

Wakefield School Board  
11-17-20 Public Minutes  
Held in the Multi-Purpose Room and via Zoom  
Approved

In attendance:

Board: Relf Fogg, Mary Collins, Lino Avellani. Bob Ouellette and Sandy Johnson via Zoom

Administration: Superintendent Jerry Gregoire, Business Administrator Marie D'Agostino, Student Services Director Anne Kebler, Vice Principal Jenn Spector and Transportation Director via Zoom. Principal James Lampron, and Facilities Manager Joe Williams

Public: Parents and community members via Zoom

### **Call to Order**

Mr. Ouellette called the meeting to order at 6:00 and led those present in person and on zoom in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Public Hearing**

Mr. Ouellette opened up the Public Hearing at 6:03.

Mr. Gregoire told the Board that he recently found out that they are eligible for another grant in addition to the Cares Act which requires a Public Hearing for the Board to accept this money. It is called Supplemental Public School Response Fund Grant for \$131,000. This money has already been deposited to us. He would like to use this money to pay for the Cares Act items they have talked about and use the Cares Act money for technology. He said this money has to be spent by December 31<sup>st</sup> and can be spent retroactively. The Cares Act money can be used up until September.

**Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to accept the Supplemental Public School Response Fund Grant for \$131,000. as long as it's applied only to Covid related expenses only in our district.**

Mrs. D'Agostino said this money will flow through the operating Budget-general fund not the Grant Fund. There was considerable discussion about whether or not this was a grant. It was determined that it is a federal grant distributed by the State of New Hampshire. Mr. Avellani asked, what line the Cares Act money was assigned to? Mr. Gregoire said that was a grant and it was assigned to a grant line. Mr. Avellani said that money has to be assigned to a line offsetting expenditure assigned to an opposite line so it doesn't affect the budget as presented. He said you can have supplemental appropriations by receiving the grant, assigning it to a line and then assigning it to an expenditure line so you could track those costs accordingly. Mr. Gregoire said they are not assigned to a specific budget line we have a specific grant line. Mr. Avellani wanted to know what lines both grants are being assigned to. Mrs. D'Agostino said we were directed to post that to the Revenue Account 4590. We have to indicate what function and what the money is spent on. Mr. Avellani asked again what line this grant is assigned to. Mrs. D'Agostino reiterate what Mr. Gregoire had said. Mr. Avellani asked again. Mr. Gregoire said this will be applied to several different lines. Mr. Avellani said a grant dropped into the general fund is

irresponsible. Mr. Gregoire said, that's how the State set it up. Mr. Avellani said when a grant is accepted it should go into a line so it can be easily tracked that way when the Budget Committee sees you have accepted a grant they're not going to have to go through twelve or fifteen lines to find out where that money has been spent. Mr. D'Agostino gave an explanation. Mr. Avellani asked once again what revenue line the grant will be assigned to. This will become part of the school budget revenue. Mrs. D'Agostino said line 4590 General Fund Revenue on page 5 line 14 on the DOE25. That did not answer his question. He said 4590 is the department. He would like to know the line. Mrs. D'Agostino said you don't see anything posted because the Board hasn't accepted the money yet. Mr. Avellani asked one more time, what line is this money going to? Mrs. D'Agostino said there is no line number yet because up until now we hadn't received money for this purpose before. She said it will be in 100-4590-4000.

**Mr. Fogg made a motion to amend his motion to include, "the \$131,000 will be placed in line 100-4590-4000". Mr. Avellani seconded this motion. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Johnson aye, Collins aye, Mr. Avellani aye, Fogg aye (5-0)**

The Board then voted on Mr. Fogg's original motion:

**Roll call: Ouellette aye, Johnson aye, Collins aye, Mr. Avellani aye, Fogg aye (5-0)**

**Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Johnson, to close the Public Hearing at 6:46.**

**Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Johnson aye, Fogg aye, Avellani aye (Vote 5-0)**

Mr. Fogg said he does not see the Cares Act funds reflected on page 19. That \$147,000 is flowing through the grant fund. Mrs. Kebler explained how a grant is separated from the general fund. Mr. Avellani would like Mr. Fogg's question answered. Mrs. D'Agostino said she is not answering questions about the Cares Act, that would be a grant fund and would be Mrs. Kebler. Mrs. D'Agostino said grant money is in and out. We spend the money then we get reimbursed. The conversation ensued with the same information being reiterated. Mrs. Kebler explained that the grant money is sitting in a Grant Management System at the DOE. We spend money out of the operating Budget and then get reimbursed from the DOE. Any explanation beyond that is in the business office. Mr. Gregoire said he will give Mr. Avellani a complete accounting of the grants and where they are located and where they're accounted for.

### **Public Comment**

None

### **Consent Agenda**

Mr. Fogg asked about the enrollment numbers. There are 467 students. Mr. Gregoire said the numbers are 467 but a lot of students have gone into home schooling

**Mr. Johnson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to approve the Consent Agenda.**

**Roll call: Ouellette aye, Johnson aye, Collins aye, Mr. Avellani aye, Fogg nay (4-1)**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs., Johnson, to approve the public minutes of November 9th with any amendments offered. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Johnson aye, Fogg aye, Avellani aye (Vote 5-0)**

**Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs., Johnson, to approve the public minutes of November 2nd with any amendments offered. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Johnson aye, Fogg aye, Avellani aye (Vote 5-0)**

## **Reports**

### Student Services Report

Mrs. Kebler gave the Board an update on the number of Special Education students and the grades levels. The majority are coming into the school for services. Last week the Special Ed department worked on face to face and remote learning schedules. 18% of the students are remote and 82% are face to face. There are twenty-two students coming into school face to face during this remote time.

### Business Administrators Report

#### Food Service:

Mrs. D'Agostino enclosed student meal comparison report that indicated an increase participation in breakfast of 3,497 and a decrease of (3,883) in lunches through October 2020 versus October 2019.

FY 2020-2021 Appropriation Revised payment schedule for the Wakefield School District.

Includes the Capital Reserve Report:

In the packet there is the October 2020 Town of Wakefield Capital Reserve School portion listing of the Trust Fund Report.

#### Monthly Financial Report:

The enclosed October 15, 2020 financial report includes the following supplemental reports: Dental Benefit, Health Benefit, Retirement, and Salary. The salary, retirement, health, and dental benefit reports capture increases or (decreases) for all functions.

Mr. Fogg questioned some of the overspent lines. Mrs. D'Agostino explained that we are waiting for reimbursements from Trust Funds, Covid reimbursements plus the Board approved part time to a full-time position. Mr. Gregoire said the LNA is in the school as there are still kids in school. The nurse is out of the area.

## **Old Business**

### Legal Services Bid Response

Mrs. Johnson asked why a dollar amount wasn't specified for special ed in two of the bids? Mr. Avellani asked Mr. Gregoire if he had a recommendation. He answered the firm we have now.

**Mrs. Johnson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg, to table this discussion until the next meeting. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Johnson nay, Fogg aye, Collins nay, Avellani nay (Vote 3-2)**

Mrs. Collins asked that the material about the law firms not be printed off again.

## Budget

**Mr. Avellani made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg, to move the Budget agenda item to the end of the meeting. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Johnson aye, Fogg aye, Avellani aye (Vote 5-0)**

## **New Business**

### Remote learning

Mr. Lampron shared with the Board the following information.

- A survey was sent out to parents at the beginning of October asking about potential technology needs. Out of the 245 responses that we received; 153 laptops were requested.
  - As of today, we've given out a total of 257 devices (190 to accommodate this switch to remote learning and 67 at the start of the year for Q1 remote learners).
  - We are out of computers but we can still accommodate families with iPads that have access to Zoom
- We were able to implement school wide breaks for all students when we shifted to remote learning
  - 10:15 - 10:30                      Break
  - 12:00 - 12:45                      Lunch
  - 2:00 - 2:15                          Break
- Paper copies were supplied to families who requested them.
- Remote learning expectations and guidelines were handed out to everybody who came to pick up work.
- There were 22 students who didn't make it in to collect their materials and we've reached out to all of those families. Ten students still need to pick up their materials.
- Staff was quick to hit the ground running on Monday after preparing for remote learning on Thursday and Friday.
  - Overall, initial feedback has been positive.
  - We had some behavior concerns in the 7th grade online classes but we have a plan in place to increase the teachers' ability to mute meeting participants and control the chat feature.
- We're providing breakfast and lunch to families while they're learning remotely.
  - Meals are available to be picked up at the school on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.
  - For those who aren't able to make it to the school, we've been able to schedule drivers to drop off meals at their house.

## Wakefield Emergency Management Meeting – update

Mr. Ouellette and Mr. Gregoire attended this meeting via Zoom last week. This will be a regularly scheduled meeting with the Chief. They applauded the school for transitioning into remote learning. The SRO is currently working with the Police Department. Mr. Scala will send a letter to all departments to post on their websites. Mrs. Johnson would like that letter.

Mr. Fogg asked, with people out of the buildings how are observations and evaluations being conducted? Mr. Gregoire said he can drop into any classroom at anytime and do their observations.

### **Policies 1st Reading**

Mrs. Collins explained the changes to the following policies.

JH: Doing to add number 5

JJ: No changes

JFABD: Adopt NHSBA's policy

**Mrs. Johnson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, that any policies that we are reaffirming or that are new that if there is a policy with a category at the top like required by law and any categories that go with it so that future boards will know that it's required by law. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins abstain, Johnson aye, Fogg nay, Avellani nay (Vote 2-2-1)**

### **Public Comment**

Randie Fox asked what the oversight is during remote learning. She said she's wondering why her seventh grader is learning about Black Live Matter but not the US Constitution or the Ten Commandments. Mr. Lampron said he didn't have an immediate response. He will have to dig deeper and get back to her and the Board. She said it's disturbing. Now that she's home and her children are learning from home, she's more aware of the curriculum and she is curious what the oversight is.

**Mr. Avellani made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg, to see what the curriculum is particularly seventh grade. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Johnson nay, Fogg aye, Avellani aye (Vote 4-1)**

Mrs. Johnson questioned why the motion when anyone can come in to school to see it. Mr. Fogg asked about teaching the state constitution. Mr. Gregoire said pocket constitutions are ordered every year to give to the students in middle school. Mrs. Fox said she just wants to make sure our political views aren't pushed on our children.

## **Resignations/Nominations**

Monica Lowe who recently started in the SAU sent Mr. Gregoire an email resignation.

**Mrs. Johnson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg, to accept Monica Lowe's resignation with regret. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Johnson aye, Fogg aye, Avellani aye (Vote 5-0)**

This position will not be filled until the SAU is back and full.

## **Budget**

Mr. Fogg said last night the Budget Committee recommend a 1 ½% increase sighting past increases equaling a 20% increase over the last three years. There was a recommendation to level fund the school district as the town did. Mr. Fogg abstained from the vote as he did not know the feelings of the Board. Mrs. Johnson would like to consider nonaffiliated raises at 1.5% instead of 2%. Mr. Fogg would like to have the budget stay status quo. He mentioned the large pay raises the administrators received and the teachers not receiving any raises. Mrs. Johnson requested that they go through the budget by function. Mr. Gregoire pointed out that nonaffiliated isn't just administrators. It's also bus drivers, SAU employees and anyone who doesn't have the benefit of a CBA.

**Function 1100:** Mr. Gregoire said that the total increases in salaries that are projected for this year just because of the change in personnel is an increase of \$5,957. FICA goes up \$456 and retirement goes up \$123,821. Health goes up \$94,586 and these are beyond the districts control. The total increases in salaries, retirement, FICA and health is \$223,897. Mr. Gregoire said there is a decrease in Public Tuition of \$113,884. He said there isn't much room in the 1100's. There is an increase in supplies of \$34,023. The Money we are looking at that we have to reduce is \$300,000. If the \$131,000 the Board just approve is added in the number would be \$250,000, That would change the percentage from a 4.87% increase to 3.61% increase. Mr. Avellani asked if we are adding \$131,000 into next years budget. Marie explained that the appropriation will increase by \$131,000 that corresponds with the \$131,000 revenue we're getting. The difference will be less by \$131,000. This impacts the variance and the percentage and amount that will be needed to cut. Mr. Avellani asked why are we subtracting the \$131,000 from the variance when it has been explained that that money will be used this year? The appropriation will change from \$10,749,924 by increasing it by \$131,000 to the new number will be \$10,880,934. If you subtract the \$10,880,034 from the proposed budget of \$11,273,752 the difference will now be \$392,828.

By adding money to the current year's budget, it reduces the difference that we are proposing for next year. Mr. Fogg asked how this number change when the voters approved the \$10,749,924. He said we are going against the vote of the people who voted to raise and appropriate \$10,749,924. He said he would make a motion to not use the methodology that is being explained to us but use the number that the voters authorized for the school district and then calculate a 1 ½ % increase to that operating budget. Mr. Gregoire said if the Board wishes to use the number the people voted on it's the will of the Board. Mrs. D'Agostino understands how difficult this is to understand. She said this extra money is a revenue source it is not raised and appropriated by the voters.

Mrs. D'Agostino said we have to get the budget to the Budget Committee the day before Thanksgiving. Mr. Ouellette and Mr. Fogg wish to continue the budget discussion next week. Mrs. Johnson would prefer to continue the discussion tonight.

**Mr. Avellani made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg, to move the budget discussion to Tuesday November 24<sup>th</sup>. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Johnson nay, Fogg aye, Avellani aye (Vote 4-1)**

Mr. Avellani asked that the proper notation be on the notice as they might be discussing positions. Mr. Gregoire said he will.

There was discussion about approving the sealed minutes. **Mrs. Johnson made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to unseal the minutes of November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>.** Mrs. Collins rescinded her second and Mrs. Johnson rescinded her motion. It was decided to read and approve the sealed minutes in non-public to avoid them becoming public documents.

### **Non-Public**

**Mr. Avellani made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to enter nonpublic under RSA 91-A 3:11 (e) Consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation which has been threatened in writing or filed by or against the public body or any subdivision thereof, or by or against any member thereof because of his or her membership in such public body, until the claim or litigation has been fully adjudicated or otherwise settled. Any application filed for tax abatement, pursuant to law, with anybody or board shall not constitute a threatened or filed litigation against any public body for the purposes of this subparagraph. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Johnson aye, Fogg aye, Avellani aye (Vote 5-0)**

The Board exited non-public at 10:10 While in non-public the Board discussed negotiations and approved the sealed minutes of November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **Adjournment**

**Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to adjourn the meeting at 10:11. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Johnson aye, Fogg aye, Avellani aye (Vote 5-0)**

Respectfully submitted for approval at the next School Board meeting.

Priscilla Colbath  
Secretary Pro Temp

