

WINNISQUAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Minutes of the Annual Meeting

March 19, 2016

Pursuant to the Winnisquam Regional School District Warrant, the Annual School District meeting was convened in the gymnasium of the Winnisquam Regional High School in the Town of Tilton in said District on the 19th day of March 2016. School District Moderator Kent Finemore called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Jasen Stock, School Board Chair. Moderator Finemore made mention that Nancy Trowsdale has babysitting services available for those who need it. He also asked that we take a moment of silence to thank the brave men and women who serve our country.

Moderator Kent Finemore swore in Assistant Moderators. At this time Moderator Kent Finemore announced election results and added that there are no bond votes.

Jasen Stock, School Board Chair, introduced the School Board members and Nina Gardner, Budget Committee Chair, introduced the Budget Committee members.

Dr. Tammy Davis, Superintendent, introduced herself and the principals and other department heads introduced themselves.

Jasen Stock gave a presentation highlighting an overview of the budget process and how the School Board looks at the metrics behind it:

1. Though enrollment has dropped, staffing has leveled off. Today, there is smaller group learning in areas of special education and accelerated learning, such as STEM, technology and online courses which require more hands on and intense learning by staff, including paraprofessionals and special education teachers.
2. Curriculums are very different today than in years past, requiring more math, science and technology (STEM) in order to advance in the workforce. Starting with the third grade, students are expected to create websites, electronic portfolios and to learn coding and engineering. In order to succeed in today's workforce, students must be proficient in computer technology.
3. Results indicate that graduation rates have increased, dropout rates have decreased and there is an increase in enrollment in both two and four year colleges.

Nina also gave a power point presentation explaining the dollars and cents of how the budget is reached. She started off by saying the budget is up 1.44% from last year which is an increase of \$348,759.00. The factors being:

- a. Stable enrollment.
- b. Health/Dental insurance increase of \$100,000.00.
- c. Adding High School, JV and Varsity lacrosse for boys and girls at a cost of \$28,000.00.
- d. Non-collective bargaining merit reserve.
- e. In 2016-17, re-purposing funds from a math coach to a special education teacher based on student needs.
- f. In Sanbornton Central, the School Board voted in favor to replace the current behavioral tutor to a behavioral teacher specialist.
- g. Adding a district math interventionist with a school improvement data analyst to recognize the gaps in student achievement needs.
- h. Eliminate DTZ and go back to an in-house position with the hire of Rob Berry, Facilities Director.
- i. Adding the title of Special Education Coordinator of Student Services to current staff member with a slight increase in salary.
- j. Eliminate full-time principal at Union Sanborn (salary to be divided between Principal and Special Education Director) and half-time kindergarten position.
- k. Adding Network Administrator in the technology department using savings from staff turnover.
- l. Re-organization of business office by adding a human resources professional, increasing hours to current office staff and adding a full-time A/P specialist position.
- m. A \$210,720.00 teacher salary increase.
- n. A \$161,525.00 merit pool increase.
- o. Adding a Director of Student Improvement to address the problem in the graduation rate which dropped significantly last year. This person's goal would be to monitor the high risk students on a daily basis and aid in making sure they graduate.

- p. Decreases in employee turnover and special education re-organization.
- q. A decrease of \$75,000.00 in technical services.
- r. Decreases in gas, diesel and utilities.
- s. Decrease in books and periodicals.
- t. A decrease of \$38,000.00 in debt services.
- u. A decrease of \$20,000.00 in vocational tuition.

Which brings a total of \$572,347.00 dollars in budget reduction.

Nina went on to explain how the state budgets \$3,561.27 per student for each community for an adequate education. Added to this amount is a stability fund added in 2012 when the aid distribution method was revised to stabilize aid amounts distributed to towns. The state legislature assessed a 4% reduction in the stability fund for each community for 2017 and the tax impact is broken down by each town:

Northfield, increase of .32 cents (highest amount because of declining enrollment)

Sanbornton, increase of .2 cents

Tilton, increase of .4 cents

The impact on the tax rate for each town for the total budget is as follows:

Northfield - .89 cent increase

Sanbornton - .7 cent increase

Tilton - .29 cent increase

Moderator Finemore read Article 1 as follows:

Article-1

To see if the Winnisquam Regional School District will vote to raise and appropriate the School Board's and Budget Committee's recommended amount of **Twenty Six Million Three Hundred Fifty One Thousand Six Hundred Six dollars [\$26,351.606]** for the support of schools, for the payment of salaries for the district officials and agents, and for the payment of statutory obligations of the District. The article does not include appropriations voted in other warrant articles.

[Majority vote required]

This article raises the appropriations for the General Fund, plus Special Revenue Funds for Food Service and Local, State and Federal Grants.

Motion: Motion made by Nina Gardner, seconded by Jasen Stock.

Testimony: *Jasen Stock* explained that a lot of time and energy goes into this budget and both the School Board and the Budget committees are in complete agreement.

Greg Hill recommended a rebuttal section and continued by stating that Northfield is facing a huge tax whack by the 4% stabilization each year which he fears will be gone in five years, making Northfield a ghost town.

He then proposed an amendment to Article 1 to read as follows:

Article-1 Amendment 1

To see if the Winnisquam Regional School District will vote to raise and appropriate the School Board's and Budget Committee's recommended amount of **Twenty Six Million Three Hundred Twenty One Thousand Six Hundred Six dollars [\$26,321.606]** for the support of schools, for the payment of salaries for the district officials and agents, and for the payment of statutory obligations of the District. The article does not include appropriations voted in other warrant articles.

This amendment is a reduction of \$30,000.00 to recommended amount in Article 1.

Amendment seconded by Leif Martinson.

Testimony: *Greg Hill* spoke to article by saying he believes lacrosse should be a separate warrant article and added that this is not good stewardship of our money. He questioned why the proposed budgeted amount of \$28,000.00 remains the same even though there are not enough students interested for a JV team. He questioned why we are moving from an academic to and athletic school district.

Kevin LaChapelle agreed with Greg and made a point that there are no students present to even fight for a lacrosse program.

Nina Gardner clarified that Jon Cilley, budget committee member, made a motion to eliminate the \$28,000.00 for lacrosse, but it did not pass and that she also had concerns about the program.

Barbara Wirth stated she is also against the lacrosse program, and believes it should be a grass roots process. She also reiterated the fact that there are no students fighting for this program. Barbara also voiced her concerns about potential injuries.

Leif Martinson expressed his agreement with Kevin and Barbara that it should be a separate warrant article and should not be in the budget. He also spoke to the 5% merit pool explaining that we are all assuming everyone receives a 5% increase when in fact, the average increase is 3.4% and should be reflected in the budget.

Sean Goodwin defended the lacrosse program stating that it fills a void in the spring season where extra-curricular activities are needed and includes both girls and boys. He also added that lacrosse can be competitive with surrounding communities.

Valerie Kher emphasized that there is a disproportionate amount of attention spent on athletics vs. academics/arts. She also stated that we need to be more competitive at a collegiate level. She voiced her concern over the \$97,000.00 salary for, what she called 'a babysitter', to make sure seniors are meeting the graduation requirements and questioned why we do not hire more guidance counselors for this purpose.

David Court asked if someone could explain what is meant by competition in general schools.

Jasen Stock answered by saying that as a district, we compete not only in the workforce, but also with other schools, military, human resources and staff.

Nina Gardner added that we compete with other students, as well. She went on to say that other school districts do offer lacrosse.

Brain Gallagher stated that we compete with other schools in many areas, including a strong curriculum, arts and sports. He also suggested that the School Board and Budget Committee put a place holder on the lacrosse program for now and re-allocate the funds.

Tim Lang argued that after numerous meetings and presentations which are open to all, the committee has received no feedback. He went on to say that more athletic programs result in increased academic acumen. Offering multi-seasonal sports for both girls and boys would also address Title IX issues and reduce failure rates. He also commended Zach Medlock on his work and on his spring sports presentations. Tim finished by saying that parents look at both academic and athletic programs offered by school districts.

Earl Leighton thanked Greg Hill for bringing up the point that the deciding factor for people buying property in these communities is the tax rate.

Carl Ulrich questioned why we are talking about lacrosse when there is not a lacrosse club, as in football.

Heather Goodwin commended the School Board and Budget Committee for taking ownership of the lacrosse program from the beginning.

Marla Davis motioned to call the question and was seconded by *Tim Lang*.

Request for secret ballot followed with results as follows:

In favor of Amendment 1 to Article 1: 74

Opposed: 47

Amendment passes and is protected.

Lynn Chong questioned the furniture and equipment expenditure of \$179,000.00.

Cheryl Somma explained that the Middle School saw the least improvement from the 2003 expansion and is in need of new furniture and technology equipment. She added that equipment needs to be replaced in the custodial department. Cheryl added that a detailed listing is available, if requested.

Lynn Chong motioned for a second amendment to Article 1 to remove \$40,000.00 earmarked for purchase of new furniture at which point *moderator Finemore* explained that she cannot dictate where money is to be taken from with specificity.

Greg Hill seconded motion.

No discussion.

In favor of Amendment 2 to Article 1: 48

Opposed: 61

Amendment fails.

Greg Hill asked what the new graduation coordinator does that guidance cannot accomplish?

Jasen Stock explained that in order to do a better job in fulfilling graduation requirements, the board recognized we needed to take the next step and that the guidance department with its many facets could not accomplish alone.

Kevin LaChapelle motioned to call to question, seconded by Keith Murray.

Article 1 as amended passes and is protected.

Moderator Finemore read Article 2 as follows:

Article-2

To see if the Winnisquam Regional School District will vote to approve the cost item included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Winnisquam Regional School Board and the Winnisquam Paraprofessional Employees AFSCME Local 3158, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

Year	Estimated Increase
2016-2017	\$44,978
2017-2018	\$33,788
2018-2019	\$38,345

And further to raise and appropriate **Forty Four Thousand Nine Hundred Seventy Eight dollars [\$44,978]** for the upcoming fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels paid in the prior fiscal year.

[Majority vote required]

The School Board recommends this appropriation 9-0

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation 9-0

Motion: Motion made by Trish Sawicki, seconded by Kevin Washburn.

Testimony: *Trish Sawicki* explained how this is a three year proposal beginning July 1st and that we currently have 57 paraprofessionals serving 67 students district wide with one vacancy. This article allows for an increase in the pay rate for experienced staff and for an increase in starting wage by 2.5 % in year one, 3% in year two and 3.5% in year three. Currently, the hourly rate for paraprofessionals is \$10.40.

No discussion.

Voice Vote: Affirmative

Article 2 passes and is protected.

Moderator Finemore read Article 3 as follows:

Article-3

To see if the Winnisquam Regional School District will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of up to **Four Hundred and Fifty Thousand dollars [\$450,000]** to be placed in the Capital Reserve Fund-Building Renovations and Repairs, with such amount to be funded from the June 30, 2016, unreserved fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2016.

[Majority vote required]

The School Board recommends this appropriation 9-0

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation 9-0

This will help maintain a favorable trust fund balance to fund building repairs and improvements in accordance with the District's Capital Improvement Plan.

Motion: Motion made by Tim Lang and seconded by Nina Gardner.

Testimony: *Tim Lang* reiterated that this article represents unspent funds already budgeted.

No discussion.

Voice Vote: Affirmative

Article 3 passes and is protected.

Moderator Finemore read Article 4 as follows:

Article-4

To see if the Winnisquam Regional School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Four Hundred Forty Six Thousand dollars [\$446,000]** for the following purpose:

At the Sanbornton Central School, install a wood burning bio-mass boiler, at the Middle School, install safety devices on the basketball hoop mechanisms, at the High School, renovate the library media center and repair the gym entrance walkway, District-wide, replace the telephone system, repaint and repair the tennis courts and install bleachers for the athletic fields at the High/Middle Campus, and to authorize the withdrawal of **Four Hundred Forty Six Thousand dollars [\$446,000]** from the Capital Reserve Fund-Building Renovations and Repairs created for that purpose.

[Majority vote required]

The School Board recommends this appropriation 9-0

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation 9-0

Motion: Motion moved by Kevin Washburn, seconded by Tim Lang.

Testimony: *Kevin Washburn* addressed the removal of the 8,000 gallon underground tank at Sanbornton Central which has been in since 1995 and combining a new tank with a bio-mass boiler.

Ian Raymond from Sanbornton who serves on the Capital Improvement Planning Commission and on the New Hampshire Wood Energy Council explained how installing a bio-mass boiler would be energy efficient and feasible.

Discussion: *Janice Lindbloom* questioned the \$10,000 to repair and repaint the tennis courts which the school does not use.

Nina Gardner explained that because the courts are on district property we are liable for its upkeep. She further stated that they are being used by the physical education department as well as adults throughout the community.

Karin Wilcox asked for discussion on the other items in Article 4.

Tim Lang addressed the media center and how we need to upgrade to a more technology driven environment for today's digital age.

He also explained how the cement at the high school's gym entrance is in desperate need of repair and the telephone system which is 22 years old needs to be updated with more modern features. Lastly, this article would include adding another set of bleachers by the track and the middle school softball field as there is no place for spectators to sit.

Motion to call the question by Keith Murray and seconded by Jasen Stock.

Voice Vote: Affirmative

Article passes and is protected.

Moderator Finemore read Article 5 as follows:

Article-5

To see if the Winnisquam Regional School District will vote to authorize the School Board to sell the District owned parcel of land off of Bean Hill Road, and create a trust fund into which the proceeds of any sale will be deposited to be used for recreational purposes, consistent with the purpose of the deed. The property is located on Highland Mountain and has no road frontage. It is not used by the District and is subject to a deed restriction limiting its use to recreation.

[Majority vote required]

The School Board recommends this appropriation 9-0

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation 8-1

Motion: Motion moved by Wayne Crowley, seconded by Tim Lang.

Testimony: *Wayne Crowley* explained how the land was given to the school district in 1939 specifically for recreational purposes and that Highland Mountain is currently using it as part of its bike park and would like to purchase it. He went on to say that we need to sell this parcel for liability issues, however the proceeds would go into a trust and would be used for recreational purposes as intended.

Discussion: *Keith Murray* asked about the appraisal value.

Wayne Crowley answered that the assessed value is \$19,500.00 and the district is selling it for \$22,500.00.

Leif Martinson expressed his support of Article 5 as an excellent attraction, saying how the mountain bike park at Highland Mountain has grown in the 10 years since it opened and that they have even partnered with the middle school to offer training and cycling.

Greg Hill asked if the proceeds from this sale could be used to refurbish the tennis courts.

Nina Gardner stated that it would depend on the interpretation of the language tied to the original deed.

David Court shared his support of the transfer of land from a tax taking to tax paying entity.

Nancy Court requested that the proceeds be available to the widest number of students.

Wes Desousa motioned to call the question, seconded by *Jasen Stock*.

Voice Vote: Affirmative.

Article 5 passes and is protected.

Moderator *Finemore* read Article 6 as follows:

Article-6

To see if the district voters will vote to authorize the Winnisquam Regional School District to lease property owned by the District at the Southwick School, 50 Zion Hill Road, Northfield, for the purpose of installing a solar panel array, and to enter into a Power Purchase Agreement, with a term not to exceed twenty years.

[Submitted by Petition]

The School Board recommends this appropriation 9-0

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation 8-1

Motion: Motion moved by *Ian Raymond*, seconded by *Tim Lang*.

Testimony: *Ian Raymond* began by stating there is an estimated \$28,500.00 - \$50,000.00 in grant money available to install a bio-mass boiler at Sanbornton Central.

Mr. Raymond proceeded by speaking of a petitioned warrant article he introduced in 2008 regarding the Honeywell project and how the energy efficiency upgrades has saved the district 1.2 million dollars.

His proposal is a Power Purchase Agreement between Revision Energy and investment partner IGS Generation.

There is no upfront capital expense to the school district and this solar array will provide clean, renewable energy for our students. To explain how the project works, *Mr. Raymond* gave a power point presentation which showed in year six, we would have the option to buy the equipment outright and by year twelve, electricity would be near zero cost to the district. The developer would handle design, permits, finance, installation and maintenance and at no cost to the customer (Southwick School) the developer can then sell electricity back to the customer. Tax incentives, which are not available to a non-taxable entity, are passed on to the district through the power purchase agreement. His presentation further explained that there is no battery storage and that when the sun is shining, excess electricity is sold to the New Hampshire Electric Co-Op in the form of energy credits. When the sun is not shining, we will buy back power from NH Electric Co-Op, using the energy credits. The school can use the power grid like a virtual battery. *Ian* further explained that a Power Purchase Agreement has tax benefits for the developer and is the least cost pathway. This solar panel project is projected to save 1.4 million dollars over its lifetime and is an environmentally friendly renewable energy source that will save tax payers money. Additionally, because more energy is produced in the summer, any additional energy would be banked and used throughout the year.

Greg Hill interjected that solar power does not provide economic freedom without a government subsidy. He also questioned net metering regarding retail vs. wholesale rate.

Ian Raymond responded by saying that the Electric Co-Op has chosen to go above and beyond the current net metering cap.

Margaret LeBrecque asked about the life cycle on the panels and *Mr. Raymond* answered 35-40 years.

David Court asked if the generating companies are happy with this arrangement.

Greg Hill responded saying they are not happy paying retail rates for excess energy. They do not like the net number, but prefer it go to payment of wholesale rate, not net rate.

Ian Raymond replied that the P.U.C. sees benefits to having distributed energy generation rather than centralized generation and that there are several reports showing a value in having solar power on the grid.

Gretchen Wilder and *Karin Wilcox* were concerned how the panels would affect the metal roofs.

Ian Raymond replied there would be no adverse effects as the installation is a clamp on system and would not penetrate the roof.

Wes Desousa asked what we would do if we chose not to purchase system in year six.

Mr. Raymond responded that the contract would continue for the twenty year period and if we decided not to purchase, the equipment would be removed.

Nina Gardner motioned to call to question.

Voice vote: Affirmative

Article 6 passes and is protected.

Moderator Finemore read Article 7 as follows:

Article-7

To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

Nina Gardner gave recognition of Budget Committee members who are stepping down:

Brian Gallagher who served on the board for 5 years.

Keith Murray who served on the board for 2 years and will be joining the School Board Committee.

Jasen Stock, newly elected School Board Chair replacing Michael Gagne, recognized School Board members who are stepping down:

Patricia Sawicki who has served on the committee for 8 years.

Tim Lang and Michael Gagne were also honored for their years of service.

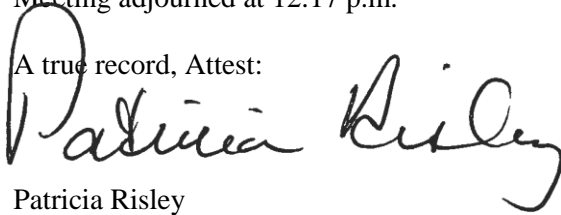
All were presented with plaques.

Kirk Young honored Zach Medlock for his years of service.

Valerie Kher asked that any handouts and power point materials be made available for review before district meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 12:17 p.m.

A true record, Attest:



Patricia Risley
School District Clerk
Winnisquam Regional School District