

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
106 Hancock Road
Peterborough, New Hampshire
CONTOOCCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

Notice of School Board Meeting
and
Supplemental Public Hearing on the FY'2023 Budget and Warrant Articles

Thursday, January 20, 2022
7:00 p.m.

Physical Location: SAU #1 Board Room

Livestream Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=922jK7vpWAY>

Minutes

BOARD

Rich Cahoon, Tom Burgess,
Keira Christian, Richard Dunning,
Alan Edelkind, Jim Fredrickson,
Katherine Heck, Greg Kriebel,
Janine Lesser, Kevin Pobst,
Liz Swan, Tim Theberge,
Stephen Ullman

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Supt.
Dr. Ann Forrest, Asst. Supt.
Lori Schmidt, B.A.
Cari Christian-Coates, Student Serv.
Cari James, H.R.

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Tim Theberge called the Public Hearing and meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. Open Public Hearing for purpose of further disclosure and discussion of:

a. FY'23 Proposed Budget

Lori Schmidt reported per Tuesday's meeting, the budget was decreased by \$711,411 which can be seen in several object codes.

ESSER monies were removed prior. The Preschool was the only thing removed reflective of tonight's documents as a result of that moving into a separate warrant article.

b. Special Warrant Articles with Appropriations

Jim Fredrickson reported that the Collective Bargaining Agreement is a three-year deal resulting in salary and benefit changes.

The total year 1 is \$877,844, in years 2023/2024 the impact is \$737,576, and in years 2024/2025, the impact totals \$714,868

Article 04 now represents the Expansion of the Current Preschool Program

Article 05 represents the creation and funding of a Technology Trust.

c. Petition Warrant Article with Appropriations

Article 12 orders the district to spend funds.

Curriculum materials are already currently available for those who request it. Training materials as well.

This would require a full-time staff to maintain this request at a cost upward to \$100K.

The Town of Sharon does not have a library.

Rich Cahoon said that he interpreted this to mean that the school libraries would maintain this information in the petition. It depends on how it is interpreted. Every time new or supplementary material is used it would/could need to be added to the library.

Perhaps the petitioner will speak at District Meeting to share their intent.

Tom Burgess said that it is poorly worded. The request is comprehensive. The wording has issue. Jim Fredrickson noted that the Town of Sharon is affiliated with the Town of Jaffrey library. It was also noted that “materials in electronic form used in classrooms” are included in this petition. More to come from legal opinions.

d. Default Budget Calculation

The decision to move preschool into a separate warrant was voted. \$595K worth of positions were removed. Positions in the 2022 and 2023 budget result in the difference in the figures.

The difference in the default is a reduction of \$921,666.

The calculation is a formula. Changes can be made, or not made, based on law, tied to the Collective Bargaining Agreement and are obligated to be maintained at a certain level. Transportation is an obligation therefore increases can be included.

3. Close Public Hearing and Re-Enter School Board Business Meeting

Tim Theberge closed the public hearing at 7:21 p.m. and entered into the regular school board meeting.

4. Action on Proposed FY'23 Budget

The proposed gross budget is \$53,766,080.

Katherine Heck moved to adopt the proposed budget in the amount of \$53,766,080.

Jim Fredrickson second. Unanimous.

5. Action on Warrant Articles with Appropriations

Article 01: Katherine Heck moved to recommend the operating budget proposed at \$53,766,080 and article as presented. Greg Kriebel second. Unanimous.

Article 02: Katherine Heck moved to recommend and accept the Collective Bargaining Agreement for Fiscal Year 2022/2023 in the amount of \$877,844, Fiscal Year 2023/2024 in the amount of \$737,576, and Fiscal Year 2024/2025 in the amount of \$714,868.

Jim Fredrickson second. Dick Dunning, Rich Cahoon and Keira Christian abstained.

All others in favor. Motion to recommend this article passes.

Article 03: Is an “automatic” article and does not require a recommendation of the board.

Article 04: Katherine Heck moved that the board recommend the expansion of the current Preschool Program and appropriate \$744,112.00.

Liz Swan second.

Rich Cahoon proposed that by the fall of 2022 that ConVal deliver a high-quality preschool program that would be capable of the board's commitment that 70% of 5-year old students would be kindergarten ready.

He said that he was not confident that in the next six weeks, the board could build the case to the public to approve the program expansion and added that more data collection is needed. Rich said that he remains concerned with the precedent of placing programmatic issues on the ballot as separate warrant articles and proposed that the expansion of the preschool program be deferred until next year.

Rich Cahoon moved to drop this warrant article. The first motion was to recommend adoption of this warrant article. The second motion was to not recommend it and remove altogether.

Janine Lesser second for purposes of discussion.

Dick Dunning said that he agreed with Rich but shared that we had a majority of the board that felt that the public would support this. If this gets defeated we cannot do anything with this program for one year. It could be brought back after that. This is critical to the success of students in ConVal. Dick said that he votes for keeping it in.

Kevin Pobst said that there is wisdom with what Rich came up with. He worried that the board may not be able to make the best case possible for the expansion, given the data we have seen so far. A powerful case could be made with more and better data. If it doesn't pass, the next time it is out there, it is out there with one loss behind it.

Jim Fredrickson said that investment can be made in preschool but expansion would be off the table. If this gets defeated, what are the options the following year? Put it in the budget or another warrant article was confirmed.

Janine Lesser said that she does not believe that the self-standing warrant article will pass. It would be difficult to bring it forward again. She said that she worries about the children that have to wait another year. She said that she preferred waiting until next year altogether.

Kevin Pobst spoke about understaffing issues previously discussed. Kimberly Saunders said that shortage issues could be addressed but the expansion of another classroom or more could not.

Stephen Ullman asked if this warrant article should fail there would still be five preschool classrooms. Confirmed.

Stephen Ullman said that he is interested in empirical data. However, he said that he wanted the program to be included in the budget. He voted against turning it into a warrant article.

Katherine Heck said that she was concerned, based on last year and the feedback she received, about not giving the voters a chance to decide themselves if they wanted a new program. Her purpose for creating the warrant article was to support the program and the voters. She struggled with saying that it has to be in the budget. The board's job is to educate on the entire budget and warrant. She struggled with where it is included at all. She said that the intent was to give the voters what they asked for last year.

Liz Swan agreed and added that if the board were prepared to educate the voters as part of the operating budget we would be in the same position to do so as a warrant article. More data is valuable, but preschool is valuable, and giving people a choice is also valuable. That is what this warrant article is doing, giving people a choice.

Kevin Pobst said that he understands the motion to be to defer this warrant article. It could be run as a warrant article next year.

The motion is intended to remove the article altogether was confirmed.

Rich Cahoon said that he is trying to save the preschool expansion.

Jim Fredrickson said that he is unsure if the warrant article is voted down this year that it would have difficulty passing next year.

Tom Burgess said that the board is divided on what to do. It is a sign to him that it should remain a separate warrant article this year.

Call the vote to retain the warrant article:

A yes vote removes it as an article. A no vote retains it as an article.

Remove (yes): Rich Cahoon, Kevin Pobst, Janine Lesser

Retain (no): Liz Swan, Greg Kriebel, Jim Fredrickson, Dick Dunning, Alan Edelkind, Stephen Ullman, Keira Christian, Tom Burgess, Katherine Heck

The article will remain separate and in place.

Does the Board Recommend or not for Article 04?:

Recommend: Unanimous

Dick Dunning noted that it was a unanimous vote. As a board we support the article. We may have disagreed how to get there but we are not divided on preschool.

Article 05: Katherine Heck moved to recommend to establish and appropriate a Technology Trust Fund. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.

Article 06: Katherine Heck moved to recommend to present article 06 as read. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.

Article 07: Katherine moved to recommend to appropriate 500K to the Building Capital Reserve Fund from fund balance.

Greg Kriebel second.

The linkage between article 07 and 09 was explained. The need to build a capital trust was recognized so it was split. It is unknown how much money might remain at the end of the year.

We want to ensure that money is put into the Health Trust Fund which sits between article 07 and 09. They are funded in the order they appear on the warrant.

Unanimous.

Article 08: **Katherine Heck moved to recommend to appropriate 50K. to the Health Trust Fund. Greg Kriebel second. Unanimous.**

Article 09: **Katherine Heck moved to appropriate \$250,000 to the Building Capital Reserve Fund. Greg Kriebel second. Unanimous.**

Article 11: **Katherine Heck moved to recommend article 11 as presented. Dick Dunning second. Unanimous.**

Jim Fredrickson noted that every recommendation was recommended unanimously other than one that had three abstentions due to staff relations.

This is a public document now.

5. Action on Petitioned Warrant Article with Appropriations

A recommendation was not voted on the Petitioned Warrant Article.

6. Adjourn

Stephen Ullman motioned to adjourn at 7:54 p.m. Second. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok