

Wakefield School Board Emergency Meeting
1-14-19 Public Minutes
Approved

School Board members in attendance:

Board: Robert Ouellette, Tracey Kolb, Sandy Johnson and Jennifer McCawley

Administration: Business Administrator Marie D'Agostino
Donna Martin with Clearview Community TV.

Mr. Ouellette opened the meeting at 5:00 and led those present in the Pledge.

Non Public Session

Mrs. Kolb made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Johnson, to enter non-public session at 5:00 under RSA 91-A:3, II (a) The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted. (Vote 3-0) Roll Call: Ouellette aye, Kolb aye, Johnson aye.

The board returned to public session at 6:25.

Mrs. Kolb made a motion, seconded by Mrs. McCawley, to come out of non-public at 6:25. Roll call: Kolb aye, Ouellette aye, McCawley aye, Johnson aye (Vote 4-0)

At this point Mrs. D'Agostino joined the Board.

Discussion of Warrant Articles

Mrs. D'Agostino told the Board that the total of their warrant articles including the CBA's and the Operating Budget is \$11,031,901. Mrs. McCawley asked if, with numbers being changed that weren't supposed to be, are they going to decide what the final numbers will be now that they have a legal opinion that both sides agree to that say when the School Board presents a warrant article for a certain amount that the Budget Committee doesn't have the right to change the amount. Mrs. Kolb said that the governing body owns the article. Mrs. D'Agostino said her recommendation is to use "in favor" and "opposed" instead of recommend or not recommend that make it confusing. She said she looked it up and this is how other districts word them. If the Board would like to go back to recommend or not recommend she'll go back to that. Mrs. Kolb said she thinks this is very clear and she checked with two NHSBA attorneys and Kidder & Soule. Mrs. D'Agostino said this wording was her idea and she has tried to make this easy to understand. She told them that the Budget Committee will have the option to change their votes when it goes back before them.

The Board addressed the articles that were changed.

Article #8

Mrs. Kolb wants to wait until Ms. Moody is present tomorrow night to vote on the articles so they will have their vote unanimous. Mrs. McCawley asked about facetimeing Ms. Moody. Ms. Moody will be at tomorrow's regular meeting and they will vote then. Mrs. Kolb asked, so we want to leave article #8 at \$100,000? The Board said they did. They also wanted to leave the Transportation article at \$185,000. Mrs. McCawley said she thought the Board should put off the roof article for five years or so. Mrs. Johnson was opposed to that.

Mrs. Kolb made a motion, seconded by Mrs. McCawley, to remove article #13 for roof repair from the warrant. (Vote 3-1)

Article #12

Replace/Repair Gym floor. Mrs. McCawley said she would like to see it stay but she got no support from the gym teacher on that. She believes it's dangerous. She believes it's important and should get in front of the voters. She'd like to keep it at the original \$60,000 but is willing to let the board decide the amount. Mrs. Johnson said it's in the CIP for next year that they all approved. Mrs. Kolb said furnaces start in the CIP next year. They should have started this year but the Board chose the windows that have asbestos in them.

Mrs. Kolb made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to leave the gym floor at \$20,000. (Vote 2-2) It stays at \$20,000 but the Board will vote on this again tomorrow night when they have a full board.

Article #15

SAU article was originally \$26,500 and the Budget Committee reduced it to \$16,500.

Mrs. Kolb made a motion, seconded by Mrs. McCawley, to leave article #15 at \$16,500. (Vote 4-0)

Article #12

Maintenance Contingency Fund. Mrs. McCawley said our head of maintenance bailed on that immediately so he must feel that's all we need. Mrs. Kolb said if the Budget Committee thinks that's all we need... Mrs. McCawley asked, you're never going to base anything on that are you? Mrs. Kolb responded no.

Mrs. Kolb made a motion, seconded by Mrs. McCawley, to leave article #16 at \$10,000. (Vote 4-0)

Mrs. Kolb did some research over the weekend. She said there has been a lot of interest where Wakefield stands in cost per student. Last year the average cost was \$15,998. Wakefield spent \$14,600 and we are 24th from the bottom out of 157 schools. Our gap on what we spend for students is growing. Our valuation of the 254 towns is 1.1 billion. We are 33 from the top. Wolfeboro is 1.9 billion There school tax rate is \$6.00 and Milton whose valuation is 407 million pay \$13.00 for school. Wakefield pays \$5.00 for school. If you raise \$1,000,000 your tax rate goes up \$1.00 per thousand. Every \$100,000 is \$10.00. She said the Default Budget allows you to carry over all Special Ed expenses but not regular ed increases. Mr. McCawley said, then the regular ed students get cheated again. She said we've heard talk about retired people not being

able to afford this, many of those people had children in school and relied on the people of the town to spend money on property tax to give their children a good education. The COLA and the percentage of increase in budgets are not the same amount and they talk about our voters not being smart enough, and they would have difficulty reading or being able to know their children are not getting an adequate education. Mrs. Kolb said we tried very hard to be fair. We are well below the state average for teacher pay. We are in the bottom quarter of the state. Everyone has steps the 2.5% raise is outside of the steps. Mrs. McCawley said the teachers that negotiated the contract worked well with them and they are all on board with changing the insurance costs. They are very eager to have a fair system. The teachers were very professional.

Mrs. Kolb made a motion, seconded by Mrs. McCawley, to adjourn the meeting at 6:45. (Vote 4-0)

Respectfully submitted for approval at the next School Board meeting.

Priscilla Colbath
School Board Secretary