

**Lyme School District
School Board Regular Meeting
Tuesday, January 19, 2021
Electronic Meeting Via Zoom**

approved with changes 1/26/21

Board Members Present: Vince Berk, Yolanda Bujarski, Hayes Greenway, Matthew Hayden. Jonathan Voegele, Phil Barta, Barbara Wilson. District Administrator Jeff Valence, Coordinator of Business Services Janet Mitchell, Academic Director Elise Foxall, Special Education Director Miki McGee; Public including Lyme Moderator Bill Waste: 14 other public attendees via Zoom. Recorded by Roger Lohr

1. Call to Order

Chair Jonathan Voegele called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM and welcomed the attendees, with the Board and public via Zoom.

2. Public Comment

Chair Jonathan Voegele opened public comment and there were no comments so public comment was closed by Chair Voegele at 7:08 PM.

3. Reports

3A. Finance Update

Coordinator of Business Services Janet Mitchell stated that there was a printing error with the expenditures and budget that was in the amount of \$2,000. The new 2021-22 budget is \$7,543,122.

Board member Matt Hayden gave an overview of the Warrant Articles and explained the contingency fund concept, which is intended as a procedural placeholder to be discussed at the school district meeting. The fund would be established to cover COVID-related costs in case other sources of funding (operating budget, related reserve funds, State Emergency Order # 38, Federal funding) were not available. The possible COVID-related costs were outlined including the need for remote learning staff, PPE, sanitation, furniture, etc. The proposed Warrant Article to establish a contingency fund was created with the help of the district counsel and incorporates specific language provided by the DRA. The amount in the fund could be discussed and set at the district meeting.

3B. Warrant Articles

Article 1 – Reports

A motion was made and seconded (Hayden, Greenway) to approve the Warrant Article 1 as presented at the January 19, 2021 Lyme School Board meeting.

VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved with Barta, Berk, Bujarski, Greenway, Hayden, Voegele and Wilson in favor.

Article 2 – Operating Budget

A motion was made and seconded (Barta, Hayden) to approve the Warrant Article 2 on the Lyme School 2021-22 Operating Budget in the amount of \$7,543,122 as presented at the January 19, 2021 Lyme School Board meeting.

Discussion: The Board discussed the status of the Special Education budget for 2021-22 set at \$45,000, while the possible expenses could be \$168,000. There is uncertainty in the special education

budget amount but it was recommended by Special Education Director Miki McGee taking into various factors. If new information is available by the time of the district meeting, a new amount could be amended for the article.

VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved with Barta, Berk, Bujarski, Greenway, Hayden, Voegelé and Wilson in favor.

Article 3 – Add \$19,000 to the Enrollment Response Capital Reserve Fund from surplus

A motion was made and seconded (Greenway, Bujarski) to approve the Warrant Article 3 to add \$19,000 to the Enrollment Response Capital Reserve Fund as presented at the January 19, 2021 Lyme School Board meeting.

Discussion: It was stated that the amount would bring the balance of the fund to the amount necessary to cover one teacher (Track 3, Step 10) including salary and benefits.

VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved with Barta, Berk, Bujarski, Greenway, Hayden, Voegelé and Wilson in favor.

Article 4 – Add \$88,000 to the Special Education Reserve Fund from surplus

A motion was made and seconded (Greenway, Bujarski) to approve the Warrant Article 4 to add \$88,000 to the Special Education Reserve Fund as presented at the January 19, 2021 Lyme School Board meeting.

Discussion: It was stated that the amount would bring the balance of the fund to the amount necessary to maintain a \$300,000 balance.

VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved with Barta, Berk, Bujarski, Greenway, Hayden, Voegelé and Wilson in favor.

Article 5 – Add \$26,000 to the Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund from surplus

A motion was made and seconded (Bujarski, Hayden) to approve the Warrant Article 5 to add \$26,000 to the Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund as presented at the January 19, 2021 Lyme School Board meeting.

Discussion: It was stated that the amount would bring the balance of the fund to the amount necessary to maintain a \$50-60,000 balance.

VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved with Barta, Berk, Bujarski, Greenway, Hayden, Voegelé and Wilson in favor.

Article 6 – Establish a Contingency Fund in the amount of \$100,000 from taxation.

A motion was made and seconded (Hayden, Bujarski) to approve the Warrant Article 6 to establish a Contingency Fund in accordance with RSA 198:4-b I to meet the cost of unanticipated expenses that may arise during the year and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 to the Contingency Fund as presented at the January 19, 2021 Lyme School Board meeting.

Discussion: The Contingency Fund would be non-lapsing and was worded so that it would not be restricted to only COVID-related expenses. The amount to put in the fund could be amended at the district meeting. The election would be held on March 9 and four new board members could be elected but the district meeting tentatively scheduled for May regarding the 2021-22 budget would be within the current board's business. The new board would meet for the April meeting and members of that board would be able to speak to the budget at the district meeting. Changes to the amounts in the budget or the Warrant Articles could be no more than 10%.

The use of the Contingency Fund would need to be approved and would require a town vote. The language of the Contingency Fund Warrant Article was provided by the DRA and reviewed by the

district's counsel. The Board could put caveats on itself in a public statement with regard to its intention to restrict the use. An alternative option to establishing the contingency could be to add funds to the existing targeted reserve funds but it was stated that returning amounts to taxpayers from such funds would be tricky. The operating budget can be increased by 10% (\$700,000) from the floor but this would need to be done when the budget warrant article was being discussed and could not be done after it was passed. Other options for covering potential COVID-related expenses for the 2021-22 school year might include the state's emergency order #38 or possible Federal funding, if they exist at that time.

It was explained that the tally of the School Board would be included on each Warrant Article as "the Board recommends," but if the Board does not pass the proposed article, it would not be added to the document. It was also stated that it may be uncertain that a public vote or simply a public hearing is necessary to expend funds from the Contingency Fund.

VOTE: The motion failed. In favor of proposed Article 6 included Barta, Bujarski, Hayden and those opposed included Berk, Greenway, Voegelé, Wilson.

Article 7 – Salaries of District Officials

A motion was made and seconded (Greenway, Bujarski) to approve the Warrant Article 7 to approve salaries as presented at the January 19, 2021 Lyme School Board meeting.

VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved with Barta, Berk, Bujarski, Greenway, Hayden, Voegelé and Wilson in favor.

3C. Town and School District Meetings

The Board was updated by town moderator Bill Waste about the collaborative dialogue held in the town about scheduling the town and school district meetings. It has been suggested that the election vote be held on March 9 in the school gymnasium. There has been discussion about shortening the hours for the election. The school would go on remote learning for that day.

The budget deliberation would be held on Saturday, May 1 with a raindate of May 2 or May 8. The town meeting and school district meeting would be held on the same day with a break in between. It was suggested that the school district meeting be held first as it involves a larger budget. The Board will be given an update at its January 26 meeting. The superintendent commented that a late date for the district meeting could impact the search process to replace staff retirees or contracts.

4. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded (Hayden, Greenway). VOTE: The motion was unanimously approved with Barta, Berk, Bujarski, Greenway, Hayden, Voegelé and Wilson in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.