

1 WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE SCHOOL
2 BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
3 WLC-Library
4

5 FINAL MINUTES
6 Wednesday, November 12, 2025
7

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9 Committee Membership: Bill Ryan (Chair), Alyssa Lavoie (Vice Chair),
10 Bridget Mooney (Secretary), Craig Alley, Jennifer Bernet, Phil Brooks,
11 Harold Melcher III, Bob Silva, Jonathan Vanderhoof
12

13 Present: Alley, Bernet, Brooks, Lavallee (SB rep), Lavoie, Mooney, Ryan, Silva,
14 Vanderhoof
15

16 Absent: Melcher
17

18 Other Attendees: Peter Weaver, Kristie LaPlante, Benjamin Hofstetter, Tom Ronning,
19 Stacy Maghakian, Dennis Golding
20

21 The meeting was called to order at 6:31
22

23 The meeting was recorded.
24

25 Adjustment to the agenda: None
26

27 Kristie LaPlante updates some deliverable that she needed to get to the Budget
28 Committee.
29

- 30 1. Is there a cap on what the district can earn on non-reimpressible
31 meals? Answer: No.
- 32 2. Food Service net operating costs: It's always operating at a loss which
33 has grown over the last few years due to increased food and labor
34 costs.
- 35 3. A complete list of vendors will be provided prior to the December 3RD
36 meeting.
- 37 4. Can there be a Capital Reserve Fund for Salaries and Benefits?
38 Answer: Yes for Benefits tied specifically to Health Insurance, No for
39 Salaries
- 40 5. Is it possible to establish a Capital Reserve fund for Co-Curriculars?
41 Answer: Yes
- 42 6. Emergency Fund - technical term is contingency fund- allowing a
43 percentage of unspent unassigned general funds to be held for an
emergency or extenuating circumstances. The spend that money you'd

44 need a budget, a public hearing, report it in the district meeting and
45 annual report.

- 46 7. Why the employer tax expenditures for WLC were greater than
47 budgeted when salaries were less than budgeted? Some taxes are
48 charged to a grant and others the local budget and they don't know
49 ahead of time how that will play out.
- 50 8. Special Ed Service providers hourly rates and contract hours. Mr. Pratt
51 generated one for this current school year as well as hourly rates for
52 the last four year.
- 53 9. The budget committee asked for an updated budget to include item that
54 should have been budgeted but weren't due to the miscommunication
55 on the zero dollar. The administrative team has been working for hours
56 in July, August and September. They feel the budget presented is in the
57 best interest of the district. After meeting with the school principals, they
58 feel there is no need to make changes to the budget.

59 Brianne Lavalley will get the School Board potential Warrant Articles to the Budget
60 Committee.

61
62 Jonathan Vanderhoof is surprised in the Administration's decision to not increase
63 the current budget citing the public's interest at last year's budget meeting where
64 the community voted to increase the budget. He requests that Tom Ronning
65 address this issue. Kristie LaPlante points out that they talked about "wants" and
66 "needs" and that's how they built the budget. They considered the budget
67 committee, the school board, and the public sentiments and hashed that out and
68 front loaded this budget based on lessons they thought they had learned. Peter
69 Weaver says they are looking at other places they can cut this budget and if the
70 public asks for anything to be added into the budget at the annual meeting, as
71 happened and was accommodated last year, they will not agree to that. They
72 believe this budget is in the best interest of the school and is a good and
73 responsible budget at a 2.44% increase. Brianne Lavalley points out that the
74 administration only speaks at the annual meeting if they are asked to comment on
75 something, they don't interject otherwise, adding that they are doing a good job
76 presenting a line-item budget, as requested, and being mindful of the public's tax
77 dollars. Following the last meeting Mr. Ronning, together with his team, discussed
78 the needs and wants and they decided they had put together the budget they need.
79 If there is surplus money at the end of the year, they can then request some of
80 their wants. Jonathan Vanderhoof questions the need for another PE teacher. Tom
81 Ronning says that is not a need. Jonathan Vanderhoof wants to know if this is the
82 budget Mr. Ronning will support. When asked at the annual meeting if this the
83 budget he supports Tom Ronning will answer yes.

84 Kristie LaPlante goes over the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), a long and
85 intensive document. It includes capital projects that the School Board and Facilities
86 fee are high value, long term investments within the district. She refers to an email
87 sent to the committee that points out projects that are in the plan; ones that have

88 been completed and ones yet to be completed. The Facilities committee will be
89 looking at outstanding projects and determining if the funding outlined two years
90 ago still seems to be sufficient. The method for getting items on the CIP is dictated
91 by School Board policy and old practices that used the CIP to balance the budget
92 have been removed. Alyssa Lavoie asks if there are unspent funds at the end of
93 the year can those funds be added to the CIP. It would have to be a Warrant article
94 that was set up ahead of time. It can happen for up to 100K. The current CIP is in
95 good shape and not in a deficient. A discussion on unexpended funds vs. a warrant
96 article took place.

97
98 Benjamin Hofstetter, *Facilities Director*

99 He started working for the district in May 2025 so he's working from a budget that
100 was presented to him when he arrived. Bill Ryan complements Ben Hofstetter and
101 his staff on the improvements they've made to the school over the summer. Alyssa
102 Lavoie asks about oil and gas prices that Wilton has contracted and can we
103 collaborate on prices. Kristie LaPlante says everyone is already locked in, but we
104 will look into that for next year. Questions about lighting costs and generators we
105 asked and answered. Bob Silva asked if efficiencies could be identified that would
106 result in long term savings. Ben Hoffstetter has been discussing the cost of
107 replacing the heating units in all the buildings with the heating company that we
108 use. He has a meeting arranged with their sister company called EEI that focuses
109 on energy efficiency systems. They will do an analysis of all the systems (heaters,
110 lights, windows...) and produce a report. The total net cost is zero or close to zero
111 for the tax payer. Craig Alley wonders if there is a cost for that assessment or if its
112 part of the sales pitch. No, there is no upfront cost for that analyses to the best of
113 his knowledge.

114 115 CAPITAL RESERVE FUNDS

116 Kristie LaPlants explains that CRF's are funded separately from the operating
117 budget and are like long term savings accounts. The district has three CRF's

- 118 1. the Special Ed CRF, currently with \$341,239.68, to be used for any
119 substantial, unbudgeted Special Needs costs.
- 120 2. Technology Advancement CFR, dormant for years, has funds of
121 \$21,084.78
- 122 3. Building and Roadway Construction, Reconstruction, and Building
123 Equipment, Commonly referred to as the Building and Roads CRF. This
124 is the money that projects in the Capitol Reserve Plan are funded. It
125 currently has \$439.309.42

126 The school board votes to put them on the Warrant and that's how they are funded.

127 128 FEDERAL GRANTS:

129 There are four and all are 100% reimbursed.

1. IDEA is used for students with disabilities. It is a two year grant cycle. A small portion is shared with High Mowing for students with IEP's which is a federal requirement. Anticipating 200K for FY27
2. Title 1 Grants are for disadvantaged students and low achieving schools. These funds are meant to supplement our regular education funding for academic support, academic interventions, and family engagement activities. Title 1 is a one-year grant, but if it's not all used in one year it can carry over to the following year. We're anticipating 110K in Title 1 funds.
3. Title 2 grant is specific to teachers to improving quality leadership and student outcomes. It is shared with High Mowing.
4. Title 4 grants are for student support and academic improvement. It is a two-year grant cycle and is shared with High Mowing. We're anticipation receiving 18K

We don't use grants to pay for full time teacher salaries and benefits as larger district often do as they receive much larger funds and can do that. We don't budget ahead of time as the money could potentially dry up or substantially change. We use 100% of the IDEA and TITLE 1 grants and try to use all the Title 2 and 4 grants, but it's not always 100%.

Alyssa Lavoie asks if there is a history of grants received and how they've been spent, rather than just a high-level explanation of the grants.

Kristie LaPlante answers, year by year no. It's a difficult reporting mechanism. However, she can send out some historical information to show grant spending but not in the actual budget. Kristie LaPlante will send that out in advance of the December 3rd meeting. Kristie LaPlante acknowledges that there are some part-time (no more than 28 hours) grant funded positions in our district and these positions are funded almost exclusively by Title 1 funding. Brianne Lavallee clarifies the Title 2 and Title 4 grant planning meetings which they are required to have by law. These meetings include administration, a board member and a community member where they discuss the money they will have and the ways projects it will be spent on. Jonathan Vanderhoof wonders about the timing and reporting of the grant monies and if there are detailed records of the spending and asks if we get all the money upfront or do we have to get reimbursed. Kristie LaPlante says there are detailed records, but it's summarized in the budget. Peter Weaver explains the process of planning in advance but not being able to encumber the grant funds until the plan has been approved, which can be a lengthy process. If they don't get approved, the activity can't happen. Craig Alley requests that the percentage of the grant money sent to High Mowing be included in the historical breakdown to be sent to the budget committee. Brianne Lavallee explains that there is a tool online that can give you that exact information. There was discussion on how the monies are distributed based on number of students and between the two schools. Alyssa Lavoie asks if there are other grants that we receive for instance a transportation grant or a co-curricular grant or the robotics education development grant. Peter Weaver says yes they are currently working on a

safe grant, which has been submitted before and not awarded, but we'll try again. Jonathan Vanderhoof would like the line item in the budget stating the grant amount to be broken out to indicate the anticipated uses of the grant. Alyssa Lavoie suggests a supplemental document explaining the grant's use could accompany the budget. Peter Weaver agrees that more clarify is needed and suggests breaking it out to show the public at the annual meeting would be a good idea to help them understand what the line item for grants in the budget means. Jonathan Vanderhoof again brings up the grant line item in the budget being broken out in the budget saying I see \$350,000 going as a generic expense and I see \$350,000 coming out as a generic funding and I have no idea where that's going. Maybe it's going in somebody's pocket, maybe it's not. Peter Weaver reiterates that the accounting for the grant money is very strict and every penny is accounted for. Alyssa Lavoie wonders how we can make this item less confusing year after year.

Kristie LaPlante says we are meeting on November 18th in a joint session with the School Board. The Budget Committee will meet on December 3rd and where we will discuss revenues, salaries and benefits, transportation, and warrant articles. Health insurance is going up considerably. A 15% increase was budgeted, but its gone up by 34.6%. Kristie LaPlante is looking at competitors to try to get better rates and should have that on Dec. 3rd. However, she won't have the transportation rates for the Dec. 3rd meeting.

Jonathan Vanderhoof would like the minutes from the annual meeting included in these minutes. He also wonders why there is a rotating member of the school board attending the budget committee meetings. Brianne explains that the liaison had to resign and therefore she and Dennis have been volunteering to fill the position.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Adam Lavallee - Lyndeborough does not agree with the administrations belief that a 0% budget will not affect the students in a negative way. Items such as the baseball fence need to be addressed before a completely new fence is needed. He believes the golf team, which is popular with the students, should be funded by the school. He's not asking for money to coach the team, which he's happy to do as a volunteer. He feels it is negligent to not look at and fund some of these items.

Bob Newton – Lyndeborough wonders if his request for information to be shared with the public will be an agenda item at a future budget committee meeting. He reminds us that he provided a written copy of the questions he had at the October meeting. He states a budget committee member and an administrator indicated an interest in discussing his concerns but neither have followed up with him.

Bill Ryan states that our next meeting is a joint meeting with the School Board at 7:00 on November 18th in the WLC Library. The Budget Committee will meet at 6:30 in the conference room prior to the joint meeting.

Jonathan Vanderhoof makes a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Craig Alley seconds the motion. Alyssa Lavoie asks that administration and staff present at the meeting be listed at the top of the minutes. The amended minutes are accepted unanimously.

Craig Alley motions to end the meeting. Phil Brooks seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:11