



# HUDSON SCHOOL BOARD

Community Center Hudson, New Hampshire

6:30 pm Regular Meeting

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## Minutes – January 9, 2023

### In Attendance

#### Board Members

Gary Gasdia, Chairman  
Gretchen Whiting, Vice Chair  
Ethan Beals  
Mike Campbell  
Maureen Dionne

#### SAU Staff

Dan Moulis, Superintendent of Schools  
Kimberly Organek, Assistant  
Superintendent of Schools  
Rachel Borge, Director Special Services  
Jen Burk, Business Administrator

### A. Call to Order [0:00:07]

#### 1. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Gary Gasdia called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Gretchen Whiting led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### B. Bond Hearing (Decision) [0:01:11]

Pursuant to RSA 33:8-a (I) and RSA 40:13, II-a (c), the Hudson School Board held a public hearing to discuss the proposed bond issuance in the amount of \$27,000,000 for construction and renovations to Alvirne High School. This referred to Warrant Article 1. There were two bond rates: a 20-year term with an approximate rate of 5.5% (\$42,525,000) and a 30-year term with an approximate 6% rate (\$51,975,000).

Darcy Orellana of 12 Robin Drive supported Warrant Article 1 and noted that the safety factors included were important. She stated that the “gymnasium” is an insufficient space for a secondary school experience, where safety remains a concern.

Shawn Jasper of 83 Old Derry Road is a University System of New Hampshire Trustee and spoke about demographics and declining enrollment and revenues. He feels that the warrant is a large amount for the community in light of this, and stated he anticipates a small recession.

Victor Oates of 77 Sousa Blvd. supports the project, noting that the theater can be a source of revenue for the town and events could be broadcast from there.

At 6:44pm, the bond hearing was closed.

### C. Public Input [0:11:47]

Suzanne Roark of 5 Gloria Avenue urged the board to remove the elimination of the Forestry and Natural Resources courses off the proposed cut list, as they are integral to the Alvirne CTE program.

Shawn Jasper of 83 Old Derry Road is in favor of not cutting the Forestry and Natural Resources programs, noting the value of the interaction of the programs.

Michelle Michael Etas of 14 B Twin Road read a letter that she emailed earlier in the day on behalf of employees working in the intensive needs program at HMS. She asked the board to reconsider cuts and not reduce administrative assistant positions, especially the one for the Special Education Department, Ms. White, who had helped given the shortage of support staff.

A parent named Ashley spoke about her support of Cathy White (Special Education Administrative Assistant) who has helped her child at Hudson Memorial School.

Christina Ferris of 67 Sousa Boulevard has an autistic child and is concerned with the Special Education cuts as her child will be attending kindergarten next year.

### D. Good News Update (Information) [0:25:32]

Alvirne High School social studies teacher Cameron Debrusk and economics students Aidan Nye, Nicolas Ford and Elliott Hill shared details about their first-place finish in the New Hampshire Stock Market Game. They invested well and it was a fun experience. American Eagle was the highest earning. The School Board offered their congratulations.

### E. New Business [0:31:04]

#### 1. 2023 American Culinary Federation Annual Convention (Decision)

Chef David Bressler requested approval to travel to the 2023 ACF Conference taking place in New Orleans. Conferences offer continued education for chefs and points for certification and are good opportunities to network. This is funded through the Perkins Grant.

***Ethan Beals made a motion to approve the travel request by Chef David Bressler as presented. Maureen Dionne seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.***

## 2. Hudson Federation of Teachers Contract Approval (Decision) [0:35:33]

Superintendent Moulis and Business Administrator Jen Burk presented details of the proposed HFT contract for the board to ratify. The contract will help increase teacher salaries and decrease turnover.

Some changes included:

- adding a teacher grant incentive fund
- a new joint study committee to look at alternative compensation structures (to present to the school board no later than May 2024)
- a stipend committee
- additional teacher workshop day
- a memorandum of agreement for teachers teaching a sixth class
- salary structure increases to be competitive relative to area districts to help with retainment.

Negotiations are collaborative. The first-year cost of the changes to the proposed warrant article is \$1,897,268; in year two, the cost is \$1,252,413.

***Gretchen Whiting made a motion to approve the HFT contract as proposed. Mike Campbell seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.***

***Ethan Beals made a motion to approve the nomination of Matt Lee for the Head Football Coach for FY24 with the caveat of offseason training beforehand. Mike Campbell seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.***

## F. Old Business [0:45:10]

### 1. Budget FY23-24 (Discussion)

There was a review of proposed budget cuts occurring after the December 15, 2022 Budget Committee meeting where reductions totaling \$3,169,379 were made. Recommended budget changes were listed to meet the \$2.7million general reduction; a reduction which is not supported by the superintendent. In requesting the reduction, a Budget Committee member had referenced the district's high fund balance due to salaries and benefits for unfilled but necessary positions the past few years. Forty-five positions were unfilled. The district got by with the staff it had but "getting by" is not sustainable.

Impacts of the budgetary cuts were reviewed. The district looked at reductions in areas with least impact to students, and the School Board can shift priorities as it is a bottom-line budget. This was a very difficult task to go through within the district. It was noted that every position is important, and a reduction of staff may lead to declining levels of achievement.

It was noted that voices could be heard during public hearing and deliberative session last year. The district had presented a budget that was below the default but supported district goals and there was disappointment that the Budget Committee made such reductions. There is concern this year about making the reductions without affecting students. It was also noted that the fund balance is not going to be the same each year.

There was a review of warrant articles, including the change in the operating budget number in Warrant Article 2. The Budget Committee recommended the SAU chair lift replacement be put out to bid for security and potential liability reasons.

***Gretchen Whiting made a motion to remove Warrant Article 7-SAU Chair Lift Replacement, and direct the district to go out to bid. Ethan Beals seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.***

***Ethan Beals made a motion to not recommend Warrant Article 2 - Operating Budget (\$60,223,107/default \$63,748,201). Mike Campbell seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0***

Warrant Article 3: HFT CBA

- 2023-24 increase: \$1,897,268
- 2024-25 increase: \$1,252,413
- To further raise and appropriate \$1,897,268 for the upcoming fiscal year.
- Est. tax rate impact: \$.40

***Gretchen Whiting made a motion to recommend Warrant Article 3: HFT CBA as presented. Mike Campbell seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.***

**2. Policies - Second Reading (Decision) [1:12:52]**

**DGA Authorized Signatures**

- Current policy
- NHSBA policy (proposed) replaces whole policy

**EHAC Electronic Digital Recordings and Signatures**

- New policy (proposed) for the district, recommend adoption

**EEAE School Bus Safety Program**

- New – NHSBA version (proposed)

**JLCB Immunization of Students**

- Current policy, last updated in 2004
- NHSBA version (proposed) replaces current version

**JLCDA Medical Treatment – Parental Consent**

- New policy (proposed)

**JLDBB Suicide Prevention and Response Plan**

- Current policy (proposed) with NHSBA revisions

***Maureen Dionne made a motion to approve the second reading of the following policies as presented:***

***DGA - Authorized Signatures***

***EHAC - Electronic Digital Recordings and Signatures***

***EEAE - School Bus Safety Program***

***JLCB - Immunization of Students***

***JLCDA - Medical Treatment - Parental Consent***

***JLDBB - Suicide Prevention and Response Plan***

***Mike Campbell seconded the motion. Motion passed, 5:0.***

## G. Recommended Action [1:13:58]

### 1. Manifests -N/A

### 2. Minutes – December 19, 2022 – Draft minutes

The following edits to the December 19, 2022 minutes were made:

- Under Old Business, #2: clarification that “some felt that denoting the number of days related to discipline was helpful, others not.”
- Under the comments related to policy JLDBB - Suicide Prevention and Response, there was clarification that the update of including a liaison and crisis information was for the student handbooks, not added to the policy for the next school year.
- Under committee reports, it was noted that the field access mentioned under the Capital Improvement Committee paragraph related to HMS not Alvirne.

*Ethan Beals made a motion to approve the minutes of December 19, 2022 as amended.*

*Maureen Dionne seconded the motion. Motion passed 4:0:1 (abstention from M. Campbell).*

## H. Reports to the Board (Information) [1:15:41]

### 1. Superintendent Report

Superintendent Moulis reported that:

- The Director of Strategic Engagement and Communication, Terry Wolf, led a conversation with principals/administrators on accessibility and the district’s communication with a shift to electronic communication (email, social media, presentation, and website), including providing language translation. This supports the goal of inclusivity with communication and school resources.
- The Hudson Chamber of Commerce will be at the Palmer Center tomorrow.
- There will be a series of conversations with families at each of the schools (mid-January and early July) to discuss top priorities.
- There are scheduled visits this week and next week with the Department of Homeland Security to assess security, surveillance and access points in schools; they will provide an outline of progress and recommendations for improvement.

### 2. Assistant Superintendent Report

Ms. Organek noted:

- On December 22, she and Superintendent Moulis had an annual visit with second and fifth grade students at Nottingham to read the Gingerbread Baby and decorate cookies.
- There was preparation for FY24 with finalization of program of studies and decisions on a reading program for grades K-5.
- On Friday there will be an annual suicide prevention training to be taken by staff.

### 3. Director of Special Services Report

Ms. Borge noted that the related services team focus is on a new altered developmental normal regarding younger learners after the pandemic where students had different preschool experiences. They will work on helping support families, staff and community with this.

#### 4. Business Administrator Report

Ms. Burk mentioned that this is the second week for the new finance director and next week the new accounts payable coordinator will begin. The payroll coordinator is transitioning with the new coordinator, and the current accounts payable coordinator is shifting to the accountant role.

#### I. Committee Reports [1:22:42]

The Cable Committee is meeting tonight.

There was a JEDI Committee meeting and it was noted that positive steps are continuing to be made and more interest and participation is being sought.

#### J. Student Representative Comments [1:23:49] - N/A

#### K. Board Member Comments [1:23:50]

Mr. Campbell said that voices were important to be heard during town meetings and that elections were in March 2023.

Ms. Dionne noted that teachers and staff are the biggest resources in the district, and she encouraged people to speak up, vote and support teachers and students.

Mr. Beals said that voices should be heard at town meetings and that regarding the election, candidacy openings will be posted on the town website and will close on February 3rd. He encouraged people interested in the openings to reach out to Mr. Campbell with any questions.

Ms. Whiting said that the HFT contract is very important, as teachers are invaluable. She thanked the teachers and staff who participated in negotiations, which are collaborative. People may reach out to her or Mr. Campbell with any questions.

Mr. Gasdia thanked everyone involved in the teacher contract, noting that the community comes together in moments of need. He also noted a fatal accident occurred tonight on Derry Road. Thoughts and prayers are sent to those affected.

#### L. Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3 II - N/A

#### M. Adjournment [1:28:27]

***At 7:58 pm, Ethan Beals made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Maureen Dionne seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0. Roll call vote.***

Submitted by  
Susan DeFelice