

Wakefield School Board
11-25-20 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, Principal James Lampron.

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.

OLD BUSINESS

Remote Learning

Mr. Gregoire said we have no one in the building with Covid. Chief Ventura would like the school to stay closed. The last Board action ends the 30th of November.

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to bring the students who wish to be in the school back and the students who want to continue remote learning do that as well.

Mrs. Johnson said she agrees with the Chief of Police. But if we want to stay open, she believes the hybrid would be a better alternative. Mr. Fogg believes the students are better off in the building. He said research says that transmission between students is almost zero. Mrs. Johnson disagrees with Mr. Fogg and stated that kids are transmitting it more than you think. Mr. Fogg asked for public input prior to the vote. Mr. Ouellette agreed. Mrs. Johnson said it would only be part of the community so you'd have to take that with a grain of salt. Mr. Ouellette opened public comment. Mrs. Joy said these kids have to be back in school. Some kids aren't learning. Some are shoveling children from one to another and making it hard on the kids. Other schools are back in school, face to face learning. Why can't we do that? Nicole Demers said she's heard good things about remote learning but it is not an option for her family. If school continues to be closed, she will have to pull her kids out of school. She has seen her son digress over the last two weeks. She asked the Board to take that into consideration when voting. Mr. Miller asked that Mr. Ouellette let him know when regular public comment begins. Clay Cyr, a para at Paul School is concerned about contracting Covid and bringing it home and transmitting it to his seven-month-old daughter and wife. No one else wished to speak.

Mrs. Collins asked to move the motion.

Roll call: Ouellette nay, Fogg aye, Collins aye, Avellani aye, Johnson nay. (Vote 3-2)

Budget

Mr. Fogg asked if the 2% freeze for unaffiliated, voted in last night, is applied to all the unaffiliated in the entire budget? Mr. Gregoire said the 2% increase has been eliminated from the budget.

Mr. Gregoire said we brought the budget to zero percent increase today. Mr. Ouellette said that he could go through the cuts he made today first. Mr. Gregoire asked if we wanted to address the cuts made last night in non-public. Mr. Fogg said if they are part of the public record, he doesn't see any reason to discuss that. Mr. Colbath said the minutes are sealed you can't discuss it. Mr. Gregoire said he will go over the cuts made today.

Mr. Avellani asked to have a copy of the new budget for the Board members. Mr. Fogg asked about the current rate for retirement. He wanted to know why there was a variance in the percentage of increase in certain instances 14.06% and 21.02% show 7% increase or nearly a 20% increase in some cases. Mr. Gregoire said the 14.06% is the employee rate which is different than the 21.02% which is the teacher rate. This is set by the state. Last year it was 11.17% for employees and 17.08% for teachers. Mr. Fogg asked why is this increasing by 20% when the actual increase should be like 4%?

Budget

Administration cuts

Line 17	1100	Regular Education Tuition - Two (2) Additional Student Enrollment Adjustment	29,964
Line 22	1100	Regular Education New Furniture + Fixtures	(2,045)
Line 70	1410	Co-Curricular Activities Contract Services - 8th Grade Trip Supplemental Funding	(25,999)
Line 92	2120	Mr. Fogg asked if the Renaissance Star Subscription was previously grant funded. For 12,500. Mr. Gregoire said that is a necessary item.	
Various	1430	Summer School Reduce Salary, FICA, Retirement + Supplies Funding	(6,930)
Various	2120	Guidance/Social Worker Eliminate Salary, FICA, Retirement Proposed 2% Increase	(230)
Various	2130	Nurse LNA Position Reduced to P/T - Salary + Benefits Decrease	(14,771)
Various	2130	Nurse Reduce Supplies	(4,905)
Various	2220	Library Eliminate Salary, FICA, Retirement Proposed 2% Increase	(291)
Line 118	2220	Library-Library Repairs (Shelving)	(1,000)
Line 133	2310	School Board Decrease Legal Services	(5,000)

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Avellani, to reduce that line by a total of \$8,000.

Mr. Gregoire said with moving to a new superintendent you may need more legal services.

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

Line 130 2310 FICA

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Avellani, to remove School Board FICA from the budget. Roll call: Fogg aye, Avellani nay, Collins nay, Ouellette nay, Johnson nay (Vote 1-4)

Various	2320	SAU Admin Expenses Position Salary/Benefit/ Eliminate Proposed 2% Increase	(157,829)
Line 148	2320	SAU Administration Expenses Reduce Conferences/Courses	(1,900)
Various	2410	Principal Position Salary + Benefit Changes + Eliminate Proposed 2% Increase	(52,933)
Line 170	2410	Principal Reduce Tuition	(3,500)
Line 171	2410	Principal Reduce Professional Development	(1,200)
Various	2510	Fiscal Services Eliminate Salary, FICA, Retirement Proposed 2% Increase	(3,121)
Line 187	2510	Fiscal Services Reduce Conferences/Courses	(1,200)
Various	2610	Operations/Maintenance Eliminate Salary, FICA, Retirement Proposed 2% Increase	(4,555)
Line 210	2610	Operations/Maintenance Reduce Special Projects	(149,597)

9 exterior doors: \$51,923

Fire Panel CO2 Detectors: \$35,000

Aluminum Glass Doors: \$9,975

Ramps to Modular: \$10,700

Lighting Upgrade: \$42,000

Auto Install in Gym: \$10,000

Mr. Gregoire told the Board they could chose to put whatever they wished back into the line or put them individually into warrant articles. Mrs. Collins said she didn't know about the warrant articles as they have already been presented to the CIP committee.

Mrs. Collins made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg, to put the \$10,700 back in the budget for the Modular ramp/ stairs and handrails. Roll call: Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Collins aye, Ouellette aye, Johnson aye (Vote 5-0)

Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Johnson, have the fire panel put back in the budget. Mrs. Johnson believes this is a safety issue. Mr. Avellani asked why this wasn't put in the CIP so it could be funded properly. Mr. Fogg said it's still legal and compliant. They were prepared to do this at a certain cost and the bids came in at 30% over. Mr. Collins said she was told that three of these projects were done at the November 5, 2019 meeting, but because the learning centers were over spent these were not completed. Mr. Williams was not there to explain. Mr. Ouellette said this is why I'd like the people who are involved in these things be present at these meetings so we can get explanations.

Roll call: Fogg nay, Avellani nay, Collins nay, Ouellette aye, Johnson aye (Vote 2-3)

Mrs. Johnson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette to replace three exterior doors for the amount of \$17,307.60.

Mrs. Collins said the cost for the doors may vary. Mrs. Collins asked if this could be in a warrant article as her concern is that this is Building Maintenance and is an operating budget item. Mrs. Johnson concurred.

Roll call: Fogg nay, Avellani nay, Collins nay, Ouellette aye, Johnson aye (Vote 2-3)

Line 213 2610 Operations/Maintenance Internet/Phones (2,395)

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Avellani, to reduce that line by \$2,500. Roll call: Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Collins aye, Ouellette aye, Johnson nay (Vote 4-1)

Line 215 2610 Operations/Maintenance Reduce Supplies (7,900)

Various 2721 Regular Trans Position Salary + Benefit Changes + Eliminate Proposed 2% Increase (77,098)

Line 233 2721 Regular Transportation Reduce Driver Training (2,367)

Line 238 2721 Regular Transportation Reduce Supplies (5,000)

Various 2722 Special Ed Transportation Eliminate Salary, FICA, Retirement Proposed 2% Increase (14,452)

Line 256 Mr. Avellani asked when the last time this went out to bid. Mr. Gregoire said when we ended the contract with BackBay we awarded the contract to Mainstay. Mr. Avellani said he believes it's time to put this out to bid and get a long-term contract so we know the number going forward. Mr. Ouellette said we could do that. Mr. Avellani said he didn't believe a motion was necessary as this is the will of the Board by consensus. Contracted services should be going out to bid on a regular basis to make sure we're getting the best prices for services.

Line 257 2820 Technology Reduce Repairs + Maintenance (5,000)

Line 261 2820 Technology Computer + Equipment (10,000)

Line 262	2900	Other Benefits	Reduce Disability Insurance	(2,000)
Line 263	2900	Other Benefits	Eliminate Life Insurance Benefit	(1,370)
11.25.20		School Board - V2	Proposed Budget Increase/Decrease (+,-)	(523,828)
11.25.20		School Board - V2	Proposed Budget Increase	(0)

Mr. Avellani made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg, to move these reductions as presented with amendments and changes. Mr. Avellani rescinded his motion. Mr. Fogg rescinded his second.

Mrs. Collins made a motion, seconded by Mr. Avellani, to add the \$16,000 back in the budget for Camp Calumet. Mrs. Johnson believes that the Board should put in \$5,000 and each family put in \$200. She doesn't believe it should be a free program.

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

Mr. Johnson made a motion to end the meeting. Motion failed for a lack of a second.

Mrs. Johnson left the meeting at 8:07 due to her injuries

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Avellani, to reduce that line to \$40,00 Professional Development. Mr. Fogg rescinded his motion and Mr. Avellani rescinded his second.

It was explained that this is contractual and this number does not cover even half what the teachers are entitled to for courses.

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Avellani, to reduce that lines 108 and 109 by \$5,000 for each line. Making Professional Development \$55,000. Roll call: Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Collins aye, Ouellette aye (Vote 4-0)

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to reduce lines 134 by \$1,000 for School Boards ads and notices.

Mrs. D'Agostino read the list of vendors that were paid from this line so far this year. Mr. Avellani asked why ads and notices were under School Board and not under SAU administration expense. Mr. Fogg said you do have a line in that function, line 152. Mrs. D'Agostino replied she has to go back and see what that pertains to.

Roll call: Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Collins aye, Ouellette aye (Vote 4-0)

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Avellani, to reduce line 135, background checks by \$500. Roll call: Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Collins aye, Ouellette aye (Vote 4-0)

Mr. Avellani also believes that this line should be in the SAU administration expense function.

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Avellani, to reduce line 136, ballot printing by \$1,000.

Mr. Avellani asked why no money was spent last year for ballot printing in Line 136. Mrs. D'Agostino will have to research that.

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Avellani, to table the motion until the correct number is given by the Business Administrator. Roll call: Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Collins aye, Ouellette aye (Vote 4-0)

Vote on Mr. Fogg's original motion Roll call: Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Collins aye, Ouellette aye (Vote 4-0)

Mr. Fogg made a motion to reduce line 140, School Board Misc. by \$1,000.

Mr. Avellani asked for clarification on what the \$486.50 was spent on last year. Mr. D'Agostino said this was for the teacher's breakfast and lunch on the first day of school. Mr. Avellani said the \$500 scholarship should be in a separate line.

Mr. Fogg amended his motion, seconded by Mr. Avellani to \$800 instead of \$1,000. Roll call: Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Collins aye, Ouellette aye (Vote 4-0)

Mr. Avellani asked for an administrative change to have the scholarship in a separate line and clearly define what miscellaneous is used for. The Board concurred.

The Board took a five-minute break at 8:44.

The Board resumed the meeting at 8:51

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Avellani to reduce Line 239, Reg Education Fuel by \$2,749. Roll call: Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Collins aye, Ouellette aye (Vote 4-0)

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Avellani to reduce Line 237, Transportation Travel by \$999, to \$1. Roll call: Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Collins aye, Ouellette nay (Vote 3-1)

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Avellani to reduce Line 205, Rubbish Removal by \$4,000. Mr. Avellani rescinded his second and Mr. Fogg rescinded his motion

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Avellani to reduce Line 205, Rubbish Removal by \$3,000. Roll call: Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Collins aye, Ouellette aye (Vote 4-0)

Mrs. D'Agostino said this has been budgeted for the last three years, the first year it was used to pay off IRS the \$42,000 fines, the second year it was used for the increase in superintendent salary due to a change to full time and this year Covid stopped the installation as everyone in the SAU has to be in the office for the training and conversion.

Mr. Avellani made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg to move the Accounting Software moved to a Capital Reserve Fund. Roll call: Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Collins aye, Ouellette aye (Vote 4-0)

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Avellani to reduce line 193 Financial Software by \$56,400. Roll call: Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Collins aye, Ouellette aye (Vote 4-0)

Mrs. Collins asked if there was a way this could be accomplished this year as it's in this year's budget. Mr. Gregoire said there is no guarantee because of the Covid situation.

Public Comment

Mr. Kerns asked if any teacher positions were cut during non-public last night. Mr. Gregoire answered no.

Mrs. Soares said the Board has cut \$150,000 tonight and she asked where is the other \$350,000 to bring it down to the zero-line budget you have now. She said that is something that should be acknowledged in public. She was told the minutes are sealed. Mrs.

Colbath said the Board has to send an approved budget to the Budget Committee on Monday. Mr. Avellani said that's not going to happen on Monday. Mr. Avellani said he does not believe that was a vote of the Budget Committee. Mrs. Colbath said the Budget Committee doesn't look at budgets that aren't approved by the legislative body.

Budget

Mr. Fogg is concerned with the retirement rate increase. Mrs. D'Agostino explained the process and increase.

Mrs. D'Agostino asked if the Board was going to approve the bottom line. Mr. Fogg asked Mrs. D'Agostino if she could print out the entire packet with all changes for the Budget Committee. He understands the enormity of the task. She said she would.

Mr. Avellani made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg, to tentatively approve the changes made so there is a clear path for the Budget Committee to review on Monday. Roll call: Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Collins aye, Ouellette aye (Vote 4-0)

The Bottom Line is (52,355) -.49%

Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg to enter Nonpublic under 91-A:3 ll (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance tax or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant at 9:45. Roll call: Fogg aye, Avellani aye, Collins aye, Ouellette aye, (Vote 4-0)

The Board reentered public session at 10:06. During nonpublic the Board unsealed the minutes of 11-24-20

Mr. Ouellette adjourned the meeting at 10:07

Respectfully submitted for approval at the next School Board meeting,

Priscilla Colbath

Secretary Pro Temp