

MINUTES OF ANNUAL SCHOOL MEETING  
WEATHERSFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT  
WEATHERSFIELD SCHOOL  
FEBRUARY 26, 2022 AT 10:00 AM  
MINUTES

Moderator John Broker-Campbell called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM, followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Principal Martes presented this years' Service Award to all of the Weathersfield School families in honor of the numerous challenges they have had to face, endure, and conquer this year due to the challenges of COVID 19.

The Moderator read the warning:

The legal voters of the Weathersfield School District, Weathersfield, Vermont, are hereby notified and warned to meet **in person** at Weathersfield School in Ascutney, Town of Weathersfield, Vermont, -OR- **virtually on Saturday, February 26, 2022, at 10:00 a.m.** in the morning to transact any business not involving voting by Australian Ballot or any voting required by law to be by ballot, such meeting so started shall be adjourned to Tuesday, March 1, 2022.

The legal voters of the Weathersfield School District, are further notified and warned to meet at the Martin Memorial Hall in Ascutney, Vermont, on Tuesday, March 1, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. in the forenoon to act on any business involving voting by Australian Ballot or any voting required by law to be by ballot. Polls open at 10:00 a.m. and close at 7:00 p.m.

School Board Chair, AnneMarie Redmond, introduced the members of the school board. Ms. Redmond also introduced Dr. David Baker, Superintendent, Larry Dougher, Information Officer, Ed Connors, Business Manager, Brian Martes, Principal, and BJ Esty, Administrative Assistant extraordinaire.

Moderator Broker-Campbell said if there were no objections, we would allow Ed Connors, David Baker, and Larry Dougher – all non-residents – to speak at this meeting. There were no objections.

Local Representative John Arrison (Windsor 2 district) spoke briefly about updates from the House Committee on Education on which he serves. The dominant topic this year has been COVID concerns. The good news is there has been adequate money to address all of the concerns. Weathersfield has the advantage of having a fairly new school with good systems, something many schools don't have. Another major topic is work force development. Businesses everywhere are looking for help. He urged everyone to explore the two regional technical centers in our area. They aren't what they used to be. Poor student behavior has become a problem at some schools. Weathersfield doesn't appear to have this problem at present.

Good news - the Education Fund closed out this year with a \$90M surplus. The legislature is considering putting \$45M of the surplus into property tax relief. Use of the remainder hasn't been decided yet, perhaps seed money for school construction.

Bad news – the weighting factor study that came out last year – the weighting factors did not accurately reflect the actual cost to bring all students to the same level. The numbers have been recalculated. Some towns will be receiving, some will be giving. It is unknown where Weathersfield will stand.

The Committee spent considerable time this year crafting language that would allow towns to pull out of (forced) unified districts while still being able to benefit from the services that the supervisory union provides.

Moderator Broker-Campbell turned to introducing the articles.

**Article 1:** To approve the reports of the School District Officers for the period from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021. (By Australian Ballot).

There were no questions and no discussion on this article.

**Article 2:** To see if the School District will vote to authorize the School Board to borrow money in anticipation of taxes to meet the requirements of the School District for the ensuing year and to authorize the execution and delivery of notes or orders to the School District. (By Australian Ballot)

There were no questions and no discussion on this article.

**Article 3:** To elect all School District Officers as required by law. (By Australian Ballot)

There were no questions and no discussion on this article.

**Article 4:** Shall the voters of the Weathersfield School District approve the school board to expend \$6,964,373.00 which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of \$20,998.74 per equalized pupil. This projected spending per equalized pupil is 2.29% higher than the spending for the current year. (By Australian Ballot)

Principal Martes spoke about how the school meet the needs of the students at the school; what's new this year; sources of funding for the school; goals of the FY23 budget; FY23 projected enrollment (240 students, Kindergarten through eighth grade); and K-12 Student enrollment (344 students, Kindergarten through high school).

School Board Chair Redmond spoke about shared expenses across the SU (and how they saved us from a forced merger); the FY23 SU projected assessment (\$1,518,892, which is a slight increase from last year); the impact on School Taxes (projected tax rate of \$1.8469, a \$0.10 decrease); the Weathersfield School District FY23 General Fund Budget (\$6,964,373 – a 5.94% increase); and the FY23 projected high school tuition (\$2,133,407).

Ms. Redmond thanked outgoing School Board member Kristen Bruso for her service to the Board.

The moderator called for questions on the article.

Michelle Pinders asked if there would be an additional 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher hired for next year. Principal Martes said it is being looked into.

Paul Tillman asked about the 125% increase in transportation. Ms. Redmond said this was because transportation for sports was added back in to the budget.

Meredith Kelley asked if the language of the budget article was statutory. The answer was yes.

Article 5: To transact any other business which may properly come before the meeting.

There were no questions or discussion on this article.

Dr. Baker said there was no need to adjourn the meeting as voting is to be held on March 1<sup>st</sup>.

It was agreed to suspend the meeting until voting on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, at 10AM at Martin Memorial Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

**deForest Bearse**

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John Broker-Campbell, Moderator