

**WINCHESTER SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
NOVEMBER 5, 2020
WINCHESTER SCHOOL GYMNASIUM**

Board Members Present: L. Picard, T. Kilanski, J. Rokes, T. Perkins, E. Holmes

Administration Present: K. Dassau, V. Carey, M. Henry, I. Spencer

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 pm. by Chair, L. Picard.

MINUTES:

L. Picard MOVED to approve the public and non-public minutes of 10/15 with changes and the public and non-public minutes of 10/22/20 with changes; SECONDED by: T. Perkins, VOTED 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard explained that it was necessary for the Board to go into non-public session now rather than at the end of the meeting.

T. Perkins MOVED to allow the Board to go into non-public session at the beginning of the meeting; SECONDED by: J. Rokes, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard MOVED to go into non-public session under RSA91-A:3(a); at 6:37pm; SECONDED by: T. Perkins, VOTED: J. Rokes, T. Kilanski, E. Holmes, T. Perkins, L. Picard, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard MOVED to leave non-public session at 6:58pm; SECONDED by: T. Perkins, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

While in non-public session a retirement was accepted. The Board will hold the name of the person until the next meeting.

While in non-public session the resignation of M. Henry was accepted with regret. She will be leaving on 12/11/20.

L. Picard explained while in non-public session, she reminded the Board that they need to ensure appropriate budgeting and planning for the school and that needs to be their first priority. Students need to receive the best education we can provide. Good people are hard to find. She publicly thanked Mary Henry. She came into a very tough financial situation and worked very hard to get through it. The auditor said the books look better than they have in 10 years.

K. Dassau explained there is one agency in the State that provides Business Manager Services; Municipal Resources, Inc. (MRI). They receive one request per week for a Business Manager. K. Dassau did let them know that Winchester is interested. It will cost whatever is in the Business Administrator lines and the position would be for only three days a week. We also have a Payroll person; perhaps they could play a role as well. We might have to anticipate a long-term vacancy. We could use the service, for example, for 60 days and then post the position.

T. Kilanski MOVED to have K. Dassau proceed with finding out more information on MRI and come back to the next Board meeting with more numbers; SECONDED by: T. Perkins, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

L. Picard and K. Dassau will then decide if the Finance Committee should meet to review.

L. Picard advised the Board will need to discuss salaries for the 2021-2022 budget. Our salary was well below the average and she would appreciate the Board considering that for the next meeting. The budget will need to be finalized at the 11/19 meeting.

M. Henry thanked everyone for allowing her to be here. She has enjoyed her time in Winchester.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT –V. Carey:

*NHDI Dance Residency – The PTA is sponsoring the t-shirts this year. Students are dancing with smaller groups this year. There is a very positive message/theme. The people from NHDI love bringing dancing here to Winchester; love our kids.

*Fall Assessment – The state has decided to have each school give an interim assessment. We will see what kids individually and as a whole are struggling with. Assessments will take place this week and next week; remote-only students will also participate. The tests are not being used for accountability. They will be used to see what effect remote learning is having on student learning.

L. Picard wants to be clear; there will be no change in the scores from last year. Not being used for accountability; not comparable. There is not a state test to be reviewed this year.

BUSINESS MANAGER – M. Henry:

*L. Picard entered into the record the 10/30/20 Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$201,566.60 previously approved by the Board.

***L. Picard MOVED to approve the 11/5/20 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$290,257.76, SECONDED by: T. Kilanski, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

*2020-2021 Budget year-to-date: M. Henry explained that 81% of the 2020-2021 budget has been spent. She reviewed year-to-date numbers with the Board; showing a comparison to last month. Adjustments to the KHS tuition have not been made yet.

SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR COMMENT/REPORT – L. Picard:

*L. Picard wants the Board to think about and have discussions about the Deliberative Session. If there is a spike in COVID numbers and we are unable to meet in person, she feels they should start a conversation with the State regarding whether or not there is a Plan B.

*Received an e-mail complimenting the principal, administration and staff from the new school nurse. She is very proud of everyone in keeping students and families safe, especially Principal Carey. The nurse feels everyone showed due diligence with the return to school plan and have zero positive COVID tests in the district.

L. Picard knows the teaching staff is working above and beyond every single day. She has two students in two different districts. She explained each experience is very different.

L. Picard explained teachers strive for excellence. She is asking everyone to have perspective; providing outstanding service to education. Thanked them for all their hard work. The Board will continue to support them in any way they can.

L. Picard explained as we head into one of the most nerve-wracking times, they need to continue working hard to do what is best for students. She believes in Winchester. All students deserve the best education and families deserve our support. Reminded the Board as they go out in the community, please speak positively. Ask community members to stop if they are talking negatively about our town.

BUDGET REVIEW:

M. Henry spoke regarding the new CARES Act money of \$200.00 per student which comes to \$106,500 received from the first round of Grant monies. The whole amount must be spent by 12/30. Hoping we can get additional money from the \$10,000,000 “pot”. Whatever the money is spent on has to be up and running and the money spent by 12/30.

Ian Spencer spoke to the use of funds for the HVAC system for four additional rooms with CARES money. The Facilities Committee has met and reviewed the items regarding the four additional rooms.

J. Rokes MOVED to approve use of the New Student Aid funds for an extra four rooms and additional nine rooms with money from Article six and additional CARES money expected. The total amount needed is \$337,800; SECONDED by: T. Kilanski, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

After discussion, **T. Kilanski MOVED that the Winchester School donate 20 one-piece desks to SAU41; SECONDED by: T. Perkins, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

T. Kilanski advised the Facilities Committee discussed the Boosters Club request at their meeting including the price and what can and cannot happen.

Ian Spencer explained it depends what they are looking for. It couldn't happen immediately after school. Need to clean the gym and bathrooms three extra times. If different, would have to look at that. It would be a minimum of two hours for one practice at \$30.00 per hour.

Ian Spencer – If this is the cost, it is not that he is recommending the Boosters be charged that amount. Advised he doesn't have the staff to add extra work. He would be overspending his budget otherwise. Income paid by Sports Boosters can't be subtracted for any charge for that line. He cannot overspend budget line items. Revenues are irrelevant.

K. Dassau – The Board has the authority to spend the bottom line, but there is a deficit of \$385,000. The Special Ed budget is fragile. There are lots of variables.

L. Picard can follow-up with the Boosters and see if they are interested and able. Then the Facilities Committee should meet again.

K. Dassau advised if there is a spike in cases and we go to full remote learning, the building would be empty.

L. Picard advised there would have to be a Motion to overspend the Facilities Line.

Ian Spencer is not saying they should charge the Boosters a certain amount, but saying this is his cost.

M. Henry hopes to have KHS figures for the Board by the next meeting.

M. Henry reviewed Transportation for Regular Ed, Special Ed, Field Trips/Sports and co-Curricular

Special Ed:

K. Dassau reviewed and Jen Heise spoke to Aides salaries. We lost nine positions with budget cuts and one who has not been replaced. Asking for four additional paras for the 2021-2022 school year to meet the needs of the students who will return and move up from Pre-School and Kindergarten.

L. Picard reminded everyone that the entire Special Education section, except for occasionally some staff that could be reduced, is fixed. Right now that is \$4,000,000; contracted State and Federal requirement. Please remember it's a significant piece of our budget.

L. Picard MOVED that Administration continue with the Special Ed budget to include the recommendations made to the budget of an additional four positions pending Special Ed Tuitions; SECONDED by: T. Perkins, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

Warrant Articles:

K. Dassau reviewed Warrant Articles with the Board.

L. Picard advised spent \$1.5 million in interest on a bond because we didn't take care of the building. Didn't spend money each year or put money in the fund. Want to be in a good position when the bond is paid off.

K. Dassau – Discussed Warrant Article Six; have \$385,000 plus \$85,000 ACCESS shortfall to General Fund. He is working with the Attorney on language for the Warrant Article. Until the shortfall is paid off, there will be no return to the Town. There is a consequence if not able to pay our bill at some point. He will bring information back from the Attorney to the Board.

T. Kilanski feels amounts should be separated.

K. Dassau will get information from the Attorney regarding that, too.

L. Picard asked about the default budget.

M. Henry advised probable December. Should have budget ready for the next Board meeting if hear from KHS and the insurance company.

L. Picard discussed the possibility of reducing the amount in the Special Ed Warrant Article. She doesn't want to remove it, but maybe reduce it and leave it in.

L. Picard advised at the next meeting they need to approve the Budget and any/all Warrant Articles.

After discussion, the Board agreed to add an additional meeting to discuss the budget and Payroll Manifest on 11/12 at 6:30pm.

L. Picard advised at the next meeting on the 12th the Board will see a full and complete budget hopefully with KHS and insurance numbers.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

Ben Kilanski let the Board know that being able to use the school gym for voting worked amazingly well. He gave them a huge thank you.

Ben Kilanski - Recommendation of speaking to MRI – loves it! It is a very thorough company. The Town has used them. Hopefully they will come back with reasonable prices.

Ben Kilanski - The Town has not heard about a plan from the State regarding the Deliberative Session.

Ben Kilanski advised if for some reason the Board doesn't have all the budget figures, the Town could review the parts of the budget that are ready.

Asked about the 81% portion of the budget and encumbered funds. He is sorry to see M. Henry go, but glad she got something she wants to do and with good money.

M. Henry explained the portion of the budget that has been encumbered. She knows it will be spent, but hasn't received Purchase Orders, etc. yet.

Ben Kilanski - Infrastructure Adequacy Aid – M. Henry received the first two installments. Two payments are still owed to the School. He asked about other Grants.

M. Henry advised \$312,000 and \$106,000 but if we don't use it, we'll lose it. There could also be a share in an additional \$10,000,000 which we have qualified for. There are two Homeland Security Grants. Thank you to the Town for the money for lighting.

Kevin Bazan asked in light of the recent announcement from Mary Henry, he thinks the Board should possibly look at contracting out SAU services. Thinks that is the reality of where we are, if not going to raise salaries the same as other districts.

Kevin Bazan asked when we are going to get the report from Keene High School.

K. Dassau hasn't had a conversation with Mr. Malay. He will discuss it with him.

Kevin Bazan asked if we got last year's report.

K. Dassau – No.

Kevin Bazan – It is disturbing. In the past we have looked at reports to be sure kids are prepared; makes him very nervous not to have it.

Emily Henderson asked via Facebook live about tonight's non-public session. Asked what position retired; not the name.

T. Kilanski feels it is safe not to say.

L. Picard advised it was a teaching position.

T. Kilanski MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 9:25pm; SECONDED by: J. Rokes, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

Sincerely,

Peggy Higgins

School Board Secretary