

**WINNISQUAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
Minutes of the Annual Meeting  
March 24, 2007

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 24<sup>th</sup> day of March 2007. School District Moderator Ken Randall called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. He called for a short recess until all of the voters had signed in. The meeting reconvened at 10:05 A.M.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Moderator Randall introduced the Middle School and High School National Anthem Chorus. They have been selected to sing the national anthem at the Jefferson Memorial in Washington D.C. on June 14, 2007. Under the direction of music teacher Holly Anderson, they sang the national anthem for the assembly. Moderator Randall pointed out the section for non-voters. He put the assembly on notice that if at 6:00 P.M. there are still articles to be discussed, the meeting would be recessed to Wednesday, March 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M.

Moderator Randall introduced himself, District Clerk, Adele Chertoff, and Assistant Moderators, Tamar Cerafici of Northfield, Jane Goss of Sanbornton, and Dave Wadleigh of Tilton. Moderator Randall introduced Dave Foster, School Board Chairperson, who introduced the School Board members. He then introduced Dr. Tammy Davis, Superintendent and the SAU administrators. Next, Chairperson Foster introduced the building principals and Kimberly Rizzo-Saunders, who will be the new high school principal next year. To conclude introductions, he introduced John Teague, School District Attorney.

Dr. Davis, Superintendent, welcomed the assembly and gave a PowerPoint presentation of what is being done in the district to improve student learning and prepare every student for post secondary success. She discussed five important areas of focus:

- Increasing the academic content and rigor while balancing a strong foundation in reading, writing and math skills
- Designing lessons to meet every child's individual learning needs
- Providing strong leadership for instruction
- Engaging parents and community and strengthening communication mechanisms
- Creating a school culture where individuals are valued

Dr. Davis concluded with how important it is that we all work together and thanked the assembly for their time.

Moderator Randall explained the voting procedure. Moderator Randall explained reconsideration and protection of their vote. If reconsideration is voted for, the assembly must wait seven days after this meeting. Moderator Randall explained #17 of the Moderator's Rules on the use of cell phones.

The Moderator asked for a vote on the acceptance of the ground rules.

**Vote: Affirmative**

Moderator Randall explained that if a person is standing to speak and the question to end discussion is called, they will be allowed to speak, but no one else can talk on that article.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Nina Gardner, seconded by Dave Foster, to reorder the articles to move Article 4 to Article 1 because it requires a ballot vote and the polls must remain open for one hour.

**Vote: Affirmative**

Moderator Randall read Article 1 as follows:

**Article 1 (Article 4)**

To see if the Winnisquam Regional School District will vote to adopt the optional School District Budget Committee (RSA 195:12-a) to become effective March 25, 2007. The budget committee shall have the same number of members as the cooperative school board plus one additional member from the School Board. The term of office and manner of election of members shall be determined in the same manner as the cooperative school board. Whenever it is voted to establish a budget committee, the moderator in the first circumstance shall appoint the members of the budget committee, except for the additional member appointed by the School Board, within 15 days of the vote establishing the committee. The members appointed by the moderator shall serve until the next annual meeting when the meeting shall elect their successors. (Majority ballot vote required). The School Board does not recommend this warrant article.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Kathryn Dawson, seconded by Kevin Waldron, to bring this article to the floor for discussion.

**Discussion:** Curt McGee supports a budget committee. He believes the budget is a runaway train and a budget committee can be of assistance to the School Board not an adversary.

Kevin Waldron spoke in favor of this article and asked about the wording “optional” in the article. He commented that he expects value with his money.

Dave Tryon spoke in opposition of a budget committee. He commented that it adds another layer of bureaucracy. He said the citizens of the district already have representatives from each town – the present school board.

Earl Leighton believes in accountability and thinks we could see a savings in the budget if adopted.

Patsy Wells, Chairperson of the Board of Selectmen for the Town of Sanbornton said this is a practical matter and mistakes can be made in a budget this size. A budget committee adds a checks and balances system. A cooperative effort cannot be a bad thing and she asked voters to support a budget committee.

Kathryn Ferrera commented on line-by-line discrepancies from year to year. She believes a budget committee will help the citizens with the money they give to the school district and the district with their spending.

Kathryn Dawson, Selectman for the Town of Tilton, commented on the help of the town’s budget committee in preparing their budget. She added that the cost of \$5,200 for the district newsletter is a misuse of public funds and supports this article for a budget committee.

Jon Scanlon is on the budget committee for the Town of Tilton and said it works very well. He commented that it isn’t always about cuts and it would allow the School Board to work on other important matters.

Aurlow Stanley, School Board member from Northfield, shared that he previously worked on the Town of Northfield’s budget committee for six years and said the district’s process is the same as the towns. He said people have the right to come to the budget committee meetings and stated unless they wish to cut great sums of money they will not see a big change in their taxes.

Ken Gorrell spoke in favor of a budget committee. He said the budget process is far more complex today and additional resources are needed. In 2005 he brought a proposal to the Board to volunteer

the services of four people to help with the budget. He never heard back from the Board and does not feel they are open to community comments.

Dick Gardner said that this is the School Board that was elected by the people and that we should look to the Board to make responsible budgetary decisions.

The question was called to end discussion and Moderator Randall gave the people behind the microphone the opportunity to speak.

Gretchen Wilder credited the School Board for all their efforts. She supports a budget committee and believes everyone brings something to the table. She suggested that all contractual negotiations be settled before the annual budget hearing.

Kevin Waldron asked for clarification on the word “optional” in Article 1. Patsy Wells asked Attorney Teague to give the answer. Attorney Teague said the word “optional” was used by the petitioners and it does not change the legal affect that refers to the statute. It will be an RSA 32 Budget Committee.

Moderator Randall said that a 2/3’s vote would end the discussion on Article 1.

**Vote: Yes – 178 No – 3 and the Moderator declared the vote to end discussion passes.**

Moderator Randall declared the polls open at 11:23 A.M.

Moderator Randall read Article 2 as follows:

**Article 2 (Article 1)**

To see if the Winnisquam Regional School District will vote to create an expendable emergency repairs trust fund under the provisions of RSA 198:20-c, to be known as the School Buildings Maintenance Emergency Repairs Fund for the purpose of repairing and maintaining the school buildings. Furthermore to raise and appropriate a sum up to fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) towards this purpose, such amount to be funded from the undesignated fund balance as of June 30, 2007, and to name the School Board as agents to expend this fund. Funds must be maintained by the Trustee of the Trust Funds (Town of Tilton). (Majority vote required). The School Board recommends this appropriation.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Kevin Washburn, seconded by Aurlow Stanley, to bring this article to the floor for discussion.

**Discussion:** Kevin Washburn explained that this article is for emergency purposes only, such as a new boiler or roof repairs.

Kathryn Ferrera compared the account from last year to this year and commented that it was deleted this year.

Charles Hall asked for clarification on whether or not a meeting would need to be held to spend the money from the fund. Chairman Foster answered that in order to expend the funds, the School Board would have to have a public hearing to explain the expenditure of the funds.

Kathryn Dawson commented that money could be taken out of the general budget for emergency provisions and then at the end of the year if the budget is over expended a special meeting could be called.

Nina Gardner explained that the Board does not believe it has \$98,000 of surplus money in the budget without taking away from the educational process. This emergency fund is another way to deal with emergencies that happen during the year.

Jon Scanlon spoke against this article and asked that money left over at the end of the year be returned to the taxpayers.

Dina Hunter asked about the life of the boilers and if they were in the capital improvement plan. Chairman Foster said they were currently not in the plan.

Nina Gardner explained the history of the Capital Reserve Fund for capital improvements.

Earl Leighton asked about the prior roof damage at the middle school and how that was paid for. Kevin Washburn said it was covered under insurance and Chairman Foster commented that bonding was also necessary.

The question was called to end discussion and Moderator Randall gave the people behind the microphone the opportunity to speak.

Kevin Waldron said the boilers should be in a plan for replacement. He is not in favor of this article.

Moderator Randall said that a 2/3's vote would end the discussion on Article 2.

**Vote: Yes – 147 No – 13 and the Moderator declared the vote to end discussion passes.**

Division of the house was called. Moderator Randall asked for a standing vote.

Moderator Randall called for a vote on Article 2.

**Vote: Yes – 85 No – 82 and the Moderator declared Article 2 as read passes.**

**A ballot vote was requested and a sufficient number of people seconded a vote by ballot.**

Moderator Randall called for a recess until 12:28 P.M. until the polls are declared closed from the vote on Article 1 before opening the polls for a ballot vote on Article 2.

At 12:28 P.M., Moderator Randall declared the polls closed on Article 1.

At this time, Moderator Randall read the results on Article 1.

**Ballot Vote: Yes – 103 No – 90 and the Moderator declared Article 1 as read passes.**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Greg Hill, seconded by Earl Leighton, to protect the vote on Article 1.

**Vote: Affirmative**

Moderator Randall asked that anyone interested in being on the budget committee to get in touch with him within the next 15 days.

Moderator Randall read Article 3 as follows:

**Article 3 (Article 2)**

To see if the Winnisquam Regional School District will vote to raise and appropriate a sum up to \$200,000

to be placed in the Capital Reserve Fund-Building Renovations and Repairs, such amount to be funded from the undesignated fund balance as of June 30, 2007. (Majority vote required). The School Board recommends this appropriation.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Jasen Stock, seconded by Valerie Allen, to bring this article to the floor for discussion.

**Discussion:** Jasen Stock explained that this is the capital reserve fund for routine maintenance and upkeep and to fund the five-year Capital Improvement Committee's recommendations. This appropriation would cover the maintenance items in the next article.

Dina Hunter asked what amount is currently in the capital reserve fund. Jasen Stock replied there is approximately \$330,000.

Kevin Waldron commented that there is already enough money in the account for repairs. He would like to have any money left over returned to the taxpayers.

Jim Vila asked how much money was put into last years capital reserve account and what had been expended. He added he would like to see a list of the maintenance projects that will be coming up. Jasen Stock responded that as of June 30, 2006, \$271,000 was in the account and last year \$100,000 was approved and that brought the total to \$371,000. \$40,000 was drawn off, leaving a total of \$331,000.

Kathryn Ferrera asked about the money approved for the ramp. Chairman Foster said the bid for the ramp was significantly more than the first estimate that was received.

John Spear spoke in favor of Article 3. He feels this is a responsible way to deal with the maintenance needs of the buildings.

Jon Scanlon is in favor of this article. He asked if any of the Capital Reserve money would be spent on the new alternative school. Jasen Stock replied that this money is for existing facilities.

The question was called to end discussion and Moderator Randall gave the people behind the microphone the opportunity to speak.

Gloria Muraszko spoke in favor of this article.

Kent Finemore spoke in favor of this article.

At this time, Moderator Randall read the results of Article 2.

**Ballot Vote: Yes – 84 No – 88 and the Moderator declared Article 2 as read fails.**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Don Foudriat, seconded by Dennis Fields, to protect the vote on Article 2.

**Vote: Affirmative**

Moderator Randall said that a 2/3's vote would end the discussion on Article 3.

**Vote: Yes – 162 No – 0 and the Moderator declared the vote to end discussion passes.**

Moderator Randall asked for a show of hands for how many people wished to vote by ballot on this article. Four people raised their hands and the Moderator said that was not enough for a ballot vote.

Moderator Randall called for a vote on Article 3.

**Vote: Affirmative and the Moderator declared Article 3 as read passes.**

Moderator Randall read Article 4 as follows:

**Article 4 (Article 3)**

To see if the Winnisquam Regional School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred and ninety four thousand five hundred dollars (\$194,500) to replace the Middle School intercom system, to replace part of the Southwick School playground, to refurbish the Sanborn roof, to build an external storage facility at WR High School, and to install a structural beam at Sanbornton Central School. To replace at the Vocational Agriculture Building: the chair lift, the classroom divider, the stairwell treads, the garage doors, and to complete the bathroom renovations and to authorize the withdrawal of one hundred ninety four thousand five hundred dollars (\$194,500) from the Capital Reserve Fund-Building Renovations and Repairs created for that purpose. (Majority vote required). The School Board recommends this appropriation.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Dave Foster, seconded by Kevin Washburn, to bring this article to the floor for discussion.

**Discussion:** Chairman Foster gave the details of the work to be done at the schools that requires \$194,000 to be withdrawn from the Capital Reserve Fund.

Gretchen Wilder asked about the cost of the stair treads at the Voc Ag Center. Chairman Foster explained that the numbers were transposed on the stair treads (\$5,000) and the garage doors (\$10,000).

Dina Hunter asked for clarification on which building was meant by “Sanborn”. Chairman Foster answered that it was the Union Sanborn School and the shorter building requires the roof to be refurbished.

Kevin Waldron asked about the construction of the wood storage building. Judy Farr gave the details of the project.

The question being called, the Moderator called for a vote on Article 4.

**Vote: Affirmative and the Moderator declared Article 4 as read passes.**

Moderator Randall read Article 5 as follows:

**Article 5**

To see if the Winnisquam Regional School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$23,027,031** 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). The School Board recommends this appropriation.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Nina Gardner, seconded by Valerie Allen, to bring Article 5 to the floor for discussion.

**Discussion:** Nina Gardner gave a PowerPoint presentation on the budget process and the proposed operating budget for 2007-2008.

The question was called to end discussion and Moderator Randall gave the people behind the microphone the opportunity to speak.

Leif Martinson asked about the \$129,000 increase and merit raises. Mike Gagne said this is a pool of money for all staff increases with the exception of the teachers and custodians.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Jon Scanlon, seconded by Earl Leighton to decrease the budget by \$254,361.

**Discussion:** Jon Scanlon proposed this amendment to decrease the budget by the amount needed for the Alternative School. He explained his reasons for his opposition to the Alternative School.

Jack Tiano explained that the purpose for the proposed Alternative School is to provide a transitional and preventative program for students. The number one cost for special education is for out-of-district placements. He added that he is committed to providing an education for students in the least restrictive environment.

Kevin Waldron asked for reconsideration on the ruling to call the question to end discussion.

Barbara Wirth is in favor of the amendment. She said she was not aware of the Alternative School and asked that the parent voice not be excluded on important matters.

Dave Tryon urged rejection of the amendment. He believes this is a positive step for our educational system and a way for these students to be connected to our community and school system.

Kent Finemore asked Attorney Teague for clarification about the amendment in the amount of \$254,361 and if it would be up to the School Board to decide where to take the money from. Attorney Teague said that there are certain obligations the Board has to meet to run the district. If there is a reduction in the budget it may be intended that it be aimed at a particular program, but it may be necessary to meet the obligations that it come from somewhere else.

Mike Gagne commented that the Alternative School was in no way being buried in the budget. This was presented at the public hearing. This is an attempt to save money in the long run.

The question was called and the Moderator called for a vote to end discussion on the amendment.

**Vote: Affirmative**

**A ballot vote was requested and a sufficient number of people seconded a vote by ballot.**

The Moderator called for a vote on the amendment of the reduction to the budget.

**Ballot Vote: Yes – 48 No – 111 and the Moderator declared the amendment as read fails.**

Kevin Waldron asked for more information on NEASC and teacher salaries. Nina Gardner explained the accreditation requirements for the high school and said teacher salaries do not reflect any increases because of a negotiation impasse.

Barbara Wirth commends the representation of the Northfield School Board members. She is concerned with the elimination of the Gifted & Talented Program and that the parental voice was not heard in that decision.

The question was called and the Moderator called for a vote to end discussion on Article 5.

**Vote: Yes – 128 No – 15**

Joe DeMello called for a standing vote.

The Moderator called for a vote on Article 5

**Vote: Yes – 124 No – 29 and the Moderator declared Article 5 as read passes.**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Joe DeMello, seconded by Judy Stewart, to protect the vote on Article 5.

**Vote: Affirmative**

Moderator Randall read Article 6 as follows:

**Article 6**

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

Jane Goss, Town Clerk and Tax Collector for the Town of Sanbornton, reminded the members at the assembly to be kind to their tax collectors when tax bills come out.

Lisa Swancott commented that inclusion is not working. Her son is being left behind. She added that class size should be reduced and teachers should receive more help.

John Spear commended Principal Judy Farr for her 39 years of service to the district. The assembly gave her a standing ovation.

Valerie Kehr expressed disappointment in the elimination of the Gifted Academic Program. She feels this will put an undue burden on the teachers and frustrate the children. She wished that parents were involved in the decision making process.

Kent Finemore extended his sincere thanks to the School Board, to all the staff and to the new leadership. He believes everyone is trying hard and expressed appreciation.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Aurlow Stanley, seconded by Judy Stewart, to adjourn the meeting at 3:02 P.M.

**Vote: Affirmative**

A true Record, Attest:

Adele Chertoff, Clerk  
Winnisquam Regional School District