

**WINCHESTER SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
NOVEMBER 17, 2022
WINCHESTER SCHOOL LIBRARY**

Board Members Present: L. Picard, L. Hildreth, J. Rokes, J. Blake, J. Hadler
Administration Present: T. Taylor, M. Pouliot, M. Hill

The meeting was called to order by Chair, L. Hildreth at 6:36pm.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

Amy Hill brought a request from membership for a flowchart to show what happens with a request when teachers order supplies. Feel there needs to be something in writing.

L. Picard MOVED to approve the 11/3/22 Public and Non-Public School Board Minutes as written; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

BUDGET DISCUSSION:

Professional Development, School Board and Transportation – Fourth Review. The Board received updated budget documents for review.

The Board received enrollment numbers and T. Taylor reviewed and answered questions.

Reviewed Maintenance/Custodial Staff – After discussion, L. Hildreth confirmed that two market adjustments along with a three percent increase for other positions was approved at the last meeting.

Administration/SAU Staff:

L. Hildreth explained they had previously looked at two percent – wanted to review market adjustments before making a decision. After much discussion by the Board, L. Hildreth advised she is okay with the recommendation of two percent, but when the time comes that they need to hire a Superintendent, most likely will be looking at doing a market adjustment because the part-time Superintendent roll now is pretty in-line with other districts. Feels the Business Manager and Administrative Assistant will also be in that line which will make them more competitive.

L. Picard is concerned that the Business Manager and Administrative Assistant need a market adjustment; concerned it is a slide. Feels they should have information so the whole Board can have it to review. Feels will become a talking point for the Budget Committee and the Deliberative Session. The Board has worked really hard to show data on salaries.

L. Hildreth MOVED to approve a three percent increase for SAU/Administration except the Superintendent, Business Manager and Administrative Assistant salaries; SECONDED by: L. Picard, after discussion, VOTED: 4-1 (J. Rokes - no), MOTION PASSED.

T. Taylor reviewed the SAU Office/Specialists with the Board and possible increase percentage amounts. After discussion, **L. Picard MOVED to approve a three percent increase for Specialists; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, VOTED: 4-1 (J. Rokes – no), MOTION PASSED.**

After discussion, the Board agreed to do a final review of the budget on 11/29 at 5:30pm.

J. Rokes asked why the **Music Supplies – 1112.56100** line doubled.

T. Taylor explained she cleared out the equipment line and put it into the supply line.

J. Rokes MOVED to adjust the Music Supplies line to \$1,000; T. Taylor explained as they have moved forward out of COVID there would probably be more of a need. She would hesitate to cut that. After discussion, J. Rokes accepted a Friendly Amendment to make that line \$1,500; VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

J. Rokes asked about \$8,000 increase in **Line 1126.56410 – Books and Printed Material Reading.**

T. Taylor explained in the past no one knew what was spent and then the line was over-spent; it is a better way of tracking how much is spent and how much is left by doing it under one code.

T. Taylor advised there is \$15,000 total in the Books line, but they are moving more to applications.

There is more access on-line. It is the same amount of money allocated, but didn't have anything allocated for Information Access Fees. We are purchasing books, but not like we did. She took \$5,000 for Information Access Fees and reallocated that amount.

L. Picard advised the budget will reflect so much cleaner next year and the year after.

J. Blake asked if \$16,851.37 is what was spent already this year; total Supply expenses?

T. Taylor - Correct.

After discussion, **J. Rokes MOVED to reduce Books and Printed Material to \$7,000; SECONDED BY: L. Picard, after discussion, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

J. Hadler – **Kindergarten Screening Salaries – Line 1130.51100:** is that screening anticipated to have gone up?

T. Taylor based on salary and positions. Also, it depends how many kids are coming to Kindergarten screening; it could take two days or three days.

51105 – Reading Intervention; had dropped by \$30,000.

T. Taylor – Grant split; explained it was previously posted to the 2100 code, but should be in 51105.

J. Hadler asked about **Summer School** lines; all are blank for next year but we spent money in prior years in some of the lines.

T. Taylor will do Summer School again; starts in the next fiscal year. The lines were moved. There could be something that comes up, but Summer School really starts in the next fiscal year. It is in the budget now in the 1400's; everything posted in the FY23 school year. If she takes that out of there now, the bottom line won't be correct.

J. Blake asked about **Line 1200.55604 – Summer Programs Special Ed** and why the big gap between what was budgeted and what was spent.

T. Taylor explained it is hard to know what is needed. She moved the line to level-fund it at \$20,000.

There was review and discussion by the Board.

L. Hildreth asked if they could color the lines red that are moving and then color the lines another color to show where they were moved to so they will know they are no longer going to use this account and visually know where the funds were moved.

T. Taylor is hoping this process will be done soon.

L. Picard – Next year will have a two-year history of the lines.

J. Hadler asked about reallocation of **Wages/Summer Paras - Special Ed:**

T. Taylor advised it was originally posted in the General 1200's.

L. Picard – Not seeing Summer Paras.

L. Picard – Moving all Summer Lines to 1430?

T. Taylor – Correct; need to do a budget transfer for those numbers.

T. Taylor explained they haven't been moved yet. She hasn't been advised if they need an increase/decrease. Need to see updated numbers.

The Board reviewed and made changes/transfers as needed.

After Board discussion, Jen Heise explained cannot be level-funded as it includes salaries.

L. Hildreth – Need to see new figures so we know what the salaries will be with the increases; so we know how to proceed.

L. Picard- Definitely will need to approve next time.

J. Rokes asked about **Line 1210.56100 - Supplies/Life Skills Program**– why such an increase?

T. Taylor explained as the program is moving forward the Life Skills teacher is literally teaching cooking, etc. Definitely need the funds to be able to do this.

J. Rokes - **Books and Printed Matter Special Ed 1200.56410.**

After discussion, **J. Rokes MOVED to make that line \$1,000; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, after discussion, T. Taylor advised the two lines cannot be combined.**

J. Rokes MOVED to Amend his Motion on Line 1200.56410 to \$500.00 for Books and Line 1200.56430 to \$750.00 for Information Access Fees.

J. Heise suggested \$1,000 in each line.

After discussion, **J. Rokes Amended the Motion to \$750.00 in line 1200.56410 and \$700 in line 1200.56430; There was no SECOND, MOTION FAILED.**

J. Rokes MOVED to reduce line 1200.56410 to \$750.00 and line 1200.56430 to \$1,000; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, after discussion, VOTED: 4-1 (J. Hadler – no), MOTION PASSED.

Line 1200.56100 – Supplies and Medical Hardware Special Ed Admin:

T. Taylor explained there has been staff in and out so there will be some decrease there. Supplies were sitting around more. Supplies were ordered, but then six months goes by then they need to be thrown out. The Health Services Coordinator has come in and checked; now realized a lot of things are not stocked, so he's working on that.

M. Pouliot – advised that particular line is for Special Ed; not for the Nurse at all.

J. Heise – If a student needs a FM system attached to hearing aids, that \$3,500 would be gone.

J. Rokes asked about **Line 5232.031 – Teacher Retirement Special Ed Teachers:**

T. Taylor – There was a reduction in Teacher Retirement and we have 10 Paraprofessional positions that are unfilled; 27 positions altogether – three Paras are filling teaching positions. Still sitting there holding a spot, but not working as a Para.

J. Rokes asked about the **Wages Paraprofessionals Special Ed Line – 1200.51150:**

J. Rokes knows we are legally required to budget for paras if we can fill them. We don't expect to hire 10 paras?

L. Picard – Couldn't fill them, so the line was reduced by two.

T. Taylor – Three paras are on a Special Agreement between the District and the Union. They are doing teaching duties. They are still getting paid out of that line, but their salary inside there is a lot larger than the others.

L. Hildreth – If we reduce the line and can fill positions, we would put ourselves in the chance of a deficit as we are required to fill those positions. All vacant positions are budgeted at a BA7.

L. Picard - Explained it is not the expectation of being able to hire, it's the expectation of the need based on the IEP, 504 Plan, etc. If we need positions and can't hire them, need to contract that service and then that line item is potentially more because the contracted service is more.

J. Rokes asked if the Board would consider hiring positions unexpectedly if we are able to hire.

L. Picard - If we intentionally reduce that line in good faith and have a situation where we have to staff it, we would have to go into the Special Ed Fund.

J. Rokes asked why some Paras are teaching, but do not have contracts.

M. Pouliot explained they have an educational background, but not the requirements needed to be a teacher. They are taking the Practice, the State test to become a teacher. One of the three Paras is approved and has their teaching Certificate, but that salary won't come out of the Para line yet.

J. Hadler asked about **Line 1200.53001.30 and 53001.32 Elementary and High School Related Services Special Ed** – moved money in Elementary to High School; why was so much budgeted?

T. Taylor explained it was previously in one code; it is now broken out between Elementary and High School.

J. Rokes asked about **Guidance Salaries**: – feels the total should be less than \$100,000.

T. Taylor advised she will look at that line. She has had issues with getting kicked off the system.

J. Rokes advised his understanding is if a line has all zeros it should be deleted.

T. Taylor tried to clear out all the zeros across; might have missed some. She is trying to be careful not to accidentally delete a line.

L. Picard Guidance Salary - Assumes the Board wants to add three percent, but they will need to come back and look at this portion of the budget.

J. Hadler asked about Line in 53000 Account: Vision Services: Was this for equipment? We are not budgeted for next year.

J. Heise explained if a student remains in our District, we would still have to pay and it will be way more than that (some of the cost is included in the IDEA Grant). Advised she can have the number before the budget is finalized. She feels the worst case scenario is \$130,000, before Grants.

L. Picard feels they need to at least put one-third of the cost as a placeholder - \$40,000 to \$45,000.

L. Picard MOVED to put \$45,000 into that line item; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

If less, could reduce that number, if higher might need to look to increase it.

J. Hadler asked about **Line 2222.56430 - Access Fees/Subscription - Library**: why was nothing budgeted but there is an increase in the Book budget?

T. Taylor advised some programs at the library have been used. There are some little things she hasn't caught as far as coding.

L. Hildreth asked if any of that was for Access Fees and less for Books.

T. Taylor will need to check on what was in the \$2,060.

J. Hadler asked if the amount was \$1060?

T. Taylor was not sure if it was the amount, but close; hasn't changed that much in the past.

After discussion, **L. Picard MOVED to reduce Books and Printed Materials to \$1,500 and \$1,000 for Information Access Fees; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

J. Rokes asked about postage; there are two different lines – **2400.55340 Postage School Admin and 2320.55340 Postage SAU.**

After discussion, **J. Rokes MOVED to reduce Postage for School Admin to zero; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

J. Rokes MOVED to reduce Postage - SAU to \$2,500; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, after discussion, J. Rokes amended the MOTION to \$2,000; there was no SECOND; MOTION FAILED. VOTE on Motion to reduce Postage to \$2,500; VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

J. Rokes MOVED to reduce Line 2320.56100 SAU Supplies – Management Services to \$1,750; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, after discussion, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

J. Blake – **Line 55400 Legal Postings/Recruitment SAU.** It doesn't appear to be utilized. L. Picard advised there is a lot of on-line posting.

J. Blake MOVED to decrease the line to \$750.00; SECONDED by: L. Picard, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

J. Hadler asked about **Line 2320.56500 – Software SAU Management Services.**

T. Taylor explained it is Tyler Tech - the Software Program. What's been paid is showing up elsewhere.

After discussion, **L. Picard MOVED to reduce line 2320.56500 to \$12,500 Software SAU Management Services; SECONDED by: J. Rokes, VOTED 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

J. Rokes asked about **Line 2320.52500 - Unemployment Compensation District.**

T. Taylor explained the amount was reduced to \$20,000 as that is what Primex will bill for the calendar year. There could be a second billing after we close our books and they go back and review. When they gave us the bill for 2023, they were reviewing our FY20-21 gross wages, etc.

T. Taylor knows \$40,000 is not an accurate number.

After discussion, **J. Rokes MOVED to make that Line 2320.52500 \$15,000; SECONDED BY: L. Picard, after discussion, VOTED: 4-1 (J. Blake – no), MOTION PASSED.**

After discussion, **L. Picard MOVED to approve Line 2390.56100 \$350.00 for Graduation Misc. End-of-Year; SECONDED by: J. Rokes, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

J. Rokes advised **Purchase Services** was budgeted at \$750.00; have spent nothing.

After discussion, **L. Picard MOVED to zero the line contingent upon T. Taylor not finding that that line is relevant; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

J. Hadler asked about **Line 1490.5601 - Field Day Misc. End of Year.**

After discussion, **J. Hadler MOVED to make that line \$1,500; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, by Friendly Amendment and Second reduced to \$1,250; VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

J. Hadler asked about **Certification**.

M. Pouliot explained the cost depends how many teachers recertify in any given year.

L. Picard feels they may want to look at bumping that number up at the next budget cycle.

M. Pouliot advised she can find out how many teachers get their certification each year.

J. Rokes asked about **Purchase Services School Administration**.

T. Taylor advised she can't tell definitively what it was set up for.

After discussion, **J. Rokes MOVED to make that line zero; SECONDED by: L. Picard contingent upon no accommodation needed, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

J. Rokes MOVED to reduce Line 2400.55800 – Travel and Conferences School Admin to zero, Line 2400.56100 – Supplies School Admin to \$200 and 2400.58100 – Dues and Fees School Admin to \$100; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth; after discussion there was a Friendly Amendment by L. Picard to make Lines 2400.55800, 2400.56100 and 2400.58100 \$250.00; VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

J. Rokes MOVED to make line 58100 – Dues and Fees, \$1,000; NO SECOND.

J. Blake asked about **Line 2600.54300 – Repairs and Maintenance**.

L. Picard explained it was transferred to the Capital Reserve, but reflected in that line item.

J. Rokes asked about **Line 2600.56220 – Electricity** and if M. Hill thought that number was good.

M. Hill – Yes.

L. Hildreth advised there was a big drop in **Dental/Health Costs**.

T. Taylor explained all on different Health Insurance Plans; moved everyone over. Costs dropped and there was a switch in the plan.

M. Pouliot was told by the bus company that currently all Pre-Schoolers are on one van so we only pay for two bus monitors; one van and one Special Ed.

T. Taylor advised they could reduce that number to two bus monitors.

L. Hildreth MOVED to reduce Line 2700.55330 Bus Monitor Services - Transportation by \$21,875; SECONDED by: L. Picard, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

Fuel Surcharge Transportation will need to be added at a cost of \$6,556.

Line 2840.56430 - Information Access Fees.

After discussion, **J. Rokes MOVED to reduce the line to \$8,500; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.**

J. Rokes asked about Bond Interest – final payment at \$3,500.

T. Taylor advised it is the very last payment. The cost is due to the way the interest is split up.

Line 2840.56430 – Information Access Fees.

T. Taylor is concerned that the Board just reduced this line to \$8,500. Explained Power School, the Sonic Wall, Zoom and a lot of other licensing is all hitting there.

After discussion, **L. Picard MOVED to revisit this line; SECONDED by: L. Hildreth, VOTED: 4-1 (J. Rokes – no), MOTION PASSED.**

Line 2840.56430 – Information Access Fees.

L. Picard feels they did reduce it too much as she thought funds were coming from someplace else.

L. Hildreth MOVED to level-fund the line at \$20,000; SECONDED by: L. Picard, after discussion – L. Hildreth feels they should level-fund the line, but if they come back, possibly could look at it again and see if maybe it could be reduced some; VOTED: 4-1, (J. Rokes – no), MOTION PASSED.

M. Hill reviewed items on his **Capital Reserve Warrant Article Activity Plan** – additions for \$125,000 Warrant Article that the Board historically recommends.

L. Picard – year end return – what does it look like?

T. Taylor advised the fund balance is about \$1.5 Million.

L. Picard explained she would like to be ready to bring to the Selectboard the amount that will be returned. Feels the School needs to have an Emergency fund. Can still do it with a significant return to the Town and keep \$250,000 in the Emergency Fund. Because the School has no control over what the Selectboard does with the money returned by the School, she feels they should be specific that it is to be returned to taxpayers.

L. Hildreth MOVED to put \$250,000 from unexpended dollars into the Emergency Fund; SECONDED by: L. Picard, after discussion it was agreed \$250,000 would be put into the Emergency Fund and approximately \$1,250,000 will go to the Town to offset taxation; VOTED: 4-1, MOTION PASSED.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

None.

L. Hildreth MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 10:09pm; SECONDED by: J. Blake, VOTED: 5-0, MOTION PASSED.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Higgins
School Board Secretary