

# **WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**Location: Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School – Media Room: 6:30 P.M.**

## **January 15, 2013 FINAL MEETING MINUTES JOINT MEETING BUDGET COMMITTEE AND SCHOOL BOARD**

*Budget Members Present: Chair Don Davidson, Vice-Chair Dave Roemer, Bill Ball, Leslie Browne, Karen Grybko, Cary Hughes, Ellen Pomer, Mark Whitehill, Secretary Dawn Tuomala.*

*School Board Member(s): Geoffrey Brock (Chair), Harry Dailey (Vice-Chair), Matt Ballou, Francis Bujak, James Button, Joyce Fisk, Dion Lewis (by Phone connection), Alex LoVerm, Carol LeBlanc*

### **Attendance:**

Interim Superintendent Dr. Donald LaPlante, Business Administrator Lisa Ambrosio, Director of Student Support Betty Moore, Principal Brian Bagley, Principal Sue Tussing, Principal Kenneth Griffin, Administrative Assistant Kristina Fowler

The Agenda was as follows:

1. Call Meeting to Order – in Media Center
2. Public Comments
3. Financial Action Items
  - a. Revenue Trend
  - b. Unreserved Fund Balance 3 to 5 year trend
  - c. Budget vs. Expenses
  - d. Support Staff Insurance
4. Warrant Article Discussion
  - a. Full time vs. Part Time Librarian
  - b. Elementary Principal Position
  - c. Unreserved Fund Balance to Capital Reserve Accounts
  - d. All other Planned Warrant Articles
5. Budget Revisions
6. Other Business
7. Adjourn

### **1. Call Budget Committee Meeting to Order – in Media Center**

Chairman Davidson called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM for the Budget Committee.

Chairman Geoffrey Brock called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM for the School Board.

### **2. Public Comments**

Mr. Tom Schultz from Wilton and as a parent spoke about instituting a resource officer in the schools. Other Towns have already taken this step. He has requested this in previous years starting in 2004 and most recently in 2007. There hasn't been any movement on this issue to date. He feels that it has been shown to make the students and teachers feel safer in the schools with less drugs, bullying, creating a better learning environment while

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE SCHOOL - BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
**JOINT MEETING MINUTES** – January 15, 2013

preventing school violence. Both Wilton and Lyndeborough Police Departments favor this as when they are visible in the schools but this is only a temporary measure. A resource officer would coordinate emergency responses. There is Federal funding of \$5.5 million across 45 States. This should be brought to the voters this year. A Petition Warrant Article needs to be brought before the School Board before February 6<sup>th</sup> and this must have 25 signatures with addresses. Mr. Schultz would like to have his letter completely put in the minutes. The letter in its entirety has been scanned and attached at the end of the minutes.

### **3. Financial Action Items**

- a. Revenue Trend and**
- b. Unreserved Fund Balance 3 to 5 year trend and**
- c. Budget vs. Expenses**

Ms. Ambrosio was asked to track the impact of the tax rate and what revenue trends have been. All of the expenditures are in there. All sources of revenue from school nutrition to State and Federal Aid are also included. A large number of grants are offset with dollars in and out. The Budget expense less all sources of revenue are calculated to get to a share of the appropriation.

Equalized versus assessed values tax rate based on current administration and assess value \$16.91 (up \$0.19/dollar) for Wilton and \$15.89 (up \$1.01) for Lyndeborough.

The Fund Balance impact has a new standard of reporting, Gatsby 54 was instituted another way of representing the fund balance. Expenses on MS22 is the budget and sources of revenue with both of these having to equal.

There was a reduction in regular ed, along with changes in Administration staffing with benefits that weren't needed, also a change in teaching staff to lower rates. Everything is going out to bid saving more money and the facilities repairs came in \$10,000 under the estimate.

The SPED Department is \$100,000 under budget which is due to the transition out of a third party vendor to in district placement. The SPED Transportation for another student is no longer required since they are now in a residential placement. This will all go into the unreserved fund balance for next year. CAT aid was \$10,000 under what we projected last year. Those are the drivers for the revenues. The State Adequacy aid has been going lower and lower each year. It is down about \$140,000, and we will true them up during the year instead of at the end of the year. There was also a credit due to a Town specific project.

Mr. Button explained that aid grant was up \$15,000 for Wilton but down \$143,000 for LCS.

Dr. LaPlante stated that there is a bill to restore funding to the Towns that lost it due to a miss calculation in DRA. Manchester and Nashua were restored to previous amounts, but it is unclear if LCS will get it or not. This is just a one-time fix and next year they will go back down again. The shift between ADM (Average Daily

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE SCHOOL - BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
**JOINT MEETING MINUTES** – January 15, 2013

Membership), a full time student enrolled is considered 1 and a kindergarten student is ½ even if the school has full time kindergarten.

The fund balance is a combination of the end of year expenses and a look back into the prior year. Then the previous year is trued up. The difference between the prior years, if adjusted in Capital Reserve balances is also added to the fund balance. The budget gets set and the revenues always equal the budget. The tax is based on the estimated revenues minus the proposed budget to balance them.

The premium holiday is a one-time event. There are other items that do carry into the next year, some are the same and some you only take a percentage. The oil budget was based on \$/gallon but when it went out to bid it came back as a lower rate so it dropped the budget. Electricity has a built in savings due to changing from PSNH to Hess. Each year the budgets are built around and with the current staff and what their expenses are but this has to be adjusted with the changing of staff. Also helping reduce the budget are costs with SPED since they have been changing students to an in-house program from being tuition out of District.

The projection for year ending 2013 to close out actuals at 11,059,855 and V3 for year ending 2014 is \$600,000 over what the actuals are for 2013. This is going up due to the third year of the teacher contract, the insurance for part time employees and the state retirement program shifting more costs to the local district. This totaled \$320,000, so what is the other \$300,000 difference between last year's budget. For the year ending 2013 the budget has a fund balance. This year we will have another \$474,000 that was budgeted for but won't be spending. There seems to be a trend going up every year, \$200K, then \$300K and now up to \$400K. Some of this was due to the consolidation but we are beyond that now. The excess last year was due to the LCS addition construction project that came in below estimate. Even the outside general expenses affect the budget. This seems like a large excess that could be cut some while still keeping up out of a deficit situation.

Mr. Dailey stated that there are one time savings coming off consolidation. There will be a pairing down of contracts and we will not see this kind of savings going forward to this extent. There was \$150,000 from the State Retirement requirements put on the Towns, over \$250,000 for the third year in the teachers' contract. There is a difference between the salaries and benefits which has been under running due to changes in the staffing.

There is a 6% increase more than year 2013 but we haven't accounted for 6% expenses going up. Compare the budget requests to the actuals spent. There is still a principal and a secretary that wasn't in the previous budget. There was spending money on staff from different places in the budget to accomplish this. Salaries and benefits have been driving the costs up. There are a total of \$320,000 of uncontrollable expenses but there is another \$280,000 that we are talking about. Show the budget to estimate actual for 2013 to see where the spikes are going into the 2014 budget. If \$11,533,000 was budgeted why was only \$11,060,000 actually expended?

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE SCHOOL - BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
**JOINT MEETING MINUTES** – January 15, 2013

**d. Support staff insurance**

Mr. Daily recused his self from this discussion.

Dr. LaPlante began the discussion stating the he absolutely needs to have a decision tonight about which way the Board and the Committee would like him to negotiate tomorrow otherwise we won't have a number by the end of the month. He would like to see the approval of the proposal in front of us. There was discussion about whether or not he should be given an actual budget number or to approach it by stating the type of insurance so that he doesn't have to walk away from the table especially if it is only for a small amount of money. Otherwise we will be cutting hours to the people that provide service to the children that are most at risk and they are the ones who really need to have the quality of services maintained. This is the least expensive proposal out there to date.

**Motion was made by Mr. Roemer (Budget Committee Vote) to empower Dr. Laplante and the team to move forward with the insurance concept shown and explained to us. Mr. Ball seconded; Discussion: if we vote on an actual number and they get close but fail to meet it then they are out of time. The worst case would be if all 32 employees were to take it then there would be \$200,000 that would need to be considered. All in favor; motion passes.**

**Motion was made by Mr. Bujak (School Board Vote) to accept the concept described by Dr. LaPlante to be used in the negotiations with the support staff. Mr. Ballou seconded the motion; all in favor with one abstention; motion passes.**

Mr. Daily returned to the Board.

**4. Warrant Article Discussion**

- a. Full Time vs. Part Time Librarian and**
- b. Elementary School Principal Position**

Principal Bagley has brought forth a proposal to increase the Librarian's hours from part time to full time which would add another \$42,000 to the budget. The Budget Committee discussed this in connection with the elementary school principal position which will be brought up to the voters as a warrant. The Librarian position should have the same rule set as the Principal has. If the Principal warrant fails then it creates a new position and if it passes then it restores to what we already have.

Mr. Brock explained that the Librarian position exists and it's only going back to full time. Whereas, the Principal, is a leadership position and is considered at a different level. The School Board is empowered to make these decisions, why is an individual carved out to go onto the warrant. They felt that the Principal position is an important one and feel that we could both take up different sides of the concept showing the pluses and minuses to be presented to the voters.

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE SCHOOL - BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
**JOINT MEETING MINUTES** – January 15, 2013

Mr. Roemer explained that this will put us in a difficult position, that their own Superintendent due to his experience has stated that this is a very doable concept for running the schools. The School Board does not appear to support him with this article.

There was discussion whether the School Board would take a vote on this position. Does the School Board want the second Principal and the Budget Committee doesn't support it then we will be going to the Town with two different presentations. There are procedural problems as it was never cut but was recommended as a possible option. The School Board would rather have the voters make the decision. This will once again be pitting us one side against the other.

Mr. Button stated that they don't always go with the recommendation of the Superintendent. It was cut and now they are going to look at restoring it once again. He feels that they need an Administrator on site in both buildings. The Building Principal is the one that is the key person to deal with police under circumstances regarding the safety of students and staff. Because of previous Lyndeborough experiences they chose to add it as a new full time and bring it before the voters. Mr. Button feels that having a building administrator in both elementary schools with an increase of \$71,000 is the right thing to do.

Mr. Dailey stated that the majority of the board supported one principal therefore it was left out of the budget. Another majority of the board wants to put a warrant out that replaces the principal. The \$71,000 isn't the full amount of the principal there are some costs already built in there as someone else has to do certain duties. If the School Board puts the warrant out there then they are in support of it since they are the ones that write the warrants. Even if the vote is 5 to 4 then the entire board has to recommend it. If the School Board doesn't recommend this then it will be off the drafts. The time table for the School Board taking a vote will be next week.

**c. Unreserved Fund Balance to Capital Reserve Accounts**

There are 2 new accounts proposed to be added along with all of the old ones. All of the other accounts may become mute due to the 2 ½% rule which may be the simplest way, without ear-marking it for any particular cause. The 2 ½% can only be used to maintain a certain balance in the Capital Reserve. There are several Capital Reserve accounts being for the Disabled, for building repairs and for technology. The largest one is to cover catastrophic situations. We can have the Capital Reserve account to help build up reserves, not just for the deficit but it can alleviate the tax rate, or do both. The 2 ½% will be a life saver generally.

Mr. Brock asked Ms. Moore if she felt that the \$210,000 in the account now was sufficient. She stated that she thinks that it is fine for now and it would be a very disastrous situation to deplete all of it.

The Tech Advancement account presently has \$1,551 and it is recommended that they put \$20,000 in there. This would be used for new computers, switches, routers, servers etc. and historically there has always been \$20,000 in the account.

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE SCHOOL - BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
**JOINT MEETING MINUTES** – January 15, 2013

**Motion was made by Mr. Dailey to put \$20,000 in the Tech Plan. Mr. Ballou seconded the motion. 5 in favor; 2 opposed; the motion carries.**

From the McCormick report last year it was determined that FRES was a lot worse off than we ever really knew. The Facilities Committee sat down and ran through different scenarios to fix the problems and to look down the road to replace the building with a similar one. As they ran the numbers just for FRES, Wilton would spend another \$2,000,000 and it would keep us functioning for only 8 to 10 years of life after that. In the past few years the Town has put \$856,000 into the building already.

One solution was to use the plans already prepared for the FRES addition a few years ago. They looked at how to solve a district wide problem, building one single new building to house all of the elementary students. They have decided to use the building plans prepared for FRES and upgrade them to include all of the LCS students. They will build a new building, take down the 1940's and 1950's buildings, and gut the 1890's building to the walls and the gut the gym. This would come at a price of around 8 million dollars. Even with zero state aid we would save 2 million dollars or \$350K/year from money already spent. The SAU could be moved into LCS saving rent money. Preliminarily we would be looking at \$480K in savings annually and this is without digging very deep. The savings would pay for the bond. The existing bond for the middle school will be paid off in 5 years. If we took another bond out at that point the taxes would be level or close to level and we would have a brand new elementary school for both towns. If we continue to run buildings and the District as they are and have been then we will never see the full cost saving benefit unless we can combine the schools. There will also be benefits for the students being together and having more equal class sizes.

There is going to be a situation at FRES next year in that we will have to add another 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher due to the amount of students entering first grade. They amount of students will exceed our policy amount for that grade in the district. If we give the authority to the School Board to consolidate the grades then the School Board can make the necessary decisions. They can't operate under the current model until the School Board can do that.

Mr. Roemer stated that we just went through efforts to get everyone on the same pay scale that this could create a problem since the teachers are still working with different levels of students. So the teachers in Wilton will have more work to do than the ones in Lyndeborough who have much fewer students. So that is a potential problem or a selling point going forward since Lyndeborough teachers are being paid what Wilton teachers are but having much fewer students.

Ms. Pomer asked if they looked at building a brand new school starting on a new property, there could be issues on an existing site that they don't know what they will be running into. Just the site work alone on a raw piece of land would drive up the costs. They have come to the same conclusion at 3 different times but now we have to make some decision or our taxes will keep going up and the education will go down. The plan would be to house 550 students grades K to 5. We would be looking at another 2 million dollars moving to a different site location.

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE SCHOOL - BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
**JOINT MEETING MINUTES** – January 15, 2013

Article 9 has 2 separate Capital Reserves one for each elementary school. Mr. Davidson would like to have input on Article 13 on the 2 ½% transferred. Mr. Roemer asked if it can be renewed every year and can renew the arrangement tying the money up. If it isn't spent then it has to go to the tax rate, so it is only retained for a year.

Mr. Hughes stated that you can't touch those funds easily, that you have to have an emergency that meets the Department of Education's Definition. They would ultimately have to approve this before any monies were spent. The rules are different between the District and the Town. The School Board can dip into the reserves spending it as they want, whenever they want without permission from the Town. So the 2 ½% would put more restrictions on the money.

**d. All other Planned Warrant Articles**

There will be a warrant amending the Articles of Agreement giving the School Board the right to move grade levels between schools.

The insurance for the support staff needs to be added to the budget. This is not an optional item and if it should get turned down on the floor we would then be in a position to be penalized by the government. There are other pieces to the contract that will have a bearing on the budget that will be subject to a vote. Hopefully negotiations will be moving forward at this point.

**5. Budget Revision**

The new version V3 is the Boards view that it is presenting to the Budget Committee.

**6. Other Business**

Dr. LaPlante spoke to the School Board in regards to having a device used to keep the doors from locking but will allow them to lock if it is taken off and the door closed. There is no way to be able to lock the doors from the inside a room, you have to be standing on the outside. To change all of the locksets would cost \$300/lockset which would be cost prohibitive. They make a device that costs about \$8/device that will allow the door to be locked but will keep the door open until it is removed, once removed then the door will lock with everyone in the room.

**Motion was made by Mr. Dailey that they give authorization to take no more than \$1,000 out of the Maintenance Operation Budget to purchase these devices. Mr. Ballou seconded the motion. All in favor; the motion carried unanimously.**

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE SCHOOL - BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
**JOINT MEETING MINUTES** – January 15, 2013

**7. Adjournment**

The next WLC Budget meeting will be on January 23, 2013 at 7:00 PM location Media Center. The next Joint Session is scheduled for January 29, 2013.

**A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Hughes and seconded by Mr. Roemer; all in favor. The School Budget Committee was adjourned at 8:27 PM.**

**A Motion was made by Mr. Daily to adjourn the School Board portion of the meeting; motion was seconded by Mr. Ballou; all in favor, motion passes. The School Board portion of the joint meeting was adjourned at 8:28PM.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Tuomala, Secretary

Wilton Lyndeborough Cooperative School District  
School Resource Officer Proposal  
Thomas C. Schultz  
Jan. 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012

My name is Thomas Schultz and I am a Wilton resident, as well as parent of a Student here at WLC. I am here tonight to speak to the combined WLC School Board and WLC Budget Committee at their joint meeting to address an issue which I have previously raised which is the position of a School Resource Officer. A review of surrounding communities shows that the majority of them including Amherst, Brookline, Hollis, Hudson, Milford, Manchester, Merrimack, Nashua and at least 15 others have all instituted School Resource Officers in their school districts. In addition, Peterborough has a proposal to do so this year as do numerous other communities. Here in the Wilton Lyndeborough Cooperative School District the establishment of such a position has been discussed since at least 2004 according to a published article in the Milford Cabinet, and was raised at the 2007 and 2009 WLC School Meetings by myself to the attention of both of your Boards, as recorded in the published minutes of the meetings in the Wilton Town Reports.

However to date there has apparently been no action on this proposal, and we still have no movement on this issue. Published research by sources including the University of New Hampshire show the positive results of the creation of School Resource Officer positions in schools including that students and teachers felt much safer once a School Resource Officer was placed in the schools, a reduction in drug sales and usage at schools, as well as less bullying and disruptive behavior in the classroom. In addition teachers reported an improved learning environment and that it helped students stay out of trouble. Another survey by the National School Safety and Security Services in conjunction with the National Association of School Resources Officers showed that School Resource Officers prevent substantial amount of school violence, have exceptionally positive relationships with students and educators, and improve the reporting of school crimes that otherwise go unreported.

In discussions with the Wilton Police Department Chief Brent Hautanen he has advised me that he has met with the Wilton Lyndeborough Cooperative School Board previously in support of this position some time ago, and would see it as a positive development which he would support. The Lyndeborough Officer in Charge Rainsford Deware lists as part of his LinkedIn career summary that he is the School Resource Officer for Lyndeborough Police Department. A school resource officer in the district would be a member of the Wilton Police Department, but would be responsible for all schools in the district, subject to Lyndeborough Police Department approval to support the Lyndeborough Central School.

I read the Superintendent's Report of Jan. 8<sup>th</sup> 2013 and noted with approval the meeting with representatives of both police departments held on Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012 to review and update the school security plan. As a result of that meeting it stated that the plan was

enhanced and procedures were clarified. It also noted that “local police officers had gone out of their way to be visible around our schools and to drop by several times each day to both increase their visibility to parents and students and to provide a measure of reassurance to all of us”. I appreciate that the superintendent recognizes the value of having police officers at the school and I hope that he as well as the combined boards of WLC also recognize that this value is only a temporary action that should be addressed by a more permanent solution.

A previous superintendent of our own SAU # 63, and current superintendent of the Monadnock School District , Dr. Leo Corriveau, has recently been noted in the Manchester Union Leader as seeing School Resource Officers not only as a deterrent, but also as someone who can help coordinate emergency responses, help with truancy and educate students and teachers about safety, along with a range of other activities.

As for funding of this position, it is worthy to note that Nashua Telegraph recently reported that in New Hampshire, as of fiscal year 2010, \$5.5 Million in Federal Funds had been used to hire 45 School Resource Officers across the State. These funds came originally from the U.S. Justice Department under the Cops in Schools Program. As the School District is looking at a warrant article to reinstate a principal at the Lyndeborough Central School it would make sense to also consider funding a School Resource Officer with the potential of federal funding to offset the cost of this position.

Regardless of the funding source this position should be discussed and brought to the voters of the district for their input this year. I would ask that the combined Wilton Lyndeborough Cooperative School Board and Wilton Lyndeborough Cooperative Budget Committee consider adding a warrant article to this year’s budget to fund this position and allow the residents of Wilton and Lyndeborough to decide the value of this proposal. I will rise to address this at the Wilton Lyndeborough Cooperative School Meeting as well and would speak in favor of it should it be raised on the floor.

I have a copy of this statement which I will ask to be read completely into the minutes for each Board, and also have copies of backup documentation for this statement for each board as well as for any interested media representatives. I appreciate your attention to this important matter and thank you for your time.

Respectively yours,

Thomas C. Schultz