

LAMOILLE NORTH MODIFIED UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
GMTCC COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTER
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2022

Present: Mark Nielsen, Lisa Barry, Chasity Fagnant, Sue Prescott, Katie Orost, Jeff Hunsberger, Angela Lamell, Laura Miller, Katie Orost, Bart Bezio, Tina Lowe, Cat Gallagher, Deb Clark, Michele Aumand, Wendy Savery, Jen Hulse, Nancy LaRose, Candace Vear, Susan Tinker, Cathy Mander-Adams, Kim Moulton, Mark Schilling, Dana Warren, Thad Tallman, about 6 other people

The meeting started at 7:01. Catherine Gallagher welcomed everyone. Mark Nielsen reviewed the articles.

Article I:

To determine whether Roberts Rules (Revised) or other rules of order shall govern the parliamentary procedures of the meeting

It was moved and seconded that the parliamentary procedures of the meeting be governed by Robert's Rules (Revised) and the motion was passed.

Article II:

To review and approve the minutes of the February 15, 2021 Annual Meeting

Lisa Barry moved to approve the minutes of the February 15, 2021 Annual Meeting and the motion was seconded and passed.

Article III:

To elect by ballot the following officers: a) Moderator; b) Clerk; c) Treasurer

L. Miller nominated Mark Nielsen for moderator. Hearing no further nominations, **Thad Tallman moved that nominations cease and that the clerk be directed to cast one unanimous ballot for Mark Nielsen as moderator and the motion was seconded and passed.**

Thad Tallman nominated Donna Griffiths for clerk. Hearing no further nominations, **L. Miller moved that nominations cease and that the clerk be directed to cast one unanimous ballot for Donna Griffiths as clerk, and the motion was seconded and passed.**

Thad Tallman nominated Kim Moulton for treasurer. **By consensus the clerk was directed to cast one unanimous ballot for Kim Moulton as treasurer.**

Article IV:

To establish compensation for the duly constituted officers and the Board of Directors of said Modified Unified Union School District

J. Hunsberger moved to continue with the current compensation (clerk: \$500/yr plus mileage, treasurer: \$8000/yr, board chair: \$1800/yr, directors; 1500/yr) and the motion was seconded and passed.

Article V:

To hear and act upon the reports of the Modified Unified Union School District

D. Clark said reports of the board are included in the district annual report on pages 24-38. The treasurer's report shows cash balances were up \$552,608 for the year after adjusting for the HS construction bond account. The combined elementary budget for FY23 is \$15,018,228 with combined ed spending of \$12,993,633 and per equalized pupil spending of \$20,852. The combined secondary budget is \$15,521,287 with combined ed spending of \$13,927,560 and per equalized pupil spending of \$16,208. The tech center budget is \$3,368,599.

Elementary level afterschool programming participation is 34% for Eden, 26% for Hyde Park, 18% for Johnson and 41% for Waterville/Belvidere. Extra programming opportunities include DEI social justice committees, outdoor education, maker spaces, Lego robotics, computer shop, literary magazine, music, art, performing arts, gardening, student clubs, athletics, student council, and international studies and trips. There is significant community use of all facilities.

Article VI:

To receive from the Board of School Directors of said District its estimate of expenses of the Lamoille North Modified Unified Union Grade Schools for the ensuing year. This is a public information hearing regarding the budget. (See Article X.)

The Hyde Park bond principal comes into the budget for the first time in FY23. A small reduction in special ed expenses helps defray some of that. The Hyde Park bond principal is almost half of the tax-funded expenditures but there is still only a 4.95% increase. We have also significantly increased our grant-funded expenditures but these have no tax impact. Non-special ed elementary revenues are up and special ed revenues are down. Grant funds are up. The board decided to apply all of the prior year surplus to the budget. There is a 16.92% increase in revenues. Major budget drivers include salaries (going up 6.2%), repairs and maintenance (going up 10%) and professional services (going up 7.74 %.) The increase in salaries is a combination of the annual increase and some people who had LNSU as their employer coming back to being employed at the district level. Total PreK-6 expense is up 4.95%.

Article VII:

To receive from the Board of School Directors of said District its estimate of expenses of the Lamoille North Modified Unified Union Middle & High Schools for the ensuing year. This is a public information hearing regarding the budget. (See Article XI.)

Non-special ed middle and high school expenses are going up by 5%. That is offset by a reduction in special ed expenditures (down 9.72%.) General (tax) funded expenditures are going up 3.3%. There are some grants at the secondary level. They have zero impact on taxes. General fund non-special ed revenues decreased. One hundred percent of the prior year surplus is being

used to hold down tax rates, pretty much offsetting the decrease in general fund revenues. Secondary revenue is increasing by 11.73%, primarily due to grant funds.

Primary budget drivers include professional services (up 25%), additional supports for students who are not in special ed but still need special supports, and some E-Rate technology initiatives. We expect to get some of those refunded. Repairs and maintenance is up 14.7%. An exterior door at the middle school is part of that.

D. Clark reviewed factors used in building the FY23 budget. They are numbers that come from the state, except for our unassigned fund balances. The state property yield determines the pre-CLA tax rate. The non-residential rate before CLA is dropping about 13 cents, about \$130 dollars on a \$100K property. The reduction in yield gave us a decrease of \$86 per \$100K. In addition, 100% of uncommitted surplus was applied to hold tax rates down. In the last 2 years, Vermont property values have been driven up, so CLA dropped because the tax assessed values were too low. State property taxes are raised on market value and CLA adjusts for that. The key elements determining the tax rate are preliminary at this point and can change. If any towns are currently going through reappraisal, that could change CLA.

D. Clark went over the tax rate calculation. Our equalized pupil numbers are still being impacted by the pandemic. The base tax rate before CLA is 1.435, which is 8.6 cents less than the current year's base tax rate. D. Clark showed the CLA for each town and how that affects the tax rate. Three towns have reductions on their tax rate compared to the previous year. Hyde Park and Waterville have each seen their CLA drop by 6 points or more and they have modest tax increases, with the highest being \$28 per \$100K.

Article VIII:

To receive from the Board of School Directors of said District its estimate of expenses of the Green Mountain Technology & Career Center for the ensuing year. This is a public information hearing regarding the budget. (See Article XII.)

The primary drivers of the GMTCC budget increase are increases in healthcare costs and the yearly increase in staff salary. Program expenses are otherwise level funded. Needs not met through the budget are met through grant funding. Last year the board set aside \$193K in reserve funds to offset tuition increases. The RAB decided to apply \$75K of those to FY23 revenue. With that applied to FY23 revenue and a slight increase in the 6 semester average student count, there is a tuition increase of \$560 per pupil, a 6.44% increase over the current fiscal year.

A community member asked if these grants require a match. D. Clark said no. These budgets do not include any matches for grant funds because they are not needed.

D. Clark reviewed the tuition calculation and the per pupil assessment history for 13 years.

Article IX:

To transact any other business to properly come before the meeting.

No other business was brought up.

At 7:28, M. Nielsen recessed the meeting to March 1, 2022 (Town Meeting Day) for the purpose of voting by Australian ballot at the usual polling places in the member districts.

On March 1, 2022, ballots were brought to the GMTCC Community Education Center, where they were commingled and counted under the supervision of the LNMUUSD clerk. The number of ballots cast for Article X was 917. Results of the vote for Article X (the PreK-6th grade budget) were 469 in favor, 443 opposed, 4 blank and 1 spoiled. **Article X was passed.**

The number of ballots cast for Articles XI and XII was 1522. Results of the vote for Article XI (the middle school/high school budget) were 1041 in favor, 471 opposed and 10 blank. **Article XI was passed.** Results of the vote for Article XIV (the GMTCC budget) were 1173 in favor, 335 opposed, and 14 blank. **Article XII was passed.**

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths