

Wakefield School Board Public Minutes



November 21, 2023
Held in Paul School Library
Approved

BOARD MEMBERS		ADMINISTRATORS	
Mary Collins, Chair	✓	Anne Kebler, Superintendent via Zoom	✓
Bob Ouellette, Vice Chair	✓	Frank Markiewicz, Business Administrator via Zoom	✓
Robert DeColfmacker	✓	Sarah Howard, Director Student Services	
Sandrea Taliaferro	✓	Norma DiRocco, Principal	
Brennan Peaslee		Ivy Levitt-Carlson, Assistant Principal	

Others present: Kim Hurley, Randie Fox, Rachael Lapierre, Sheena Robbins, Kyle Robbins, Sarah Fenton, Caitlin Gelinis, Zelda Gelinis, Meaghan DeColfmacker, Sarah Farina, John Veino, Caroline Dexter, Katie Howard, Elizabeth and Mary Soares from Clearview TV.

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Collins at 5:30. She led the salute to the flag.

Agenda Review

Add the After School Program list for approval under old business.

Add the 10-17-23 public minutes that were tabled.

Add 11-14-23 non public that Mrs. Seldin took.

Add approval of sealed minutes to non public.

Public Comment

Mrs. DeColfmacker said she is speaking as a parent and community member. She is very disappointed in the way critical decisions have been made for the district that will have a detrimental effect on administrators, the behavior health team, teachers and students. She's heard it's not about the person, it's about the position. She felt the questions Budget Committee members asked about positions and qualifications had no place in a Budget Committee meeting. She said the State of New Hampshire doesn't have specific qualifications for a behavior interventionist. Data and fact should be the basis for any decisions the Board makes that involves students. You had a presentation from four professionals who explained the importance of the MTSS multi tiered system of support. Removing one member of that team reduces the effectiveness of the system. You are elected to act in the best interest of the students. She told the Board that it's not too late to do the right and responsible thing.

Mr. Veino said he has a petition that in four days has 218 signatures. These people are in support of keeping our behavior interventionist position. He said a petition was sent out asking what are the most important issues pertaining to our students? The highest priority was our children's social, emotional and behavioral health. 80% ranked this as their highest priority. The Paul

School staff also provided you with undeniable statistics in their presentation about how critical this role is. He asked how they could vote no with all this information. He feels the parents deserve an explanation and demands one. He said this would increase the budget .036% a year. He said people in Wakefield are very diverse in their opinions. Whatever happens in this town is debated at length. He said there hasn't been one comment in agreement with this Board's decision to cut this position. We deserve to know how the two Board members arrived at their decision. He called on the Board to right their wrong.

Mrs. Lapierre said she wasn't aware of the role and responsibilities of the School Board and is trying to get involved now. It surprises her that 80% of the community are telling you that the social emotional needs of a child are important to them. She is asking why the Board isn't being the voice they were elected to be. Mrs. Gelinas said her seven year old daughter was in the audience at the last meeting and asked her mom for an explanation of what she had heard. Mrs. Gelinas told her that the Board is getting rid of the behavior interventionist position and the room that she had gone to last year. She was very angry and wrote a letter. Mrs. Gelinas read the letter daughter wrote.

Mrs. Fenton talked about how passionate she is about what the leadership team has brought to this school. She explained the vast knowledge and experience she has studying the brain and emotions. She has seen this exact model grow throughout her years of practice. Randie Fox said she was struggling to understand when the Superintendent and BA went to department heads and asked them to be fiscally responsible knowing that they wanted to add these five positions some of the Board members added items that weren't asked for by the department heads who are supposed to be the experts. She does believe that the Board is trying to be successful and deliver a product to help our students do better.

She said that Mrs. Taliaferro is the most involved in looking at the budget. She feels that the administration put on a great presentation and are trying to figure out how to move the school forward and these positions are needed. She said the Transportation manager didn't ask for another bus driver. We have to trust the people who we are asking to do the job. She wondered why at the Budget Committee meeting that one Board member advocated for the behavior interventionist position, which she commends but it's confusing to her. She's hoping that can be explained.

Consent Agenda

Mr. DeColfmaacker made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to approve the consent agenda. (Vote 4-0)

Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Taliaferro made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to approve the non public minutes of 10-17-23. Vote: (2-2)

The public minutes of 10-17-23 were tabled.

Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to approve the budget workshop public minutes of 10-14-23 with corrections. Vote: (4-0)

Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to approve the budget workshop non public minutes of 10-14-23. Vote: (4-0)

Old Business

Clothing Drive

Mrs. Collins said they had a clothing drive and they had an unbelievable amount of clothing donated from the community. She said she can't express how grateful she is. The Lions Club members were there to help. The eighth grade had a bake sale. It was a great event. Families took the clothes they needed. There were clothes left over. Hats and mittens will stay in the nurses office. The other clothes will go to Savers and that money will be used for the Lunch Backpack Program. She said thank you to all who helped and donated.

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Mr. Taliaferro said he was not speaking for the Budget Committee or his wife. He said he wasn't hiding behind his vote and the reason he voted no (for the Behavioral Interventionist position) was because he ran under fiscal conservatives. He said he can't approve a \$300,000 increase. The 216 votes Mr. Venio has on his petition is only one poll. He said when polls are taken there are three or four and they are aggregated. He said he's not saying polls aren't helpful in finding out how a community feels.

Van Quotes

Mr. Markiewicz said up until today we had three quotes to present to the Board. Two vans have been sold. All three vans were similar and similar in price around \$22,000. He made a suggestion to the Board that at the December 5th meeting we will recommend a van. On December 17th, the second Board meeting, we will have the Public Hearing to withdraw the funds from the trust fund. Once approved we'd send the document to the Trustees of the Trust Fund and they would pay directly to the dealership. Mrs. Taliaferro asked if they had the paperwork. She said we need the sticker with all the information on it. Mr. Markiewicz said he hopes that the Board agrees that the administration work with Mrs. Powers to find a van to recommend to the Board. Mr. Markiewicz will be bringing one, perhaps two to the next meeting and then do a sales contract the next day. Mr. Ouellette said he was ok with that. No one disagreed.

New Business

Kingswood Continuation Approval

Mr. DeColfmacker made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to approve the continuation of Kingswood high school students for the 2024-2025 school year. (4-0)

Budget Development, Draft Default Budget,

Mr. Markiewicz will present these, in person, at the next meeting.

Warrant Articles (CIP)

Mr. Ouellette asked if \$110,000 was enough for a bus. Mr. Markiewicz said the bus last year was just under \$103,000. Mr. Ouellette asked if \$110,000 was a safe number. Mr. Markiewicz said yes.

Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mr. DeColfmacker to add \$110,000 to the established Bus Trust Fund by Warrant Article. (4-0)

Mr. Markiewicz said there is \$177,333 in the Boiler Replacement Trust Fund when this years \$50,000 is deposited.

Mrs. Taliferro made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to add \$50,000 to the established Boiler Replacement Trust Fund by Warrant Article. (4-0)

There was a discussion about making sure there is enough in the Well Replacement Trust Fund. There is currently \$30,000 in that fund.

Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins to add \$15,000 to the established Well Replacement Trust Fund by Warrant Article. (4-0)

Mrs. Collins said the total cost of the HVAC Units and Air Handlers Replacement will be \$285,000 and they would like to put \$75,000 in a warrant article this year

Mr. DeColfmacker made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to establish a new Capital Reserve Fund for the HVAC Units and Air Handlers Replacement for \$75,000. (Vote 4-0)

Mr. Markiewicz told the Board that the Computer Trust Fund was only for student computers and doesn't allow us to use that money for switches, routers, access points etc. will need some discussion. Also, there are three trust funds with very little money in them and you can put a warrant article on the ballot to ask the voters to allow us to close those accounts. Mr. Ouellette feels the Parking Lot and Sidewalk Maintenance fund with \$2,399 should stay as there are cracks that need filler. Mr. Markiewicz agreed.

Mr. DeColfmacker asked about a FEMA grant for a generator. Mr. Markiewicz said the school is not eligible because we are not a designated shelter. Mrs. Kebler will look into how a shelter is determined.

Mrs. Collins asked if the current technology trust fund could be combined with a trust fund for switches, routers etc. Mr. Markiewicz said DRA would not approve that. The money in the trust approved for student computers must stay in that fund.

Mr. DeColfmacker made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to establish a new Capital Reserve Fund for Network Infrastructure in the amount of \$50,000. (Vote 4-0)

Mr. DeColfmacker made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to establish a new Capital Reserve Fund for Classroom, Office Flooring in the amount of \$25,000. (Vote 4-0)

Mrs. Collins made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to add \$50,000 to the Educationally Disabled Children Expendable Trust Fund. (Vote 4-0)

Club Approvals

Mr. DeColfmacker made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to approve the list of clubs for the 2023-2024 school year. (Vote 4-0)

Nominations/Hires/Resignations

Mr. DeColfmacker made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ouellette, to approve the hiring of Wyatt Hill as the 5th grade teacher. (Vote 4-0)

The background checks are back for him.

Mrs. Collins told the Board about the Kindergarten Hoe Down. Mr. Ouellette told the Board that the teacher appreciation cook out that was very popular.

Non Public Session

Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mr. DeColfmacker, to enter non public session under RSA 91-A 3:II (c) at 6:41. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, Taliaferro aye, DeColfmacker aye Vote: (4-0)

The Board returned to Public Session at 6:52

Mr. Ouellette made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Collins, to exit non public session at 6:52. Roll call: Ouellette aye, Collins aye, DeColfmacker aye, Taliaferro aye, Vote: (4-0)

Mrs. Collins made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Taliaferro to adjourn the meeting at 6:52. (Vote 4-0)

Respectfully submitted for approval at the next School Board meeting,

Priscilla Colbath
School Board Secretary