mr. Post questioned that they said you could retain funds and put it in a capital reserve. Ms. LaPlante confirms yes, if it is worded that way, theoretically, we could do one to retain funds to go into the special education capital reserve fund. It is the only way to "save" for a lack of a better word, is to put it in a capital reserve fund. Mr. Post questioned if it is percentage of the total budget. Ms. LaPlante explains it is unspent funds as of June 30. Mr. Post commented that it would just go into the capital reserve fund with no expiration date. Ms. LaPlante confirms correct, because it would go into that capital reserve fund, the funds in that account do not have an expiration date. Mr. Vanderhoof commented to clarify, it is a one-time vote, you would have to do it (the warrant article) every year, and you do not pull out the funds every year. Ms. LaPlante noted she misunderstood and clarified it is not one you would keep on the books in perpetuity. A question was raised if we had this warrant article last year what would the cap have potentially been. Ms. LaPlante responded if you did a percentage you have to have a fixed number in the warrant, she provided the example of 10%, up to \$100,000 or you can have a flat rate that you appropriate. It is a portion of and not a total of unspent funds. FY 23 there was \$588,466 of unspent funds. The bulk of that was from special education tuition, wages, and benefits of vacant positions. In FY 22, we had \$666,837 in unspent funds; the same thing happening there a lot had to do with wages and benefits in vacant positions. Mr. Vanderhoof asked for clarification what is the benefit for asking for \$250,000 in warrant article #7 to fund the capital reserve and \$250,000 retained from unspent funds in the capital reserve vs. simply asking for \$500,000 in article #7. Ms. LaPlante explained in her perception it gives the voters a say in what they want to do with unspent funds. She understands the logic of why wouldn't we just ask for it in one article. It gives that power to the voters to decide what they want to do and how they want to do it. Mr. Vanderhoof commented you are still funding the capital reserve at \$500,000. It is still costing \$500,000 to fund it regardless if you ask for it one or 2 articles. Ms. LaPlante confirms it is less money going back to the towns at the end of the year. The voters may find it more appealing to only raise and appropriate \$250,000 in one funding year as opposed to \$500,000. She is really an advocate for the taxpayer to determine what they want to do with the funds. Mr. Vanderhoof responded it just sounds like we are going to tell them it will cost you \$250,000 to put \$500,000 in that fund and that is not the way it works. That is his only hesitation. Ms. Browne spoke that when she first heard this she felt very strongly that it should be one warrant and now after further thought of it and talking through it, she thinks it does give the voters the option to use unspent funds. They have said very clearly that we gave you the money use it. She is starting to change her mind a little bit on this one. Mr. Post spoke that it does come back and they can use it for that. Ms. LaPlante responded they don't get a check back, it gets shown as a revenue and it reduces their tax burden for the following year. As far as using it to offset taxes on the local end, they don't have a choice they are already getting what they have to pay. Ms. Lavalley added they have the ability to use it but there is no guarantee of what they are using it for because at that point it is at a town level decision. Ms. LaPlante responded no, because we have already taken that into account with the amount they have to pay. We say you received this much in revenue last year, we didn't spend this much and the revenue and unspent offsets what they have to pay. Mr. Post commented in essence, it gets returned to the towns; it doesn't go to a magic pot somewhere. Ms. LaPlante responded correct, she wanted to clarify that the taxpayers do not see a check; she wanted to be overly clear. Mr. Post responded that he wanted to clarify it goes back to the town. Ms. Anzalone voiced that we had a lot of people say last year we don't want the money back, use it and this gives them the opportunity to use this portion. It can potentially mean, next year we don't have to ask for as much, is that part of the goal too. Ms. LaPlante responded 75% yes, Ms. LaPlante would not use it as a way to reduce a warrant article in the subsequent years. At the end of this year, we will only have \$59,500 left in the CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) with significant projects coming up. She thinks it could be wise to use that to start building it up so that 4-7 years out, there is not a significant increase in what we are asking because we have built that base. Historically, on her end, she has seen projects deferred because there has not been enough money and she doesn't want to see that and doesn't want to see the taxpayers see a huge bill if we can preemptively address that. Chairman Jones asked if this is a may or must and who authorizes that amount to come back and go into the capital reserve. Ms. LaPlante responded it would be a School Board decision on what to put on the warrant and then whatever value the voters approve would be the amount on June 30 that goes into that fund instead of going back to the taxpayers. Chairman Jones asked if

it is required at that point or is the warrant written that the option is with the School Board. Ms. LaPlante responded if the voters approve it we have to do it. Chairman Jones commented he thinks this makes sense to him and he is supportive of it, we just need to be clear as to what we are earmarking in the CIP as he imagines that if we ask for this, people will ask what it would be used for. We just need to know what we will do with it if we get it. Mr. Post asked for the language of the article. Ms. LaPlante responded it is on the draft warrant provided in the packet. A question was raised regarding if the language of "raise and appropriate" that shouldn't be used because we already did it. Ms. LaPlante responded, good observation, we are not asking them to raise anymore but on July 1, we are raising it to put in the fund. It was asked to confirm that we are just appropriating then. Ms. LaPlante confirms yes. A question was raised if you will have items to vote on or just a big bucket. Ms. LaPlante responded it is not used to offset any project it is used to build that base capital. We heard loud and clear from the voters last year that we gave you money, we want you to use it and take care of the facilities this addressed both of those. Ms. Lavalley expressed since she has been on the Board and present for the budget committee meetings, it is an area we talk about and we have in the past, deferred maintenance. It is important for us to be aware, as with some of projects we experienced this year, there is always the possibility we get a quote and it ends up being more due to various reasons, such as supply chain issues. We have to get that money somewhere to complete the project. She thinks it is appropriate to have funds in the capital reserve so when that happens we are not taking money away from another project to do it. Ms. LaPlante was asked if the article would be reworded. Ms. LaPlante confirms no, the language we have to use is "raise and appropriate" (to raise and appropriate X value) per the DRA. She was asked if it would be explained we are not asking for additional money, that it would be from money left over. Ms. LaPlante confirms it would but not be in the warrant article it would be part of the supplemental discussion at district meeting. Mr. Vanderhoof voiced that he thinks the reason they are making you put that in there is because without it in there you are making it sound like you are not paying for this but you are paying for it because your tax burden is going to go up by whatever the ask is. He noted it is not free. If you put \$500,000 in, you will pay \$500,000 whether it is in one warrant or two. Ms. Foss spoke noting she doesn't feel like the budget is her strongest suit but in that whole conversation, as a taxpayer, she never got the feeling she didn't have to pay for that and she is a citizen here. It is just money put a certain place. Maybe that is just me she noted but she didn't feel like it was being hidden and she certainly knew she would have to pay for it. I am just putting it someplace in case there is an emergency but that is just 1 person in town and doesn't know how anyone else feels. Ms. Browne asked for any other comments on that topic. Ms. Browne questioned if the coach stipends were talked about at the last meeting and what was the decision. Ms. LaPlante confirms it was and is it in the budget, 22% increase in wages and benefits. It is less than \$10,500 including taxes. Ms. Browne asked about the teacher contract. Chairman Golding noted we came to a tentative agreement, Ms. LaPlante will provide basic details as it was just agreed to and wants to solidify her numbers. Ms. LaPlante noted it is important before she talks about numbers it is important to talk about what happened and why. She repeated some of what Ms. Anzalone expressed earlier. Ms. LaPlante reviewed the negotiation process was focused on staff retention and recruitment and competitiveness in the educational marketplace. The WLCTA, the School Board and negotiators all understood that it was important to recruit and retain our teaching staff, it is foundational and critical to improve the quality of instruction, learning, and will influence our students' academic performance. She reviewed key pieces of the agreement.

- The school year was reduced from 185 days to 180 days by removing three professional development days and two school days
- The school day increased from seven (7) hours to seven and a half (7.5) hours
- A financial penalty was added to address employee resignations after signing employment contracts
- Parenting leave granting additional 20 days paid sick leave via available sick days
- Clarity was added to the reduction in force process
- A student loan repayment (limit of \$10,000 total pool) available to eligible employees
- Clarity was added for newly hired compensation, particularly for private sector experience
- Retirement Plan was adjusted to incentivize longevity by reducing to two steps on the retirement scale
- The salary schedule was adjusted to help recruit high quality staff, retain their employment, and compete with other school districts for critical staff needs

That information is important because it comes with a price tag. In year, 1 of the teachers' contract if approved by voters will cost about \$630,000, 4.25% in the bottom line. Year 2, about \$280,000 and year 3 about \$255,000. She is speaking in round numbers so that she can triple check her numbers before she puts anything to print and intends to have those numbers finalized for the January 9 meeting. Mr. Vanderhoof asked what was the percentage of increase is in salary. Ms. LaPlante responded in year 1, it is across the board depending on the salary structure. In year 1 our first 5 steps has an average increase of between 17%-21%. Our middle steps are between about 8%-14%. Our top steps are 7%-8% all in year 1. She was asked to clarify that she said 20 additional sick days. Ms. LaPlante clarified no, the district current provides 10 days and no provision for a non-birthing partner to use additional sick days. The negotiated tentative agreement allows them to use up to 20 sick days if they have those accrued. Ms. Anzalone clarified that those are not additional days. Ms. LaPlante confirms the \$10,000 for loan repayment is not budgeted, it would be calculated in the warrant. She reviewed the criteria, you have to be on step 10 or lower of the salary scheduled, employed for 1 complete school year and employed with the district for 5 years or less and the max student loan repayment to an eligible employee is \$2,000 per year. She spoke of the retirement piece of the CBA. It was confirmed it was reduced from 3 steps to 2. Chairman Golding noted although he doesn't remember the years of longevity but believes we went from \$7,000, \$15,000 and \$20,000. We took out the \$15,000 and made it from 15-20 years to get \$20,000 for retirement instead of 16-20 years and the second was about 10-15 or something like that. Ms. Anzalone clarified the 2 steps are 15-20 years and 21 plus years. Ms. Anzalone spoke of the reduction in the number of days a year. A big complaint we heard from parents was that kids got out to late in the summer. We worked with the WLCTA regarding this and to reduce the number of teacher workshop

days but the school day itself was increased by a half an hour daily. It reduced 2 student days and 3 teacher workshop days. Ms. LaPlante confirms it added 55 hours of learning for the year. She was asked for the percentage of increase of salary for the rest of the years. Ms. LaPlante reported in year 2, the first steps 4%-4.5%, middle steps 3.5%-4.5%, the top step 3%-3.4%, and the same for year 3. Mr. Vanderhoof asked if it is front-loaded how that helps with retention he doesn't think if other districts are increasing it will be a benefit. Ms. Lavallee spoke that one of the areas we looked at in teacher turnover is a larger portion of teachers we were losing are at the lower steps. Newer teachers were leaving, they were getting their feet wet and good experience and then moved on to get more money and we wanted to fix that. Ms. Browne acknowledged she knows you are just getting this information but asked if it is the intent to put it together and provide something like what you are going to present to voters. Ms. LaPlante will provide additional information. Mr. Post asked for a copy of the agreement. Ms. Anzalone noted that we just reached a tentative agreement and it is still being finalized. Ms. LaPlante will fact check and find out if it can be released. A question was raised by increasing the school day would that create an issue with transportation. Ms. LaPlante responded the buses and drivers we have are loyal to our district and does not envision it as being problematic.

#### **ii. Facilities Committee**

Ms. LaPlante reviewed this in Mr. Allen's absence. The Facilities Committee has been working to keep the same projects on the CIP that were on the CIP at district meeting. The CIP she provided has some minor tweaks but essentially the same. At the last meeting, they voted to recommend \$250,000 on the warrant article, which is an increase of \$190,000. It would start us off with \$309,000 on July 1 for available funds. There was a brief discussion of the requested amount. There was also a discussion of asking for an additional \$85,000 warrant article for paving with an additional year next year to fully fund it and complete the transaction. Ms. Browne explained the details behind this. Ms. Cloutier-Cabral added the idea is to give the voters the option to do it this way or not letting the voters decide. There was also a brief discussion of crack sealing, the cost and if that was worth doing if the parking lot would be torn up in a year. It was noted if they do follow through with the request then it has to be very clear, as it is confusing. Ms. Browne noted it is a big ask with all the facilities articles but thinks it is all things that need to be done and proper planning and presentation are vital. There was discussion about the quote on the CIP, which is not current. It was suggested that Chris Carter could help with determining if it is worth crack sealing or not. Mr. Vanderhoof voiced that they are splitting it up with 2 warrant articles, and additional for the \$85,000 because if they vote it down we still have the other warrant assuming they approve the CIP money, there is already \$85,000 built in. Mr. Vanderhoof confirms the amount for the CIP article the committee is recommending is \$250,000 and Ms. Cloutier-Cabral agrees.

#### **iii. Full Budget Review**

Ms. LaPlante reports there are no changes since the last draft of the budget; proposed budget is \$14,349,309, which is an increase over FY 24 of \$406,088, 2.91%. The administration team feels it is a budget that will address student, teacher and taxpayer needs. We have no changes to propose and asks for any additional feedback from the Boards. Ms. Browne voiced before they came into this meeting, the Budget Committee said they have not had the opportunity to go line by line as we do every year and asks if either the Superintendent or Ms. LaPlante will sit with them to go through it. Ms. LaPlante responded, respectfully, she does not have availability until the first week of January at the earliest. She does not know the Superintendent's schedule. It was suggested January 2 or January 3. Ms. LaPlante spoke that we had done it the last 2 years but looking at this we went over each budget. Is it the Budget Committee looking to cut chunks or finesse the budget? Ms. Browne responded her guess is finesse. She thinks we are in a decent position here. She feels every time we have done this exercise in the past that it has been beneficial. Ms. LaPlante confirms we will not have the CBA numbers finalized until the 9<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Golding informed the group that the January 9 meeting would not be a joint session. The Board will be meeting with the Wilton Selectman and it would be too much on everyone to do both. The next joint session will be January 23. Ms. Browne suggests the Budget Committee meet on January 2 with the Superintendent and Ms. LaPlante. Ms. LaPlante will speak with the Superintendent regarding his availability. There were no additional questions on the budget.

#### **iv. Warrants**

Ms. LaPlante reviews it falls on the School Board to determine what goes on the warrant. She reviews article #4 is the operating budget, \$14,349,309, #5 is similar to last year where the student cost and property value is nearly identical and she wants to make sure has it finalized before she estimates the tax impact. Article #5 is the WLCTA CBA, (numbers are not finalized) year 1 \$630,000, year 2 \$280,000, year 3 \$255,000, article #6 is boilerplate language for a special meeting if article #5 does not pass, article #7 is the Building & Roadways Capital Reserve and the Facilities Committee is recommending \$250,000. She asked if the Board is in a position to make any decisions on that. Chairman Golding responded not without the Facilities Committee Chair present (Mr. Allen). Article #8 is for special education capital reserve. She noted the balance is currently \$309,296 and it is her understanding that the Board's goal was to have above \$300,000 in it. She asked if the Board wanted to remove that article. Chairman Golding agrees unless something up in the next few days, we can remove it. No objection heard to remove this. Mr. Pratt was asked for input. He responded that he is Ok with that and appreciates that amount of money being in there in case we have an unpredicted situation. The Budget Committee has no problem removing this as well. Ms. LaPlante reviewed article #9 is the warrant we spoke of and asked if the Board was in a position to make a decision. She feels it is a good balance between investing and returning unspent funds. She would be comfortable with \$75,000 ideally, acknowledging that historically we have returned more but if we are trying to find a balance, she doesn't recommend anything over \$100,000 personally. Chairman Golding noted it would be discussed more during the board's budget discussion. There was a brief discussion of just making that \$85,000 instead of multiple articles. Ms. LaPlante reviewed article #10 is boilerplate language. She will remove article #8 for special education capital reserve. If there are no objections, she will start putting values in the warrant, work on the tax net impact and show how the two break out this year. She asked for any additional feedback. None heard.

## VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public comment section of the agenda was read.

Ms. Browne voiced that she was disappointed that the Board decided not to do anything with the Budget Committee's request to look at options and the viability of our school district. It is the Board and the school districts job to provide the best education for our towns and something the taxpayers can afford. If there are other options out there, we need to look into them. We don't need to ask taxpayers to look into them that is our job. Harry Dailey had his finger on some of these figures and knew we were doing the right thing. We need to do that exercise; we don't need a consultant to get involved. It is a several year process and wouldn't take action right away. You need preliminary data, ask the taxpayers, and see if they want to pursue. If you had that discussion now you would have an emotional discussion. It is our job. I have never been in favor of tuitioning out but we still have the same numbers that we had been educating for the last 12 years and our budget has probably doubled since I started paying attention.

Mr. Pratt called out those online asking if they wanted to comment.

Ms. Mary Golding welcomed Mr. Chenette, the MS is lucky to have you. Great job on negotiations, I know it was not easy and glad everyone reached an agreement. Longer school days mean longer summer! We get to keep our fabulous teachers and staff. During the Budget Committee portion, she asks that people be mindful to use the microphones. She believes Ms. Anzalone was answering a question and she didn't hear some of the questions Ms. LaPlante was asked and didn't hear who asked them. She did however hear someone cut her off. She is unable to attend in person and relies on the microphones to be used to be an active participant. She congratulated all the starfish nominees that is one list of awesomeness. Ms. Jessica Hill has a beautiful brain, has boundless energy and creativity, you are a super rock starfish! Principal Fuller, I am so proud of you, everything you have on your plate and you worked so hard for this. I am happy to be in your presence. Thank you everyone for all you are doing.

The last joint session will be January 23, which is the last one before the public hearing.

*A MOTION was made by Mr. Vanderhoof and SECONDED by Ms. Alley to adjourn the Budget Committee session at 8:04pm. Voting: all aye, motion carried.*

## IX. BOARD BUDGET DISCUSSION

Chairman Golding voiced not wanting to talk about warrant article #7 without Mr. Allen present. The next Facilities Committee meeting is January 8, at 6pm. Chairman Golding asked Ms. LaPlante regarding article #9, her original recommendation was \$75,000, did she want to change that to \$85,000. Ms. LaPlante voiced, noting wanting to tread lightly with her response, if the intent is to truly start building capital and not to earmark it for specific projects then she thinks the first year we draft this article, it is not transparent to use those funds to supplement the paving. She thinks there will be mistrust and does not think that is the goal. She wants to see this brought up in future years. If we have any catastrophic failures, we don't have any funds to do anything. If the goal is to avoid spikes and take care of projects then this should be the narrative the Board should establish and continue. She does not support \$85,000 for paving; that is her personal, professional feedback. Ms. Anzalone agrees. It was discussed that they want a warrant for \$75,000 from unspent funds and another for \$85,000. Ms. LaPlante clarified the Facilities Committee is asking for \$85,000. Mr. Lavoie questioned if that is included in the \$250,000 they are asking for. Ms. LaPlante spoke her disconnect is that she has heard over the last 2 years multiple, and strong opinions if the project is on the CIP for "X" amount if it is over that amount then you should do a warrant article for that amount. This year though it appears there is a request to increase the funding in the CIP, increase the project cost which seems to go against everything I have been hearing over the last 2 years and what the intent of what the CIP is supposed to do. If you look at the draft wording on the CIP policy it is not to change the prices on the CIP. If the goal and objective is to do the paving, she recommends taking the \$85,000 from the CIP and do a supplemental article for the \$170,000 or whatever it is to make that balance. She thinks that is the most transparent, that follows the narrative that has been presented for years now. She does not recommend a warrant article for \$85,000 for paving; she does not recommend increasing the allotment just to increase the funding for the paving. She clarified the total project in the CIP for the project has been budgeted for \$85,000. The funding request for FY 25 is to increase it to add a second bucket of \$85,000. It was asked if we should add another line for \$85,000 on the CIP. Ms. LaPlante does not think it is transparent. A question was raised if it would still be transparent if we told them what we would spend the funds on. Ms. LaPlante explains right now what we have is money in, money out. Discussion continued on this matter including Ms. Cloutier-Cabral voicing that it was not her understanding to make two lines on the CIP. It was to ask the town do we want to do this now or do it when it is due. She thinks it is important to present to the town what needs to be done and however we fund it that is what we do. We present here are the benefits doing it now and here is the risk of doing it later. It is not to be part of the CIP it is to help pay for a project that is on the CIP. Discussion included including it is like the gym windows it was \$61,000 and we know now it will cost more. A question was raised who decided that \$85,000 was good for the parking. Ms. LaPlante responds, it was added many years ago. Mr. Erb has been working with paving vendors, he can have phone conversations and verbal quotes but not able to get any written quotes. Mr. Erb noted Continental won't talk to him until after the holidays and the other vendor it's the same thing. There is only one so far who has come out but still didn't provide a written quote. Ms. Cloutier-

Cabral voiced when they are plowing up here it can cause damage to the vehicles and the cracks continue and will be more expensive in the future. She has received feedback from the plow person and others walking. Chairman Golding noted we are asking for a lot of money this year. It would be better if we had firm quotes. Ms. Cloutier-Cabral agrees but looks at it as an offer to the voters, do you want to do it this way or that way. That is what district meeting is for. All the stuff we are working on all year won't do us any good if we won't reveal them. You can give them all the information that we went over and have them decide, we will need to show photos. They might say wait a year or two. It was noted that this is confusing and it was reviewed again. We have a line for \$85,000 in the CIP for paving the main lot at WLC but it will actually cost much more. We are asking to raise \$85,000 this year and \$85,000 next year. We are looking to do it early, as it may be beneficial. It means moving it up on the CIP but sometimes you have to do that Ms. Cloutier-Cabral noted. For example, the boilers are not being done in the original year. A question was raised how much we have saved. Ms. LaPlante confirms she can't answer that, there has never been a built out amount that we have for each year. She explained how it should work. What has happened is that money is spent each year so that no money is left over. At the end of FY 24, we will have \$59,000. We are raising that and asking for more. If it was built correctly and had baseline capital, it would be for future projects but we don't have that. Discussion continued. Ms. LaPlante confirms we don't have permission for a rainy day fund, the (operating budget) funds laps on June 30. Certain types of funds such as capital reserve don't lapse but can only be used for that specific purpose, specific to which the warrant is created. It was questioned if Chairman Golding is thinking that since we have a large ask this year that we should hold off on this. Chairman Golding is not necessarily saying that, he wants solid, correct amounts. It was noted for those who have not been here for a handful of years it seems that the way it was done was to pool up an amount of money with nothing earmarked for projects and the way it should be done is that there is an end goal to do the project. For example, paving would cost \$200,000 you would ask for \$25,000 each year until you have that amount for the project. Ms. Cloutier-Cabral added the other issue is that when we get to that year these quote are outdated. The vendors won't come because they know it will take us so long to do the job we are the last on the list from what she understands. Chairman Golding voiced he would be more comfortable having the warrant article discussion when the Chair of the Facilities Committee is present, January 9.

## **X. POLICIES-1<sup>ST</sup> READ**

### **a. JLCJ-Concussions and Head Injuries**

Ms. Lavallee reported this is a 1<sup>st</sup> read of this policy. Changes were made to bring it in compliance with the law. If the policy moves forward, there will be a policy withdrawal, as this policy will replace it. No objection heard to bring this back for a 2<sup>nd</sup> reading.

## **XI. ACTION ITEMS**

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

*A MOTION was made by Ms. Anzalone and SECONDED by Ms. Cloutier-Cabral to approve the minutes of November 28, 2023 as written.*

*Voting: all aye, motion carried.*

## **XII. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **i. Facilities**

Ms. Cloutier-Cabral reported they met last Tuesday, went over what we discussed already. The other thing they are looking at is the gym windows. We do have a quote for that, there is a fiberglass option that we recommend or Mr. Erb recommends. The b-wing bathrooms are taking longer than expected but supposed to be done by Christmas. The art room counter tops, and grease traps are looking to be done by Christmas break. The architect is coming the 1<sup>st</sup> week of January and show the drawings. The tennis court surface work won't be done by district meeting, as the weather was an issue. That is the next phase; there has been fence work and site work done. The gym floor, the lines are on and looking to be completed around Christmas. The committee talked about the boilers and whether to go with propane conversion or wood. If they went with wood, it would cost significantly more with the components that go along with that, vacuum system and auger. Propane is looking like the best option. Ms. LaPlante added the quote is for \$250,000 and the tank work would be done at no charge for us. Mr. Erb is waiting on 2 additional quotes. Ms. Cloutier-Cabral noted the committee supported propane because even if there was a long-term benefit of wood, we still don't have the funds for it. She asked if there was a consensus of the Board to go with propane. Mr. Lavoie feels it is the most economical. Chairman Golding agrees to go with propane. There was no objection heard to go with propane and Chairman Golding directed administration to go with propane, get 3 quotes and get it down with ESSER funds we have. Ms. LaPlante confirms we do not need to appropriate additional funds at this time that she can see. Mr. Erb spoke of the quote situation, he thinks it will cost about \$244,000-\$247,000 but has a quote for \$260,000. Discount Oil will throw in the tank and dig it all for free and no one has ever beat their fuel price. He voiced frustration with the situation. Ms. LaPlante noted that we need to add in some cost for additional ESSER things that we need to do. She will get a price and the Board can vote at the next meeting. Ms. Cloutier-Cabral spoke of the paving, we have a quote that is years old, the paving is 23 years old and we can crack seal for a temporary fix about \$40,000. We are close to presenting the CIP we have been working on but not quite there yet. We are looking to have it ready for the next meeting in January. The base price for the gym windows is \$64,000. We want to have \$250,000 in the warrant article and another for \$85,000 if you want us to do it now or not. It was a productive meeting. Clarification was asked for regarding the boilers. Chairman Golding clarified Ms. LaPlante has said the funds need to be structured a certain way and it will be more than \$260,000. It was questioned if we could tell the vendor we want to work with them and start working on that or at least accept their quote. Ms. LaPlante explained we have to wait because it falls under the

construction approval process. She is reluctant to sign a commitment in this case. Once we get all the approvals it is about 14-28 days to get the paperwork completed. Mr. Erb has been transparent with the vendors on the process we have to go through. It was asked if we can get something signed with them with the understanding we will accept the quote, it is good for a number of days, and it won't change and we are not obligated if there is an issue. Ms. LaPlante will look into that. Ms. Lavallee noted she was reviewing the bidding requirements in the policy and it appears if we made 3 attempts to get quotes and are not getting information back then the Board has the right to waive the formality of continuing to search. Ms. LaPlante confirms we have the funding obligated in ESSER but need the formal approval. She can move forward with that now that we have a fuel source.

*A MOTION was made by Ms. Anzalone and SECONDED by Mr. Lavoie to allow Mr. Erb and Ms. LaPlante (administration) accept the bid (\$260,000 boilers/propane) contingent upon getting the approval for the ESSER paperwork.*  
*Voting: five ayes; one nay from Chairman Golding, motion carried.*

A discussion was had on the gym windows, the CIP shows \$61,000, and the committee had discussed \$61,000 and \$20,000 coming from the operating budget for fiberglass. Mr. Erb recommended fiberglass the committee went with glass to get it done. Ms. LaPlante confirms that at the end of the meeting there was a shift to go glass with the base bid of \$64,000. The additional funds will come from the operating budget (\$61,000 coming from CIP and balance from operating budget). It was confirmed the base bid is \$64,500 with Granite State Glass, glass windows. Ms. LaPlante noted we are waiting on 2 quotes, the run around to get the quotes take a lot of time. The quote for fiberglass is \$91,000. There is a 3-month lead-time for materials. She confirms the quote for glass is \$64,500 and is firm.

*A MOTION was made by Mr. Lavoie and SECONDED by Ms. Cloutier-Cabral to accept the quote for \$64,500 for glass replacement windows in the WLC gym.*  
*Voting: all aye; motion carried. (Ms. Anzalone was not present)*

It was noted since that is grant funded (ESSER) the procurement rules are much more specific. Ms. LaPlante wants to analyze DAF-3 to make sure she understands it so she can provide better information on January 9 (regarding the boilers \$260,000 quote).

#### **ii. Budget Liaison**

Ms. Foss reported forwarding the minutes from the Budget Committee's November 28 meeting to members. While she was there, most of the discussion she felt was regarding the FY 25 budget and a lot of questions about some increases like \$83,000 for classroom tutors. Mr. Lavallee mentioned he couldn't find any specifics when it came to breaking down items for grants when he looked at other schools to see what they did. There was a lot of discussion of our SPED grants and where all that money was going and the concern was that, it was not as transparent as it should be. Ms. Maki mentioned taxpayers should see where money is being spent. Ms. Foss noted part of the SPED director's job is to determine the need and balance that. We should be grateful we have someone who is experienced enough to do that. She assumes everyone got the minutes. She voiced that Ms. LaPlante communicated with Chairman Jones about some of the specific increases. Ms. LaPlante had emailed him with the information which hammered out the reason for increases and how much, and what happened. Ms. Foss felt the email helped a lot. Eighty-three thousand dollars seems like a lot but it happens and sometimes especially over the last few years, there have been some crazy things with the budget and it has been hard to get employees. Ms. LaPlante noted she would have all accounts ready for the January meeting.

#### **iii. Policy Committee**

Ms. Lavallee reported the committee met last week and they continued to work on the Facilities Committee Policy. She had the NHSBA attorney look at it, and she cross-referenced it with current policies and legal requirements. She made significant changes. It was discussed at the committee meeting. She will send it back to Mr. Allen for feedback and hopefully they can finalize what they are looking for and get it back to the Policy Committee so that it can go to the Board. Work was completed on 8 policies and those will go to the Board for review. The first was presented tonight and the following 7 will come in January pending what we have on the agenda as some are lengthy she may push it off for more time to review. Some are regarding crowdfunding, social media, and significant updates in the attendance policy. She attended the webinar of legislative updates and policy changes. We have a few left with minor changes completed likely in February. The business office requested to have the transportation policies looked at. She will work with Ms. LaPlante to get those done within the next month and see what policies we can combine. Work has been done on the emergency policies and completed an audit last month taking all the NHSBA policies that were withdrawn in the last 10 years. We have 11 that need to be reviewed and possibly withdrawn. Those will go to the committee next month. The next meeting is January 18.

#### **iv. Negotiations Committee**

Ms. Anzalone reported we voted to accept the contract.

### **XIII. RESIGNATIONS / APPOINTMENTS / LEAVES**

#### **a. Appointment-Dale Chenette-MS Math Teacher**

Mr. Pratt reviewed the recommendation for appointment.

*A MOTION was made by Ms. Cloutier-Cabral and SECONDED by Ms. Foss to accept the recommendation and appoint Mr. Dale Chenette as MS Math Teacher at WLC, salary of \$71,000, Masters+20, step 18.*

492 *Voting: all aye; motion carried.*

493  
494 A question was raised who Mr. Chenette will replace. Principal Ronning responded Ms. Morrow and some HS classes as well.  
495 There are some teachers teaching extra classes like Mr. Kiliulis and he will help with those and an engineering class.

496  
497 **XIV. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

498 The public comment section of the agenda was read. Mr. Pratt called out all those online asking if they wanted to comment.  
499 There were no public comments.

500  
501 **XV. SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

502 Ms. Cloutier-Cabral thanked Ms. Anzalone for doing a great job on the negotiations and all those on the committee with her did  
503 a great job presenting and great job reaching an agreement.

504  
505 **XVI. NON-PUBLIC SESSION RSA 91-A: 3 II (A) (C)**

506 *A MOTION was made by Ms. Cloutier-Cabral and SECONDED by Ms. Lavallee to enter Non-Public Session to review the non-*  
507 *public minutes RSA 91-A: 3 II (C) at 9:02pm.*

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

509  
510 **RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION**

511 The Board entered public session at 9:11pm.

512  
513 *A MOTION was made to seal the non-public session minutes by Mr. Lavoie and SECONDED by Ms. Foss.*

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

515  
516 **XVII. ADJOURNMENT**

517 *A MOTION was made by Ms. Lavallee and SECONDED by Ms. Foss to adjourn the Board meeting at 9:12pm.*

518 *Voting: all aye, motion carried.*

519  
520 *Respectfully submitted,*

521 *Kristina Fowler*

522