

Wakefield Budget Committee Meeting

January 6, 2021

Approved

Members present: Jerry O'Connor, Relf Fogg, Connie Twombly, Ken Fifield. Priscilla Colbath, Dave Mankus and Denny Miller, Paul Romano and Elizabeth Connor by Zoom

School Board present via Zoom: Bob Ouellette, Mary Collins in person

School Administration and Department Heads present: Via Zoom Jerry Gregoire, Anne Kebler, Marie D'Agostino, Jim Lampron, Present in person Joe Williams

Public Present: Jim Miller with Clearview Community TV and Community members by Zoom

Mr. O'Connor opened up the Budget Committee at 6:30.

Mr. O'Connor read a letter of resignation from Frank Zappala.

Mrs. Colbath made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Twombly, to accept Mr. resignation with regret. (Vote 8-0)

The Committee, by consensus decided not to post the open seat and it will be filled during the March election. Mrs. Ward will be notified by Mrs. Colbath.

Line 211: There was some discussion at our last meeting whether to put these items in warrant articles. Mr. Fogg said the Board came up with a good solution. They decided to add \$35,000 back into the operating budget for the fire panel and CO2 detectors. The money for the nine steel entry doors and three sets of aluminum double doors will be taken out of the existing Security Trust Fund. They have added a Warrant Article for \$45,000 to upgrade lighting and refrigeration. There will be matching funds from the power company. Mr. Miller said that articles 16,17 and 18, he believes needs to state 2/3s majority and he'd like that language to be on the article.

Mrs. Colbath made a motion, seconded by Mr. Miller, to approve Function 2610. (Vote 8-0)

The amount of that function is \$622,149

There was a lengthy discussion between Mr. Fogg and Mrs. D'Agostino about gross budgeting. Mrs. Colbath, Mr. Miller, Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Mankus all took a stab at explaining this difficult to understand process.

Warrant Articles

Mrs. Twombly made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Colbath, to approve the \$11,282,569 for Warrant Article #6 (Vote 9-0-1)

Article #2 Teachers CBA

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Twombly to approve Article 2.

Mr. Miller asked if this agreement included the steps and if not, what would happen with the steps not received. Mr. Fogg said steps will be increased by two percent and once that increase is made each employee will go up one step. Both parties are happy with this agreement. Mr. Miller

agreed and said they did a great job. Mrs. Colbath said she also believes this is a great contract, being School Board Secretary, she has been privy to some of the language changes and they are minimal. Both parties were very professional. The Union and the School Board negotiators did a great job and this is a contract we can all support **(Vote 10-0)**

Article #3 Special meeting if Article #2 is defeated

Mrs. Colbath made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg to approve Article 2. (Vote 10-0)

Article #4 Para CBA

Article #5 Special meeting if Article #4 is defeated

Article #6 Operating Budget

This article will be discussed at 6:00 prior to the Public Hearing on January 12th along with the Town warrant articles.

Article #7 Educationally Disabled Children

Mr. Miller asked why we'd put money away for a possible bill we have to pay regardless. Why would we put \$50,000 of taxpayer money away when we have no choice but to pay it? Mr. O'Connor said having this money in the fund keeps us from having to go back to the taxpayers. Mr. Miller said we have to pay it so why vote on something we have no control over. Mr. Fogg said the Board is supporting this because we know the budget is very lean. In case of an emergency this money would help.

Mrs. Colbath made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Twombly to approve Article 7.

Mr. Fogg assured Mr. Miller that having this \$50,000 in a warrant article in no way makes this board feel they don't have to watch the budget. This is an effort, if an unforeseen circumstance occurs, we are prepared. Mrs. Twombly said with her experience on the Board she has found that when a student moves into the district in need the operating budget becomes compromised. Mr. Mankus says if we don't have money in that fund it comes from the other student's education. There is \$1,885.52 left in this trust fund. Mrs. Colbath also supports this article. She looks at it like an insurance policy **(Vote 9-1)**

Article #8 Lighting System Upgrade

Mrs. Twombly made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg to approve Article 8. (Vote 10-0)

Article #9 Transportation

Mrs. Twombly made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg to approve Article 9. (Vote 10-0)

Mr. Miller questioned the 8 cents on the tax impact. It should be 4 cents. Mr. Fogg said that article was \$90,000 until the Board lowered the number to \$50,000 last night. That number will be adjusted. Balance \$80,878.81 **(Vote 10-0)**

Article #10 Gym Floor

Mrs. Twombly made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Colbath to approve Article 10.

Ms. Connor asked how much money was in the fund and when they expect to do this project. Mrs. D'Agostino said this is a long-term CIP project and there is currently \$71,125.86 in the trust fund. Mr. Williams stated they hope there will be enough money in the fund to complete the project during the summer of 2022. **(Vote 10-0)**

Article #11 Technology

Mrs. Colbath made a motion, seconded by Mr. Reinert to approve Article 11. (Vote 10-0)

Article #12 Replacing Boilers

Mrs. Twombly made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg to approve Article 12. (Vote 10-0)

Article #13 Parking Lot & Sidewalk

Mr. Miller made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg to approve Article 13. (Vote 10-0)

Article #14 Updating and Improving Security

Mr. Miller made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg to approve Article 14. (Vote 10-0)

Article #15 Building Maintenance

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fifield to approve Article 15. Mr. Miller questioned the language of this article. The operating budget and this article both have building maintenance in them. Mr. Fogg said this is an attempt to consolidate three trust funds and articles 16, 17, and 18 will be discontinued. Also, it is an attempt to address the larger maintenance projects. Mr. Miller felt maintenance is too broad. There was more discussion on this article. The general consensus was, the Committee supports this article if the word maintenance is removed. The title should say Building Renovation Expendable Trust.

This article will be voted on January 12th.

Article #16 Discontinue Windows

Mr. Miller made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg to approve Article 16. (Vote 10-0)

Article #17 Discontinue SAU Office Repair

Mr. Miller made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg to approve Article 17. (Vote 10-0)

Article #18 Discontinue Asbestos Abatement and Room Renovation.

Mr. Miller made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg to approve Article 18. (Vote 10-0)

Article #19

This will be discussed at the Public Hearing on January 12th.

Mr. O'Connor said we will review the two remaining warrant articles for the school and the warrant articles for the Town on the 12th. Mr. Miller said the school has done a great job with the budget this year. Mr. Mankus asked if the Board has done any legal research on Article 19.

Mr. O'Connor read Article 19. To see if the voters of the Wakefield School District will enter into a cooperative effort with the Sanbornville Water Precinct and negotiate terms and conditions to transfer up to fifteen acres of school property for the purpose of enhancing the Sanbornville Water Precinct in their capability to serve our Wakefield School District. Mr. Fogg said this is an effort to start the process. Mr. Mankus also asked about possible deed restrictions. Mr. Fogg said that the grantor would have to agree with any change of purpose. He spoke with Mr. Stewart and he's in full support of the efforts.

Minutes

Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Miller, to approve the minutes of November 30th. (Vote 9-0-1)

Mr. Miller made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Twombly, to adjourn the meeting at 8:16. (Vote 10-0)

Respectfully submitted for approval at the next Budget Committee meeting,

Priscilla Colbath
Secretary Pro Temp