

Winnacunnet Cooperative School District

Deliberative Session Minutes – 2024

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Hampton, Hampton Falls, North Hampton, Seabrook
Winnacunnet High School Auditorium, Hampton NH
Deliberative Session February 8, 2024 Minutes

The twenty-eighth deliberative session of the Winnacunnet Cooperative School District Meeting held in accordance with RSA 40:13 was called to order by School District Moderator, Christopher Muns on February 9, 2024 at 7:00 pm. This will be the only meeting before the warrant articles are voted on Election Day, March 12, 2024.

The Moderator then explained the rules and purpose of this meeting and what changes can and cannot be made to the Articles.

Motion by Leslie Lafond, seconded by Patricia O'Keefe to allow Winnacunnet School Staff and SAU 21 Staff who are not residents of North Hampton, Hampton Falls, Hampton or Seabrook to speak. He specifically named Meredith Nadeau, Bill McGowan and Matt Ferreira.

Motion Passed

Article 01 Operating Budget

Shall the School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$33,135,855? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$32,960,247 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the

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issue of a revised operating budget only. (Majority vote required.) NOTE: Warrant Article #1 (operating budget) does not include appropriations in any other warrant articles.

Recommended by the School Board: 5-0 Recommended by the Budget Committee: 5-0

MOTION by Tamara Le, seconded by Nicole Cico to move Article 1 for discussion.

Matt Ferreira began by thanking the School Board and the Budget Committee for the hard work that they put into developing the budget. He spoke about the many different elements that are considered when preparing a budget that follows a personalized learning model that incorporates Winnacunnet's core values, beliefs, and learning expectations – as delineated by the district's stated goal.

He stated that a slight decrease in enrollment was anticipated next year, going from 1,073 to 1,067 students. He also stated that the proposed budget reflects a 6.88% increase over the FY 2023-2024 and the proposed budget is +0.53% or \$175,608 higher than the default budget of \$32,960,247. He went on to discuss the significant budget drivers in the proposed budget beginning with increases. Included in the list were cost escalation due to price inflation, increase in special education costs, particularly the tuition costs for out of district placements, increased transportation costs, significant health insurance premium rate increase, investment in Alternative to Suspension Program, transfer of 504 Coordination position from ESSER grant to operating budget, Vocational Program cost increase due to higher participation levels and tuition rate increase and ESOL contracted services increase due to rise in students requiring English as second language services. Matt then discussed the budget drivers that led to decreases in the budget. He continued by discussing the cost-of-living adjustment and how the rate was determined. He ended by going through each budget item and stated whether they increased or decreased the budget and explained why. Matt also explained how the default budget was determined.

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Frank Bajowski asked questions regarding debt service and the bond issue for the addition to the school.

It was stated that the last payment is scheduled for August 2024.

Being no further Discussion, Article 1 shall appear on the ballot as read.

MOTION to restrict reconsideration of Article 1 by Tamara Le and seconded by Nicole Cico passed.

MOTION to move Article 2 for discussion by Leslie Lafond, seconded by Patricia O’Keefe.

Article 02 Seacoast Educational Support Personnel Association Collective Bargaining Agreement

To see if the School District will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Winnacunnet School Board and the Seacoast Educational Support Personnel Association for the following increases and reductions in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

Year	Estimated Salary Increase	Estimated Benefits Increase	TOTAL Estimated Costs
2024-25	\$43,977	\$14,156	\$58,133
2025-26	\$47,976	\$13,187	\$61,163
2026-27	\$24,429	\$34,531	\$58,960
2027-28	\$23,988	\$28,922	\$52,910

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$58,133 for the 2024-25 school year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits

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required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels in accordance with the current collective bargaining agreement. (Majority vote required.)

Recommended by the School Board: 5-0 Recommended by the Budget Committee: 5-0

NOTE: In order for this article to be adopted, it must be approved by the voters of the school districts of Hampton Falls, North Hampton, Seabrook, South Hampton and the voters of the Winnacunnet Cooperative School District (which includes Hampton voters).

Chris Muns mentioned that a correction needed to be made to the estimated benefits increase for 2027- 28. The correction was made to reflect \$28,922 instead of \$56,960.

Matt Ferreira explained the importance of this article. He emphasized that the article was unanimously supported by all members and discussed the importance of these amazing educational associates. He talked about the need for this article to pass in order to retain the best educational associates and to be able to hire new high-quality associates. He discussed the high turnover rate and stated that we currently provide uncompetitive compensation and benefits to these extremely important employees.

Susan Howland and others came forward in favor of this article. Susan gave information about what these professionals do and the many ways that they help the students.

Chris Muns shared from experience what a difference these professionals can make in the lives of students.

MOTION to restrict reconsideration of Article 2 by Leslie Lafond and seconded by Patricia O'Keefe passed.

Being no further discussion, Article 2 will be placed on the ballot as corrected.

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Article 03 HVAC Upgrades

To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$400,000 for HVAC upgrades at Winnacunnet High School. This project is part of the facility plan adopted by the school board. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7 VI and will not lapse until the project is complete or June 30, 2027, whichever is earlier. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the School Board: 5-0 Recommended by the Budget Committee: 5-0

MOTION to move Article 3 for discussion by Desiree Potter seconded by Tamara Le.

Matt Ferreira gave an overview of the proposed HVAC upgrades project. He stated that the HVAC replacement cycle helps minimize large one-time expenditures.

No further discussion, Article 3 will be placed on the ballot as read.

Article 04 Roof Replacement

To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$975,000 for Year 1 of a multi-year project to replace and repair the roofs at Winnacunnet High School? This project is part of the facility plan adopted by the school board. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7 VI and will not lapse until the project is complete or June 30, 2029 whichever is earlier. (Majority vote required.)

Recommended by the School Board: 5-0 Recommended by the Budget Committee: 5-0

MOTION to open Article 4 for discussion by Leslie Lafond and seconded by Nicole Cico.

Matt Ferriera gave an overview of the roof replacement project which is a three-year project. Funding will be over two years.

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Being no further discussion, the article will appear on the ballot at read.

The Moderator reminded the voters that voting day is March 12, 2024 and announced the candidates that will be on the ballot.

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes prepared by Shirley Doheny, School District Clerk on February 11, 2024.



Shirley Doheny, School District Clerk