

Wakefield Budget Committee Meeting  
And Public Hearing with the School  
January 3, 2022  
Approved

Members present: Jerry O'Connor, Relf Fogg, Connie Twombly, Howie Knight, Tom Daniels, Priscilla Colbath, Dave Mankus and Denny Miller, Paul Romano and Elizabeth Connor by zoom

School Board present: Bob Ouellette, Mary Collins, Sheens Robbins and Caitlin Gelinas by zoom.

School Administration: Superintendent Pamela Stiles

Department Head: Joe Williams

Public Present: Jim Miller with Clearview Community TV

Mr. O'Connor opened up the Budget Committee meeting at 6:00 to review the warrant articles.

Mrs. Twombly asked for moment of silence to honor Peggy Richards, former School Board member, coach and longtime supporter of the Paul School who recently passed away.

Mr. Miller said he would like to revisit the Spaulding Tuition line at Deliberative Session

Mr. O'Connor read each article.

**ARTICLE 2:** To see if the School District will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Wakefield School District and the Wakefield Teachers' Association, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level: Fiscal Year Estimated Increase

2022 -2023 \$87,611

2023 -2024 \$85,320

2024 -2025 \$87,321

and further to raise and appropriate EIGHTY SEVEN THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED ELEVEN (\$87,611) for the 2022-2023 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels.

The Wakefield School Board recommends \$87,611 by a vote of (4-0).

**Mr. Knight made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Colbath, to recommend Article 2. (Vote 10-0)**

**ARTICLE 4:** To see if the School District will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Wakefield School District and the Wakefield Paraprofessional Union, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level: Year Estimated Increase

2022-2023 \$ 32,017.50

2023-2024 \$ 28,155.70

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of THIRTY-TWO THOUSAND SEVENTEEN DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS (\$32,017.50) for the 2022-2023 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels.

The Wakefield School Board recommends \$32,017.50 by a vote of 4-0.

Mr. Miller has some concerns. He read the contracts and what jumped out to him was that the teachers agreed to a more moderate insurance plan and the Paras are staying with what he calls the Cadillac plan. Mr. Knight said he will not support any agreement with a Cadillac plan. Mr. Miller recommended that the Budget Committee not support this article.

**Mr. Miller made a motion, seconded by Mr. Knight, to not recommend Article 4.**

For clarity Mr. Miller rescinded his motion and Mr. Knight rescinded his second.

**Mr. Miller made a motion, seconded by Mr. Knight, to recommend Article 4. (Vote 5-5)**  
(Motion fails)

**ARTICLE 6:** Shall the Wakefield School District will vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling TEN MILLION SEVEN HUNDRED TWENTY THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED EIGHTY-ONE DOLLARS AND THIRTY-EIGHT CENTS (\$10,720,981.38). Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be ELEVEN MILLION, SEVENTEEN THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED TWELVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY-FIVE CENTS (\$11,017,512.55) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Wakefield School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.

The Wakefield School Board recommends \$10,720,981.38 by a vote of 4-0.

**Mrs. Colbath made a motion, seconded by Mr. Knight to recommend article 6. (Vote 10-0)**

**ARTICLE 7:** To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$50,000) to be added to the Special Education Capital Reserve Fund previously established.

The Wakefield School Board recommends \$50,000 by a vote of 4-0

There is presently \$51,356 in the Trust Fund. Mr. Miller asked about the original plan to put a total of \$100,000 in this fund and asked if this would be capped at the amount that was agreed upon when established. Mr. Knight felt we should see what happens this year. Mrs. Colbath said she believes we jumped that to \$200,000 a few years ago. The school did have to use some of that money.

**Mrs. Knight made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Colbath to recommend article 7. (Vote 10-0)**

**ARTICLE 8:** To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of FORTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$45,000) to be added to the Transportation Trust previously established.

The Wakefield School Board recommends \$45,000 by a vote of. 4-0

There is presently \$111,000 in this trust fund.

**Mr. Knight made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Colbath to recommend article 8. (Vote 10-0)**

**ARTICLE 9:** To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of FORTY-FOUR THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$44,000) to be added to the Multi-Purpose Room Floor Capital Reserve Account previously established.

The Wakefield School Board recommends \$44,000 by a vote of 4-0.

There is \$120,000 in the fund. This will be changed to “gym floor”.

**Mrs. Colbath made a motion, seconded by Mr. Knight to recommend article 9. (Vote 10-0)**

**ARTICLE 10:** To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of TWENTY-THREE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$23,000) to be added to the Building Renovation Expendable Trust Fund previously established.

The Wakefield School Board recommends \$23,000 by a vote of 4-0

There is \$24,700 in this fund.

**Mr. Fogg made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Twombly, to recommend article 10. (Vote 10-0)**

**ARTICLE 11:** To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of FIFTEEN THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$15,000) to be added to the Parking Lot & Sidewalk Maintenance Capital Reserve Account previously established.

The Wakefield School Board recommends \$15,000 by a vote of 4-0.

Mr. Miller said once again he would like to state that we should not be setting up Capital Reserve Funds to do maintenance, That should be In the operating budget. This article is intended to build new ones sidewalks or do some repaving. No capital reserve should say maintenance. There is \$24,800 in the fund.

**Mr. Knight made a motion, seconded by Mr. Romano to recommend article 11. (Vote 10-0)**

**ARTICLE 12:** To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of SEVENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$75,000) to be added to the Replacing Boilers Capital Reserve Account previously established.

The Wakefield School Board recommends \$75,000 by a vote of 4-0.

There is \$54,000 in the fund.

**Mr. Knight made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Twombly, to recommend article 12. (Vote 10-0)**

**ARTICLE 13:** To see if the school District will vote to establish a Judy Nason Memorial capital Reserve Account under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of designing, constructing and maintaining a memorial bridge at Paul School and to raise and appropriate the sum of TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$10,000) to be placed in this fund. Further, to name the Wakefield School Board as agents to expend from said fund.

The Wakefield School Board recommends \$10,000 by a vote of 4-0.

Mr. Knight asked that a number 2 be added so that the two accounts will be separate, one for donations and one from taxation. Mrs. Stiles said an engineer looked at the project and estimates the cost at \$35,000. Mrs. Colbath said her problem with this article is they really have no idea about the cost. One estimate was \$18,000 and one was \$25,000 to \$35,000. She said she was thinking of Judy and she would question spending that kind of money on a footbridge Mr. Knight and Mr. Miller said that if they get a firm number next year we could fund and build it.

Mr. Fogg said there is a plan now that has been approved by the Planning Board. Mrs. Colbath said if there is a different plan they'd have to come back to the Planning Board. Ms. Conner asked if the Nason family has been involved. Mr. Fogg said they are most concerned about whether this will be done. The daughter who lives closest feels that this could be a simple project. Mrs. Conner wants to make sure the family is aware of the amount of money that's being proposed.

**Mr. Knight made a motion, seconded by Mr. Daniels, to recommend article 13. (Vote 9-1)**

**ARTICLE 14:** To see if the School District will vote to establish a Well Replacement Capital Reserve Account under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of installing a well at the Paul School and to raise and appropriate the sum of FIFTEEN THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$15,000) to be placed in this fund, Further, to-name the Wakefield School Board as agents to expend from said fund.

The Wakefield School Board recommends \$15,000 by a vote of 4-0.

Mr. Williams said it will be \$15,000 this year and \$15,000 next year for a total of \$30,000.

**Mr. Daniels made a motion, seconded by Mr. Miller to recommend article 14. (Vote 10-0)**

**ARTICLE 15:** To see if the school district will vote to establish a Maintenance Building Replacement Capital Reserve fund under the provisions of RSA 35: I for replacing the current maintenance buildings at Paul School and to raise and appropriate the sum of up to THIRTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$30,000) to be placed in this fund. This sum to come from June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1. No amount to be raised from taxation. Further, to name the Wakefield School Board as agents to expend from said fund"

The Wakefield School Board recommends \$30,000 by a vote of 4-0.

**Mr. Daniels made a motion, seconded by Mr. Romano to recommend article 15. (Vote 5-5)**  
(Motion fails)

After some discussion some members of the Committee asked that the School Board rewrite the article to have this article say raise and appropriate as opposed to using the reserve funds and someone on the prevailing side would ask that this article be reconsidered when the Committee meets on January 11<sup>th</sup>.

### **Minutes**

**Mr. Knight made a motion, seconded by Mr. Daniels, to approve the minutes of 11-15-21. (Vote 10-0)**

**Mr. Knight made a motion, seconded by Mr. Fogg, to recess the Budget Committee meeting at 7:50. (Vote 10-0)**

### **Public Hearing**

Mr. O'Connor opened the Public Hearing at 7:51.

Mr. Jim Miller said after observing these meeting for over ten years he is very impressed with the work done by the Superintendent, staff and School Board and he's really sorry she'll be moving on. He said we all want teachers to be compensated fairly. He cannot support a contract where one employee has a better benefit than another. He said negotiations are done behind

closed doors without any public input. He believes the process needs to be changed. Mr. O'Connor said it was devastating to hear that the Superintendent was leaving just when everything was finally starting to work well. Mr. Knight called for a round of applause. Mr. Denny Miller said he's been concerned with Special Ed for years. We can't ask questions. Then we get an administrator in here that says this is a half a million dollars too high and I have to ask how much have we been overpaying all these years.

Mr. O'Connor closed the Public Hearing at 7:59.

**Mr. Knight made a motion, seconded by Mr. Miller, to adjourn the meeting at 8:00. (Vote 10-0).**

Respectfully submitted for approval at the next Budget Committee meeting,

Priscilla Colbath  
Secretary Pro Temp