

**WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE
SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Tuesday, December 16, 2025
Lyndeborough Central School
6:30 p.m.**

The videoconferencing link was published several places including on the meeting agenda.

Present: *Dennis Golding, Brianne Lavallee, John Zavgren, Michelle Alley (exited at 7:58pm), Paul White, Erin Collins, Darlene Anzalone, Diane Foss, and Jonathan Lavoie*

Superintendent Peter Weaver, Business Administrator Kristie LaPlante, Principals Tom Ronning and Principal Stacy Maghakian, Assistant Principal Katie Gosselin, Director of Student Support Services Ned Pratt, Technology Director Nicholas Buroker, Curriculum Coordinator Samantha Dignan, Facilities Manager Ben Hofstetter, Clerk Kristina Fowler

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Golding called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. STUDENT/STAFF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Principal Maghakian informed the group there were 4 nominations for Starfish, 2 from WLC, Becky McGrath and Amber Brewster and 2 from FRES, Pat Berube and Marissa Hofstetter. Ms. Hofstetter, School Nurse was chosen as the starfish awardee. Ms. Hofstetter was chosen for many reasons; some include how she consistently goes above and beyond to support the children at FRES and other buildings. She supports and supervises the contracted service nurses at LCS ensuring consistency and best practices across both buildings on top of her own caseload. She is compliant with medication management and all medical and safety procedures. Congratulations Ms. Hofstetter, October's starfish!

IV. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Superintendent requested to add a personnel and student matter to non-public.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Lavallee and SECONDED by Mr. White to accept the adjustments to the agenda, adding a personnel and student matter to nonpublic.

Voting: all aye, motion carried.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public comment section of the agenda was read.

Mr. Bob Newton, Lyndeborough, commented, see attached written comments.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Reports

- i. Student School Board Report**
- ii. WLCTA Report**
- iii. Principals' Reports**
- iv. Curriculum Coordinator's Report**

Chairman Golding informed the group that reports from December 2 are in the consent agenda, which can be approved in one motion unless you have any reports that you wish to ask questions or pull out from the consent agenda.

A MOTION was made by Mr. White and SECONDED by Ms. Foss to accept the reports as written in the consent agenda.

Ms. Anzalone noted wanting to discuss some of what is in the WLC Principal's Report during the presentation. No objection heard.

Voting: all aye, motion carried.

VII. BOARD CORRESPONDENCE

a. Reports

- i. Superintendent's Report/Donation-Tools-Guild of NH Woodworkers**

Superintendent recognized Ms. Dignan for obtaining approval for a \$9,000 grant for Discovery Ed for all 3 schools. He is working with Ms. LaPlante regarding a CTE transportation grant to see if we can recoup some of the money in terms of transportation to get students to and from CTE classes. Ms. Lavallee spoke regarding the last Budget Committee meeting with the majority of it discussing Title I. There was some concern over funds that were allotted to us in the last fiscal year and not all the funds being used. Superintendent Weaver did have an explanation, but the Budget Committee wanted the Board to have a discussion including Superintendent Weaver regarding a timeline that we could perhaps have as a Board where at a certain point we realize how to use all the funds. Superintendent expressed the need to know when the Board would like this reported out, is it twice a year? Discussion was to perhaps have an initial report when we know what the numbers will be and the grant process was reviewed which is the same for Title I, II, IV. Superintendent explained to make changes, the activity must be rewritten and approved prior to spending funds. It was confirmed that currently there is \$20,000 not assigned, we have a Title I tutor position vacancy and are hoping to fill that. He adds in January and February we could determine the model to use for Summer Academy, look at the data from last summer, and see what is needed. We tried a different model where we didn't provide transportation but found that was a barrier for some students coming and want to build that in this year. He thinks March may be a good time to report out. Ms. Lavallee recaps we have an initial report of what the programs are and in March will see if there is any different opportunities. Ms. LaPlante noted just because we have funds available, it is still very restrictive. If we were to be using some of that money to create programs, we may not be able to fund them moving forward and need to be sure we are spending it on long-term sustainable programs if funding was taken away what is the impact. Ms. Lavallee reviewed we can't use the money for something that is already budgeted. It was confirmed it is used for targeted students and free and reduced, it is not a school wide initiative. Ms. Lavallee noted that the Budget Committee was questioning whether the Board could have a more active role in it. The Superintendent will be reporting out on all 3 grants in March with any balances and activities. Ms. Anzalone noted regarding the Road Map, the Strategic Planning Committee will meet again in January. A question was raised regarding the Title I grant being set at \$143,000 and as of December 10 we have encumbered \$123,000, is there any concern it will go over. Superintendent responded that in March we will start to build out the Academy and he has a sense that the \$123,000 will go down because we have not been able to fill all the tutor hours and will know better as we get closer.

ii. Business Administrator's Report

Ms. LaPlante reports finishing presenting the major components of the budget with 2 outstanding items which will be discussed at their next meeting. It was noted the January 6 joint session has been cancelled. We will be looking at transportation costs; the RFP was due yesterday. In prior years we only received 1 bidder, this year by partnering with Milford, she was pleased to report we have 3 regular ed bids and 5 SPED. She met with Milford yesterday and today and will meet again on Thursday and Friday to really vet that out and start asking questions of the vendors to make sure we are getting an equitable price that meets the budgetary and student needs. Transportation will need to be discussed as well as capital reserve funding which has not been finalized yet. The operating budget is up about 3.15% from FY 26 approved, just the operating budget. Both towns have received their tax rates. She is on social media and sees the feedback and rightfully so. It has been a tough economy. Everyone's costs are increasing and there is not a lot of relief. The school district's portion of the tax increase is about 4.8% but there are many factors that go into the tax rate. There are 4 components: the town, the county, the state education piece and local education piece. As a school district, every penny that we don't spend, or any penny of excess revenue goes back to the voters automatically. Towns can retain that. They can automatically retain any unspent funds and excess revenues. What towns typically do is they will fund projects with their fund balance, or they will use it as an offsetting revenue to pay down their tax rate. Looking at a tax rate from one year to one year without factoring in how much a community may have used to pay down their local portion of the tax rate can sometimes be a little misleading. One metric she uses is to take any fund balance that they apply, any excess money that they apply as a revenue to reduce their tax rate because theoretically if they spend every penny and they didn't have the ability to manipulate which she uses that word not nefariously, she worked in a community and knows what you can do to adjust your tax rate. If communities didn't have the ability to manipulate their tax rate, what would it be? In Lyndeborough, the district's portion over the last several years is, we take about 53.32% of the total adjusted tax rate. This year we're up to about 55.75% of the total tax rate. In Wilton, historically, we're about 55.94% and this year we're at 57.59%. What that tells or the message that sort of sends is that our spending is in line with that of the state. It is in line with that of the state of the county as well as our local community. We're not having a significant spike in one year of the other that is negatively influencing the tax rate or making the town's portion insignificant because we need a lot more. That is one metric she uses to say where are we at and are we monopolizing that tax rate. It helps to understand when you are getting your tax bill. She is pleased with where we're at with the tax rate as far as the analysis and she has 7 years' worth of data. Even comparing it to seven years we're still within the line. Regarding year to date, she does not have the detailed year to date yet. She provided a summary report on the back of her board report. As of today, our unaudited financials are about 6.4% unspent and unencumbered, \$5,668,443 has been spent. We have about \$9,243,000 encumbered and a lot of that encumbered is in the range of benefits. A question was raised regarding support services, maintenance and transportation which show over budget. Ms. LaPlante confirms we are \$110,000 over budget on support services \$57,749 is wages that show as encumbered in bottom part of the page and unspent on top which nets out to about \$53,000. Facilities have had 2 vacancies with 1 just filled and a contracted service for the other, we are over about \$1,900 and on the top on wages and benefits side we are showing savings for 1 staff member for the whole year, so they net out to minimal overages. She confirms we have about 4 FTE equivalent vacant positions. She confirms with facilities we will stay with the contracted service and there is a nurse position at LCS that we have been unable to fill despite interviews, the part time hours and pay have been an issue but it has been actually easier and more cost effective to hire a staffing agency there compared to the wages and benefits of an employee. She confirms we are doing OK, but we may overspend on another line item because those will not fall under salaries and benefits.

iii. Facilities Manager's Report

Mr. Hofstetter reported not much has changed since he submitted the report. He gave a shout out to his team, saying they had been a dream come true. This is his first real management position in this capacity, and he could not have asked for a better team to surround himself with. He has them doing things they have not done before. Ann Bird, Scott Hasu, Ariel Desfosses, Bill Carey and Pete Stephenson have all worked countless overtime hours trying to bridge the gap of those 2nd shift vacancies while we found Janine Sykeny and now Vinny White who have fit right in and hit the ground running. He just learned Alex Golding will be back for another month which he is happy about. As of right now we are fully staffed. Ariel is an ABA working extra and fits right in. Appreciation was voiced for how the buildings look so clean. It was suggested before the games at WLC that the gym be cleaned up around the stage if it possible for the custodians to get in there. Mr. Hofstetter acknowledged this and had just asked if they could get in there to do that, the gym is booked from 2:45pm-9:30pm, 5 days a week but is trying to work something out with the Principal and Athletic Director (AD). He would like to wash and clean floors too. Mr. Lavoie questioned whether it would be possible for some adults to volunteer to clean up the baseball field and wonders if there is a process to be able to do that. It would be a group of fathers just looking to do this if someone could get back to him and let him know if this is Ok. Mr. Hofstetter spoke, answering a question about the outdoor lights, he did speak with a vendor for a quote, but they gave a proposal for all new lights, which is not what we want. He has a number from another to just do the replacements and is waiting till spring to coordinate that, a quote is pending. It was suggested it be rectified before fall. Regarding trash around the gym bleachers, he has asked the custodians to place multiple trash barrels for people to throw things away and hopefully that will help. Ms. Lavallee spoke that it would be helpful to have a small table and chairs near concessions for anyone who wants to sit to eat and that may help minimize bringing food into the gym and remind people that it is not allowed in the gym. It may help to have a couple volunteers to remind people going in.

iv. Director of Technology's Report/Technology Plan

Mr. Buroker recognized our technician in WLC, Marisa Abasto for passing her CompTia Network+ certification with flying colors. She has been studying for the last six months, it is a pretty involved test, and it was all funded through a grant program with the state. He said he could not be happier and prouder for her. Regarding support, this is the slow time of the year, all the bugs have been worked out of the system since the start of the school year, everything is pretty level there. We did have a few power outages at LCS and that is forcing us to evaluate what we take as a given. He does not have a clear timeline. He spoke regarding the Technology Plan; this is the 3rd year he has presented it. Last year the big thing was to get the extracurricular piece sorted out. It didn't quite work. He ran a coding club with about 6 students attending maybe once and then of the consistent kids he had about 3. Unfortunately, a lot of kids say they want to code but it's really hard. He believes he is on track with the other things. The maintenance calendar has been implemented, the maker space has been implemented, library skills are teaching digital citizenship; he thinks we are in a good place. A question was raised about any need to go a bit further into the AI portions of this. Mr. Buroker responded there is a committee made of teachers concerning AI and how to actually fold it into classroom practices inspired by the code of ethics the Board approved about 18 months ago. When they come up with what they want to do he will happily fold that into the plan he will be presenting sometime next year, this time. He spoke a bit about what type of coding the coding club was working on noting one student could probably code Python better than he could. A question was raised regarding internet safety especially with AI, what are we doing to teach the kids how to be safe on the internet and how to be critical thinkers when they see something on the internet and not to believe everything they see on the internet and how to differentiate. Mr. Buroker spoke about our librarian, at MS HS, who teaches digital citizenship as part of library skills. Ms. Wiley talks about what sources are reliable and how to know if it is a reliable website, do they cite sources etc. Ms. Dignan confirms Ms. Loiselle also teaches digital citizenship at the elementary level as well, how we can fact check and images we talk about using what we have and how do we implement that with AI because it is different, it is different technology. Ms. Lavallee remembers having a night for parents where there was not much attendance and suggested perhaps having a short information piece at curriculum night or something that may be more accessible to parents. Assistant Principal Gosselin thinks it is a great idea, it has been popping up a lot lately especially in 6th grade and they have been speaking with a lot of parents, even this morning they spoke to a class and reiterated the presentation they had previously. It is something we spend a lot of time with kids on.

VI. PRESENTATION-ATHLETICS/CO-CURRICULAR

Principal Ronning, Assistant Principal Gosselin and Athletic Director Amber Brewster were present and provided information regarding athletics and clubs. A copy of the presentation can be found with the minutes. Principal Ronning thanked Ms. Draper, Assistant Principal Gosselin and Ms. Brewster for putting a lot of the information together. Ms. Brewster gave a shout out to Mr. Crouse and Mr. Lavoie for helping to clean up, sweep and put chairs away after games. Fall sports are Varsity Boys Soccer, Varsity Girls Soccer, Varsity Cross Country, Varsity Golf, Middle School Girls Soccer, and Middle School Boys Soccer. Changes since fall 2024 are that they added Varsity Golf (full roster) and JV Girls Soccer move to Varsity Soccer. Winter sports are Varsity Boys Basketball, Varsity Girls Basketball, Varsity Co-Ed Swim (doing awesome, piggy backing with Milford but playing for WLC, hope to have enough for our own team), Varsity Unified Basketball, Middle School Girls Basketball, Middle School Boys Basketball. Changes since fall 2024 are we offer Indoor Track (numbers permitting) and added Unified Basketball. Spring sports are Varsity Boys Baseball, Varsity Girls Softball, Varsity Track & Field, Varsity Unified Volleyball, Middles

School Girls Softball and Middle School Boys Baseball. No changes since fall 2024. Athletic participation (some students counted more than once) 24-25 is: MS, 35 in fall, 27 in winter, 29 in spring, total of 91. Participation in HS is: 34 in fall, 38 in winter, 39 in spring, total of 111. Participation in 25-26 for fall and winter only is: MS 30 in fall, 33 in winter, total of 63 and at HS 57 in fall, 38 in winter, total of 95. We have increased a lot and may get to the point of having to make cuts. Wrestling was explored but too late, if we want to do this next year we need to decide in May. Ms. Brewster does not have any kids actively in our district in wrestling she knows of but could be involved in a club elsewhere. Principal Ronning spoke about cost per sport. MS Boys Soccer, \$13,904.64 includes coach stipend, equipment, transportation, registration fees, officials, porta potties and field maintenance, MS Girls Soccer \$11,977.34, Boys Varsity Soccer \$22,393.32 (increase is due to using LA Limo cost for transportation), Girls Varsity Soccer \$13063.63 and Varsity Cross Country \$10,602.63. The total for the fall season is roughly \$71,000, the winter season total is about \$28,000 and spring is about \$75,000. All together our sports programs are roughly \$174,000, about 1% of our overall budget. Uniform rotation schedule was included in the presentation, and some sports may vary in years due to the sport such as basketball has a home and away uniform and are only worn 8 times each where baseball have more wear and tear therefore replaced more frequently. He spoke of clubs and reviewed all the clubs we have for MS (Drama Club, National Jr. Society, Dance Team, Robotics, Homework Club, WLC News Club, Student Leadership, Art Club, Band, Tennis Club, Rock Band, Ski Club, Tabletop Gaming, etc.), and HS (Drama Club, National Honor Society, Dance Team, WLC News Club, Student Leadership, Robotics, Student Government, Homework Club, Math Team, Tennis Club, Art Club, Horticulture Club, Weight Training, Band, etc.).plus the cost associated with each and overall MS clubs total cost is about \$6,175 and HS is about \$10,765. Student Government was a little more difficult to parse out because it includes the 4 years of HS and their class advisors, a historian, a secretary, and have dances etc. Participation numbers were presented for 24-25, MS 62, HS 28 both in 1 or more clubs, and this year MS 89 and HS 41 some students are counted more than once in multiple clubs. Principal Ronning spoke about W.I.N. period and looking at academics and doing a push with PSAT, SAT and iReady. They reviewed data and made improvements. They understand not all kids are going to college. They discussed what they could do to get kids to buy into the classes and school. We looked at offering clubs during the day and adding things instead of after school because it can be challenging because of transportation etc. They spoke to staff about what their interest would be if they could offer a club what it would be and they created a list. They surveyed students to see what they are interested in and met today, and did a Venn diagram to see what they have in common. The slides show the results of MS and HS. They are looking at building some of the programs they have and expanding them and adding some new ones. The HS listed a video game club, he found that interesting because NHIAA has a varsity team for video competitions, it is something we could possibly consider for next year. It's all still in the process of being put together. A brief discussion was as had regarding senior project and Assistant Principal Gosselin notes the seniors want to keep dedicated senior project time. Ms. Anzalone would like to see more specific numbers, when looking at the total number of athletes she would like to see it by sport, grade, how many are on the honor role etc. and ways to improve the program and is any of it built into the curriculum, what are the kids doing in PE and even with the clubs. She would like to know as much as can be shared regarding the feedback from the surveys. What changes or improvements could we make going forward and how do we really want to help develop our teams and the kids to be better athletes? She would like to see the breakdown of the cost, what makes one more expensive than another. Ms. Brewster responded that usually it's transportation. Ms. Anzalone suggested the soccer uniforms be a 2-year replacement. Ms. Brewster noted if there is a team that is a priority we have some flexibility. Ms. Anzalone wonders what grades are interested in which clubs, she is interested in how they choose which ones to use and how often W.I.N. would be utilized, first and foremost it has to be used for academics. Assistant Principal Gosselin gave some examples; there are parameters built in and you need to be earning your proficiency and competencies or they don't go. They do check ins with teachers if they are not eligible, they don't go and instead will have "structured work study" in that content area where they are most struggling with. There are a lot of parameters built in. Ms. Anzalone asked which teachers are running them, as you would want your math teachers to be available for math help. A question was raised whether golf has been put into the budget and is there anything they need; we should be paying for it. Principal Ronning responded we are staying with the current budget but typically there is funding left over and he would come to the Board to ask to allocate some of that toward golf for next year and a couple of items. A brief discussion was had regarding elementary PE, it was suggested to utilize the hill at LCS more, having kids outside at FRES playing more sports, having fun and going outside and using the field. A brief discussion was had about having proper coaches and assistant coaches, we have a community of moms and dads who know a lot about sports. Principal Ronning spoke of the difficulty finding coaches and sometimes they may not be the best but without them we may not have a team. There have been coaches put on improvement plans and some may be asked not to return. Ms. Brewster added she has just reconstructed the coach evaluations recently so that it is more in depth. Ms. Lavallee voiced appreciation for the volunteers that are helping to keep the costs low and keeping the clubs going. She is thankful for them. Discussion was had regarding some coaches commenting that it is becoming more and more difficult to coach because of the dissatisfaction people have. We rely so heavily on volunteers, and the coaches do get a stipend, but it equates to about \$2 an hour when you calculate the hours in and most fold it back into the program, they are really volunteering their time. It is important for us as a community to be cognizant of that, if you want to attract great people you have to have a great environment. Parents play a big role in that environment too. Discussion was had regarding a situation during the soccer season and the need to set examples for the students. Ms. Brewster spoke of having a program which should be out for the upcoming home game which basically says how you should behave and things like that. We want to be sure we get that out there, enjoy the game but be responsible. We have incorporated Owen who does announcements for us and will incorporate into his script that certain behavior is not tolerated and will result in removal from the gym. At this point with some consistent behaviors, she has seen at sporting events there is no more warning. If you continue the behavior, it is one and done.

VII. BOARD BUDGET DISCUSSION

a. Budget FY 2026-2027

Ms. LaPlante reviewed the operating budget is at \$16,152,855, which is an increase of \$492,647 over FY 26, about 3.65%. It does include the increase in health insurance. We were able to reduce essentially by a little over \$200,000 by revising our staffing estimates. When she builds it in September it is based on known staffing positions and makes assumptions about vacancies. We are continuing to budget federal grants at \$350,000 with an allocation to Title I, II and Title IV and IDEA. All in all, she evaluated the open positions, revised salaries and benefits for them and were able to save quite a bit of money. The other thing is that our maximum exposure for teacher retirements per the CBA is \$20,000 per longevity, up to a maximum of 4 teachers. When she first built the budget, she built for the worst-case scenario. We have received zero retirements but did choose to keep \$20,000 in the event that there are any unforeseen circumstances that the Board allows a special exception and waives the notice requirement. We were able to put in just over 3% on that. Our transportation costs for both regular ed and SPED are pending, she is hoping to have a contract for the Board or a proposal to the Board for their review on January 6. She built into the budget a 5% increase in transportation costs and right now from what she is seeing she thinks it may be lower than that. She is not anticipating the estimate will be exceeded. Aside from the operating budget which the Budget Committee is parsing out, federal grants, the only things left for the Board to consider are warrant articles for capital reserve accounts and any new. Discussion was had including confirming the transportation place holder is 5%, appreciation was voiced for Milford incorporating us into their negotiation. It was confirmed that, when possible, transportation is combined for both boys' and girls' games but depends on season and location. Chairman Golding asked for any further questions on the budget. None heard

b. Warrant Articles

Ms. LaPlante informed the group in speaking with legal counsel about the existing Building & Roadways Capital Reserve; it cannot be used for athletic facility needs. We would need to amend the language to add athletics facilities repairs, maintenance and upgrades and it would become part of the same CIP document, that same funding source, or there could be a subsequent capital reserve specific to athletics, facilities, repairs and upgrades. That is something she told the Board she would follow up on and has informed the Budget Committee. She provided a recommendation for the Building & Roadways capital reserve fund if we are keeping to specific to that. She is not prepared to discuss a proposed amount if you fold athletics into that. Responding to a question, she confirms it would be one warrant article which would be revised and a subsequent warrant article to appropriate. A question was raised whether the current one is amended would all of our facilities, fields and whatever is not included be included then into the CIP. Ms. LaPlante confirms yes, the Facilities Committee, she believes, would then be charged with also building out athletic facilities and upgrades into the CIP. If it were totally separate, it would have the have its own initial funding sources and then the Board would have to determine how they want to monitor it because the Board are the agents to expend. The Board does not have to have a subsequent committee to figure out the funding on that. The Board could also delegate that to the Facilities Committee, how the items on the CIP are managed and is something probably for the future discussion because she feels if we are going to have a capital reserve fund for something for athletic fields, there needs to be a mechanism for us to monitor and for the public to see what our plan is and where the money is. Superintendent spoke if we fold it into the CIP, we have to be guided by a policy that the Board passes. You cannot expend that money in the first 3 years, and the estimate needs to be over \$20,000. If we put it in the current CIP we cannot start the project for 3 years. If it has its own account and the Facilities Committee manages that we need to be sure we are not mixing the two. We would want the WLC Principal to be part of that subcommittee since most of the fields are at WLC. It was noted we have had projects like tennis courts which were over \$20,000. Discussion was had including several projects that need to be done, would need a draft policy before district meeting that deals with managing those funds, and options were discussed, leave it as is keeping athletics in the budget, adding to the current CIP warrant or having a separate one. Ms. LaPlante confirms if it is separate, the 3-year waiting period would depend on what the Board determines the parameters are. It was noted the idea would be to save for projects similar to CIP but for athletics so that over a few years you have enough to do some of those projects but would need guidelines. Having guidelines for the facilities CIP has been very helpful. We would need to take a hard look at what we need and some smaller things would go in the budget. Mr. Hofstetter was brought into the discussion, to see if he could get some estimates of what projects may be needed. Some concern was raised about putting it into the current facilities warrant and not being able to start projects for 3 years. Mr. Hofstetter prefers having two separate CIP's not mixing the two. A question was raised if it is 2 separate, is it something we can fold into the Facilities Committee. Ms. LaPlante responded, if the policy is similar, it makes sense, maybe just seeking outside input from coaches, the AD etc., and once it is created the Facilities Committee can manage it. Superintendent spoke that one of the big issues has been putting big projects in the operating budget and if we have the ability to save for it over a couple of years it seems more reasonable. He does not want another committee formed. Further discussions were had, including the need to show why we are asking taxpayers for this funding, how it will be managed and accountable for spending. One of the reasons the Budget Committee was looking into this and suggesting something like this is as we have discovered in the budgetary process every year, we essentially encounter a cost that we have no control over but is very expensive. Whether it is the state pushing back retirement funds on us or it's our health care costs going up, or it's our transportation costs, we don't necessarily always have control over those things. Since we have control over this, it makes sense for us to manage it so we can try to keep the year-to-year increases that we are asking for more level. Chairman Golding asked for a straw poll of who wants to see a separate warrant for athletics. All are in agreement with a separate warrant. Ms. LaPlante was directed to come up with the language for January 6 and Mr. Hofstetter will come up with what he thinks needs to be done and what would go on the CIP and present this in January (list of projects and costs). Mr. Hofstetter noted it will be difficult to get costs due to snow covered fields but he will ask our fields person to get some rough numbers. It was noted there is a lot of work including baseball field, lights, scoreboard

etc. It was confirmed this is for exterior not interior. That list will be provided at the January 20 meeting if possible. There was no objection heard.

Ms. LaPlante spoke about the Building & Roadways Capital Reserve and being able to save about \$30,000 over the last few years. She recommends asking for \$190,000 on the warrant article and that will keep us on the same funding trajectory. She confirms the Facilities Committee meeting could not be held as there was not a quorum, but they did have a discussion. Last year the amount on that warrant was \$272,000.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Lavoie and SECONDED by Ms. Collins to approve \$190,000 on the Building & Roadways Capital Reserve warrant article.

Voting: all aye, motion carried unanimously.

There was a discussion regarding the SPED warrant article and if they should ask to add funds to this. Ms. LaPlante confirms there is \$342,000 in it currently. Mr. Pratt spoke that we will have further conversations on SPED later and one of the fears of SPED directors he is hearing from the group at his meetings is the amount of students that are unannounced moving from one district to another district and identified with emotional disability, the numbers are increasing greatly. If he was to say at this point, he thinks there should be a contribution to it. This was tabled for now, return on January 6 with a recommendation for a number for a SPED Capital Reserve warrant. There was discussion including interest to know if there is something we can do systemically that could meet the needs of students experiencing difficulties especially for emotional disorders without costing money. Mr. Pratt spoke about weighing developmental programs or additional services, programs are difficult as it is a 3 year pathway and services are different but it's a bit grey. Mr. Pratt spoke about sometimes the needs of these students affect and entire building or class, we adjust services and try different things for kids to get into the flow of the classroom. The biggest concern is when you have 3-4 students disrupting 5 or 6 classrooms, it is hard to balance that. Even districts with more resources are struggling with this. Discussion continued on this topic. Mr. Pratt spoke of a couple of districts in Massachusetts that provide day programing and kind of create a service for those student but it is very expensive. If we did something like that it would cost \$250,000 to do that and weigh that against an OOD that costs \$100,000.

Chairman Golding spoke of the final warrant that needs to be discussed is if the Board wants to have one for open enrollment. He suggests developing the language and deciding how many students to come in and out. A long discussion was held regarding this including it does not have to be done at district meeting, it can be a special meeting. There is concern for a petition warrant article, it is important to present the way the Board and Budget Committee do with facts and unbiased. Kearsarge has just put forth in a warrant. That warrant is limited to the HS and lists zero percent going out. It was noted to accept students; we would need to know that number that could be accommodated. Superintendent suggests doing it for HS only. Concern was voiced if the warrant does not pass. Ms. LaPlante is suggesting if there is an open enrollment warrant that it be placed first. Discussion was had regarding the number of students and the cost. It is based on per pupil cost, using \$20,000 as a rough number if 50 students left, it would cost the district \$1,000,000. Discussion was had regarding the difficulty of being able to plan and budget for an unknown amount of students. It was noted there is also the EFA program. Superintendent feels most kids will want to stay here. It was suggested to make the whole district open enrollment vs. just the HS. Discussion was had you could have zero go out and take 1 student per grade in, Londonderry district is looking at something like that. Superintendent suggests if doing open enrollment then at the HS allow students in, accepting 10% which would be about 15 students. Further discussion was had including the concern with it potentially not passing and affecting the budget for next year and how do you know what to budget for. A suggestion was made to hold a special meeting prior to the March meeting. Some had concerns about not having enough time. Ms. LaPlante confirms we can't do it before the district meeting. Discussion included concern for going with a zero percent of students out as some may think it is not fair if they have a chance to not pay for tuition and that option not being available. It was noted that there is no guarantee that their child would be chosen to attend due to the lottery process. Students could be split up and attend different schools. The lottery is determined by the district, and a policy needs to be created. There may be criteria for a district to accept a student also. Superintendent voiced that the laws will likely change, it could be that each district will need to allow a certain percentage to leave a district. He spoke of another issue which is that if we do not put a cap on the number of students leaving, we will not know how much staffing we need in and out of the classroom etc., and we can't issue contracts until we know. He gave examples. If the cap is 10 students, that is about \$200,000 but we are short of \$200,000 in the budget, let's say the budget passes we are already looking to cut 2 teachers and support staff to get to that \$200,000 and that is for the 10 students leaving. If it is 20 students, that's \$400,000. If we decide right now instead of doing zero, let's say we do 10 on either side now we have a projection that we can go back and add \$200,000 to the line item in the budget. It is a risk, we are asking taxpayers to pay for it, and he thinks you would need to find cuts in the budget. He believes most schools will be open enrollment from the conversations he has had with other Superintendents and will have zero percent going out. Discussion was had regarding how many students could be added to the HS with the fixed cost the same. It was suggested to start district meeting presentation with all the positive things happening here. The last data presentation was great, not just about test scores but the bigger story, kids on the honor role and tell them what is great about our district. Superintendent spoke about the jeopardy of liability for a small district like ours. He spoke that the law will change, and districts know the only way around it is to cap it. A big school like Milford could sustain 40 students going out but for us and schools like us, Mascenic, Jaffrey-Rindge, we are all trying to figure out how to survive this without getting crushed by the Milford and Hollis-Brookline schools. At some point we can't afford to keep the school open. He thinks most of the families are really happy and the kids love our school. This is changing public education in the state and schools in our region. Ms. Lavallee spoke of what happened in larger districts like

Manchester when the open enrollment within districts law was passed that allowed parents to decide which school their children attend within their district and the effect was one school becoming better because they have the influx of tuition meanwhile the other has the opposite happening with higher needs, and higher behavioral needs. It's created a huge economic divide because you have the schools that cater to the people that have the means. Superintendent added that schools are not going to welcome kids that are at the most risk for academic failure. They won't recruit our at-risk kids and the way to control that is to set the criteria. They could say they are focused on academic achievement and will accept kids with a certain GPA. Right now, you can set any criteria you want. We could then become a school with really complicated students with complicated needs; our athletics program will be decimated. Ms. LaPlante spoke of how it affects the community and doesn't equate to automatic savings. Chairman Golding asked for a show of hands if the Board wants a warrant for open enrollment. It was unanimously in favor of having a warrant for open enrollment. Discussion was had including being the first on this, some favoring zero in and zero out, some zero out and some in and the opportunity to have students attend here and people understand this is a good school and concern was raised regarding finances and the unknown. Superintendent expresses that we need to plan for the worst-case scenario. Further discussion was had including a survey Lyndeborough put out that surveyed how happy people were with the district. The survey came back and it was abysmal but when dissected it there were no parameters to it. Anyone could have filled it out 20 times and when you dissected how many of the people that answered the survey had kids in the school they easily accounted for the positive responses about the school. Ms. Lavallee spoke about being concerned on a personal level about some members of the communities that don't support public schools and public education is taking hits from all different directions, issuing state mandates that are not fund regarding curriculum, putting rules in place we have to take care of and not funding those. Discussion was had including people don't connect that tax money to the economy in a town. You spend a dollar on public education, that dollar supports teachers and supports the staff etc., and they take that money and buy groceries and it just goes on and on and spreads throughout the entire economy and boosts the entire economy. It was noted sending your students out of district does not lower your taxes and the need to be transparent and show the great things about our district. Discussion was had regarding what is happening with legislative changes and some that have put a higher workload on administration whether it is ed rule or the curriculum changes and it is hard to quantify but even the changes to the right to know request law puts a burden on them and that is all behind the scenes. The cost doesn't just take place in the classroom. Discussion moved back to the warrant and number of students coming in and out and perhaps should start with zero out. It was noted that it has to be a percentage on the warrant. The consensus agrees with 15% coming in and zero going out. Ms. LaPlante confirms it can be revised each year. She will come back with that language for the next meeting and can work on the explanation. Ms. LaPlante informs them we are required to have a public hearing on it and she suggested February 10. Mr. Zavgren feels there should be a connection to the tax bill so that if we hit that number this is what it would look like and spread that out to each household and make it clear. Chairman Golding asked if there are any other warrants to discuss. Superintendent responded, the WLCSSA CBA but we are not there yet. Chairman Golding added we need a place holder for that we do not have a number yet but we do have language from prior years. He asked for any further discussion on the budget, none heard.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

a. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

A MOTION was made by Mr. Lavoie and SECONDED by Ms. Collins to approve the minutes of November 18, 2025, as written. Voting: all aye, motion carried.

IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS

i. Facilities Committee

Chairman Golding reported in Ms. Alleys absence. The committee did not have a quorum, and Ms. LaPlante provided a recommendation for the CIP capital reserve.

ii. Technology Committee

Mr. Zavgren reported the committee discussed moving the internet point of presence from the current place which has backup power this is prudent but if the line is out, then the phone service goes out. We want to have a no single point of failure. The idea is to move that point of presence over to FRES because they have a backup power supply and it is used as Wilton's emergency shelter. There is fiber connectivity between all these places. It should be relatively easy.

iii. Budget Liaison

Ms. Lavallee reported already speaking of this earlier. She asked what information would the Board like her to bring back regarding negotiations. Negotiations will be further discussed during non-public.

iv. Negotiations

Chairman Golding reported this will be discussed during non-public.

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public comment section of the agenda was read.

Mr. Bill Crouse, Lyndeborough spoke regarding the cleanliness of the gym, he knows there is a desire to keep it dry and food free, but many other schools do not that and they don't have a cleanliness problem. He suggests at the end of the game take your junk with you. He spoke regarding FRES PE and feels it is in need of an adjustment, a wholehearted look at the program. He spoke of being part of the PTO and is not speaking on their behalf but it is the Parent Teacher Organization and there is lack of effort on the teachers. Aside from Ms. Bujak who participated regularly, other than that we don't have attendance from teachers

and would like to see that. He was curious about meeting tonight and at FRES and wondered why the option to comment online is not available. He wants it available. Chairman Golding responded that we don't have the same set up here, technically we don't have to offer it. Mr. Crouse spoke of wanting to see sports participation be a credit achieving mechanism for PE credits as this is done in many other HS in the state at all levels. He doesn't know the right way to go about suggesting it. He has 3 kids who play sports and thinks they are getting their PE time and wants to see a mechanism for doing that. He spoke of being a proponent of the fields warrant, things have gone undone for a long time and wants to see them done now. Regarding warrants, he is still in the dark about the Performance Tech Committee, he feels they got the short end of the stick, why it was not on a warrant ever or ushered in that direction he questions. It is an asset of the school and when the fridge breaks, we replace it but we have this sound and light system overused and undermaintained and wants to do something about it. It gets pushed off in the donation schedule, but this should have been paid for by the school or coordinated with donations. Even though the money is coming in from other sources the school needs to stand behind it. At the last meeting he may have made a comment about the community being disregarded as far as the Athletic Advisory Committee and there are signs of maybe having more information. The ripples he put in the water have had an effect and is thankful for that but there is more than can always be done.

XI. SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. White commented that things are moving in a positive direction and we are in budget season, let's keep moving along.

Ms. Anzalone agrees we should have the online piece.

Mr. Lavoie attended unified basketball today, it was a great game, and the kids had a great time. It is the only game you go to where everyone claps, and everybody scores. It doesn't matter the score; they had a great time. He thinks Matthew Hannigan put up about 100 points, did a good job.

Ms. Collins commented we hear about the taxes continuing to go up and everything else going up and what we need to improve the scores. Speaking for herself as a parent, she has never questioned our average test scores or wherever any of that falls because she talks to the teachers. Anytime she is at the school she sees everybody doing the work and doesn't know what more they would necessarily be doing. She feels the vast majority of the increases are coming from things beyond what the teachers are able to control because a lot is coming from DC. She doesn't know what other programs and things there are but if anyone has ideas, she is wide open.

XII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION RSA 91-A: 3 II (A) (C)

A MOTION was made by Mr. White and SECONDED by Mr. Lavoie to enter Non-Public Session to review the non-public minutes, discuss personnel and student matters and negotiations, RSA 91-A: 3 II (A) (C) at 9:41pm.

Voting: via roll call vote, all aye, motion carried.

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

The Board entered public session at 10:19pm.

A MOTION was made to seal the non-public session minutes RSA 91-A: 3 II (A) (C) by Mr. Lavoie and SECONDED by Ms. Collins.

Voting: all aye, motion carried.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Mr. Lavoie and SECONDED by Mr. White to adjourn the Board meeting at 10:19pm.

Voting: all aye, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristina Fowler