

WINNISQUAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Minutes of the Annual Meeting

March 23, 2013

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 23rd day of March 2013. School District Moderator Kent Finemore called the meeting to order at 9:12 AM.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Moderator Finemore pointed out the section for non-voters.

Wayne Crowley asked for a moment of silence to honor the brave men and women who serve our country.

Moderator Finemore went over the ground rules and the process of the meeting, asking to limit testimony to five minutes. He also explained ballot vote rules and asked that amendments to articles be presented in writing.

Moderator Finemore took a moment to recognize the ladies volleyball team for their second championship in three years and the spirit team's recent win. Other athletic achievements mentioned were Austin Hunt who was named to the Shriners game and Mason Taylor who made the CHAD East/West game.

Moderator Finemore introduced himself and District Clerk, Patricia Risley. Moderator Finemore introduced Mike Gagne, School Board Chairperson, who introduced the School Board members present – Jasen Stock, Patricia Sawicki, Wayne Crowley, Timothy Lang, Tom Fulweiler, Sean Goodwin, Julie Lonergan and Kevin Washburn

School Budget Committee Chairperson, Nina Gardner introduced herself and then introduced the Budget Committee members present – Leif Martinson, Keith Murray, Brian Gallagher, Dana Nute, Lance Turgeon Timothy Pearson and Wayne Brock. She also noted that Budget Committee member Wesley DeSousa would not be returning and would be missed. It was also mentioned that the Tilton Budget Committee has an open seat for a three year term and any interested candidates should submit a letter of interest to Nina Gardner or Michael Gagne.

Moderator Finemore then introduced Dr. Tammy Davis, Superintendent in her seventh year, who introduced Jim O'Shaughnessy, School District Attorney and the SAU administrators present, Cheryl Somma, Janice Grenier, Lori Krueger, Bonnie Jean Kuras, Cynthia Proulx, Suzan Gannett, Andrew Brauch, Rich Hines, Pam Miller, Joseph Stone, Jonathan Dupuis, Kevin Sousa and Zachary Medlock.

Dr. Tammy Davis briefed everyone on the recent safety walk-throughs and training and having worked closely with Tilton police and fire chiefs', addressing enhancements and safety issues. Some of these include: replacing blinds and locks, replacing the high school west wing doors, installing electronic locks in hallways, video surveillance, addressing blind spots, upgrading radios and card readers and taking out the high school track to update for safety.

Dr. Davis also took a minute to recognize the accomplishments of the business office for its flawless audit. Additionally, she discussed the district's long range strategic plan which includes a long term building maintenance plan. She mentioned that a new demographic study adopted by New Hampshire shows a shift in change to the common core curriculum. NECAP is being replaced by a Smarter Balanced testing program, integrating technology performance as an instructional tool with performance based real world examples and deeper content. Also, revamping the evaluation system will be implemented this year. Lastly, Dr. Davis took a moment to celebrate the high school staff for improvements on reading scores which are up by 16% and math and writing scores which increased by 11%.

Moderator Finemore read Article 1 as follows:

Article-1

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:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Estimated Increase</u>
2014	\$30,833

And further to raise and appropriate **Thirty Thousand Eight Hundred Thirty Three Dollars [\$ 30,833]** 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.

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation.

Motion: A motion was made by Tim Lang and seconded by Patricia Sawicki to bring the article to the floor for discussion.

Discussion: *Patricia Sawicki* explained that a one year agreement at a cost of \$30,833 gives 60 paraprofessionals a 1% increase in hourly rate, eliminates two personal days and adds five sick days.

Lisa Swancott questioned why this was a warrant article and was told that the article was required by law as it is considered a negotiation.

Vote: Affirmative. Article 1 passes.

Moderator Finemore read Article 2 as follows:

Article-2

To see if the Winnisquam Regional School District will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of up to **Four Hundred 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, 2013, unreserved fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2013.

[Majority vote required]

The School Board recommends this appropriation.

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation.

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

Motion: A motion was made by Kevin Washburn and seconded by Tim Lang to bring the article to the floor for discussion.

Discussion: *Kevin Washburn* explained this has been funded by fund balances for several years and is intended to be used for major repairs and improvements including new roofing. The fund currently has \$907,117.

Testimony: *Joe Plessner* questioned the dollar amount as it differs from the report of trust funds with has an estimated 1.2 million. *Cheryl Somma* explained that as of the end of January 2013, \$450,000 was deposited in the fund from last year's fund balance and part of this expenditure will include the access road to the athletic fields which is estimated to cost \$48,000. *Kathryn Ferrara* questioned if there is a threshold and does this fund go beyond repairs and maintenance than is actually budgeted. *Mike Gagne* replied that the threshold for cost items is \$5,000 before going into the capital reserve fund. In looking at a recent study on student demographics, *Greg Hill* suggested the district hold off on expensive roof repairs. *Mike Gagne* said the district will look at recent trends in student demographics, however, Southwick School is not one of those facilities on our short list.

Vote: Affirmative. Article 2 passes.

Moderator Finemore read Article 3 as follows:

Article-3

To see if the Winnisquam Regional School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Six Hundred Fourteen Thousand Two Hundred Eleven Dollars [\$614,211]** for the following purpose: at Southwick School, install a standing seam metal roof on the south-facing sections, at all the buildings, infrastructure improvements to ensure safety and security for students and staff, and to authorize the withdrawal of **Six Hundred Fourteen Thousand Two Hundred Eleven Dollars [\$614,211]** from the Capital Reserve Fund-Building Renovations and Repairs created for that purpose.

[Majority vote required]

The School Board recommends this appropriation.

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation.

Motion: A motion was made by Jasen Stock and seconded by Tim Lang to bring the article to the floor for discussion.

Discussion: *Jasen Stock* explained the intended roofing project at Southwick School is part of the five year Capital Improvement Plan which includes any project over \$10,000.

Testimony: *Ernie Roy* commented that Southwick School has been in existence for nineteen years and asked about the life expectancy of a new roof in which the reply was fifty years.

Vote: Affirmative. Article 3 passes.

Moderator Finemore read Article 4 as follows:

Article-4

To see if the Winnisquam Regional School District will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of up to **Twenty Five Thousand Dollars, [\$25,000]** to be placed in the Special Education Capital Reserve Fund, said sum to be paid from the June 30, 2013 unreserved fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2013.

[Majority vote required]

The School Board recommends this appropriation.

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation.

Annually, the district budgets an estimated amount in the hopes of covering unanticipated costs that may arise in the area of Special Education. Per RSA 186-C: 13, the district is liable for all expenses incurred in this area, regardless of budgeted amounts. Therefore, the potential exists that an unanticipated placement could pose a considerable burden on the district's budget. This reserve fund was established July 1, 2011 per RSA 35:16-a to enable the district to set aside funds to assist with the expenditure in the event of unanticipated costs.

Motion: Motion made by Julie Lonergan and seconded by Tim Lang to bring the article to the floor for discussion.

Testimony: *Julie Lonergan* explained this fund was established in 2011 to fund unexpected special educational needs. The current balance is \$100,294 and the Board has a target of \$150,000 - \$200,000 for this account.

Discussion: *Lisa Swancott* questioned the balance. She does not recommend this appropriation. *Kathryn Ferrara* asked about the building for special needs and where the money went. *Mike Gagne* responded that the money was not spent and was therefore, returned to the voters or to other warrant articles.

Vote: Standing vote as moderator in doubt.

In favor: 75

Opposed: 5

Article 4 passes.

Moderator Finemore read Article 5 as follows:

Article-5

To see if the District will vote to discontinue the Underground Tank – Capital Reserve Fund established by act of the District in 2006 warrant article 6, for the purpose of future maintenance and upgrade of the diesel and gasoline tanks and equipment located at Northfield Park Street Garage. Said funds, with accumulated interest to date of withdrawal, are to be transferred to the District's General Fund. Article 6 is contingent upon this article passing.

[Majority vote required]

The School Board recommends this appropriation.

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation.

Motion: A motion was made by Wayne Crowley and seconded by Tim Lang to bring the article to the floor for discussion.

Testimony: *Wayne Crowley* explained that the Underground Storage Tank bank account was established in 2006 to maintain and/or replace diesel and gasoline tanks which are located at the Park Street garage in Northfield. The new intergovernmental agreement approved at last year's district meeting granted control of these funds to the school district. Articles 5 and 6 are to close the old account and establish a new account for the same purpose. This move will have no impact on the budget.

Discussion: None

Vote: Affirmative. Article 5 passes.

At this time moderator Kent Finemore took a moment to recognize the following House of Representatives elected officials present: Joy Tilton from Northfield, Ian Raymond from Sanbornton and Leigh Webb from Franklin.

Moderator Finemore read Article 6 as follows:

Article-6

To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Eighteen Thousand Nine Hundred Eighty Nine Dollars [18,989.00]**, to deposit in the Underground Storage Tank special bank account [pursuant to the intergovernmental agreement between the District, the Town of Northfield, the Town of Tilton and the Tilton Northfield Fire & EMS, and other municipal users ratified on March 24, 2012]. Said sum to come from the June 30, 2013 fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2013; (balance from the discontinued Underground Tank – Capital Reserve Fund). This article is contingent upon article 5 passing.

[Majority vote required]

The School Board recommends this appropriation.

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation.

Motion: A motion was made by Kevin Washburn and seconded by Nina Gardner to bring the article to the floor for discussion.

Testimony: *Wayne Crowley* explained again that this article takes the funds from Article 5 and moves them to a general fund for the same purpose.

Discussion: None

Vote: Affirmative. Article 6 passes.

Moderator Finemore read Article 7 as follows:

Article-7

To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **One Dollar [\$1.00]** for the Winnisquam Football Program. The funds will be used to ensure the safety of participants and the viability of the program.

[Majority vote required]

The School Board recommends this appropriation.

The Budget Committee does not recommend this appropriation.

Request made for secret ballot.

Motion: A motion was made by Sean Goodwin and seconded by Julie Lonergan to bring the article to the floor for discussion. *Sean Goodwin* requested a proposed amendment to Article 7 to read as follows: **To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Dollar [\$1.00] for the 2013-2014 school year for the Winnisquam Football Program. The funds will be used to ensure the safety of participants and the viability of the program.**

Motion made to table amendment and seconded by Kevin Waldron.

Motion fails.

Discussion: *Leif Martinson* questioned that this restriction would allow the School Board to step in and fund the program for ensuing school year.

Sean Goodwin mentioned that the Board has been made aware of the liability in safety issues and needs to address this liability. Liabilities would include the proper reconditioning of helmets and playing off campus.

Vote on Amendment [1] to Article 7 passes.

Mr. Leighton questioned the phrase 'viability of the program' which he feels is too broad of a statement. *Nina Gardner*, Budget Committee chair reiterated that the Budget Committee was opposed (5-4) to this article as read and agreed with amended article as it would limit viability to one year. *David Court* stated he is against the methodology, firmly against intramural sports in schools and believes a football program would be very expensive. He also brought up the national controversy on football and head injuries. *Mr. Court* also questioned what sports have to do with education. *Brian Gallagher* expressed concern in the planning process which needs to be further studied. He also agreed with several others that the viability of the program is too broad a phrase and questioned the feasibility of where the team could play. *Mr. Gallagher* stated that the Budget Committee had discussions about the importance of a long term plan if the voters plan to take on the football team within the district. Both the Budget Committee and School Board agree that it is important to determine the total cost of the football team before going forward. *Valerie Kehr* believes the \$1.00 line item is a blank check to do whatever the School Board chooses and is disappointed that the focus is on athletics and not on music and the arts which do not receive the same attention. *Ken Gorrell* shared the same sentiment regarding Valerie Kehr's 'blank check' argument and added that the schools' poor academic scores should be discussed. *Sean Goodwin* explained that the Board has been made aware of the liability in safety issues and needs to address this liability. He also stated that these liabilities would allow the district to be sure the equipment is properly maintained. *Tim Snow*, President of Friends of Winnisquam Football, reiterated the fact that everyone is looking at the safety of the sport and finding ways to make it safer. He thanked the School Board and the Budget Committee for being proactive and added that he believes sports and academics go hand in hand.

Motion: A motion was made by Lance Turgeon and seconded by Leif Martinson to amend the wording to include 2013-2014 school year and omit 'and the viability of the program.'

Amendment 2 proposed to read: **To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Dollar [\$1.00] for the 2013-2014 school year for the Winnisquam Football Program. The funds will be used to ensure the safety of participants.**

Vote: In favor: 86

Opposed: 57

Amendment to Article 7 passes.

Call to question by Barbara Foster and seconded by Ryann Despina. Request made for secret ballot.

Ballot Vote: In favor: 80

Opposed: 66

Article 7 passes as amended.

Moderator Finemore read Article 8 as follows:

Article-8

To see if the Winnisquam Regional School District will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee's recommended amount of **Twenty Four Million Five Hundred Sixty Nine Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Eight Dollars [24,569,268]** 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 School Board recommends **Twenty Four Million Six Hundred Eighty Four Thousand Two Hundred Thirty Five Dollars [24,684,235]**. 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: A motion was made by Nina Gardner and seconded by Tim Lang to bring the article to the floor for discussion. *Nina Gardner* gave a power point presentation showing items of interest in the budget which is up 2.01% over last year equaling a \$451,648 increase. She explained that the increase is driven essentially by health insurance and retirement funding. She added that a pool for merit pay increases for 43 non-union employees in the amount of 4% has been included as a new item in the budget and a new position for Assistant Superintendent has also been added, replacing the Director of Curriculum.

Motion: *Lisa Swancott* was appalled at the fact that merit raises were not included as a warrant article and proposed an amendment to reduce salaries to 2% or \$24,524,268 and seconded by Greg Hill.

Kathryn Ferrara questioned why the budget keeps increasing as student population declines. *Leif Martinson* responded by explaining that there are certain fixed costs such as retirement and insurance, that rise every year regardless of the student population. He also stated that we have been reducing the number of teachers where necessary. *Greg Hill*, after reviewing the survey on our high school website, found there seems to be a disconnection between teachers and administrators. *Karin Wilcox* made a point that secretaries also deserve merit increases. *Barbara Foster* stated that we need to be willing to pay for quality and qualified administrators. *Gretchen Wilder* brought up the point that in the real world a pay raise has nothing to do with whether we deserve it or not, but rather what we can afford to give employees. *Joyce Fulweiler* spoke in favor of this article. Call to question by Joe Stone on proposed amendment 1 to Article 8.

Vote: Standing vote required.

In favor: 55

Opposed: 81

Amendment fails.

Motion: Motion by Mr. Wilcox to protect the vote and seconded by Barbara Foster.

Call to question by Mary Bailey and seconded by Barbara Foster.

Vote: Affirmative. Article 8 passes and has been restricted.

Moderator Finemore read Article 9 as follows:

Article-9

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

1. Suggestion to mount a plaque to honor our fallen teachers over the last forty years.
2. Suggestion to School Board to track graduating students as to whether they have had a successful transition to college life. *Molly Wilcox*, who graduated from the WRSD, spoke of her achievements in college life and thanked the school district for her success.

Ruth Nelson, high school English teacher in her 28th year at the WRSD and a 1984 graduate, commented that many people involved with the district are also graduates of the district, and proud to be serving the district that they were proud to graduate from as well.

Meeting adjourned at 12:36 pm.

A true record, Attest:



Patricia Risley
School District Clerk
Winnisquam Regional School District