

TIMBERLANE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Atkinson, Danville, Plaistow and Sandown, New Hampshire

Minutes of the Deliberative Session
February 04, 2016

District Moderator Steven Ranlett called the February 04, 2016 Deliberative Session, held at the Timberlane Regional High School, 36 Greenough Road, Plaistow, NH, to order at 7:03 PM. He led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Metzler introduced the High School Select Ensemble who sang the National Anthem.

School Board Members in attendance: Peter Bealo (vice chair), Richard Blair, Robert Collins, Donna Green, Jack Sapia, Susan Sherman, Gregory Spero, Nancy Steenson (chair) and Kelly Ward.

Budget Committee Members in attendance: Kate Delfino, Lee Dube, Thomas Geary, Julie Hammond, Dennis Heffernan (chair), Joshua Horns (vice chair) and Michelle O’Neil. Absent: Anthony Cantone and Cathleen Gorman

Dr. Metzler welcomed the voters to the Deliberative Session and expressed his appreciation for the collaborative work of the School Board and Budget Committee in developing a proposed budget that is respectful of both the children of the district and taxpayers of all four towns.

Moderator Ranlett reviewed the meeting rules and asked Mrs. Sherman to read the list of non-voters who may be making presentations or may wish to speak during the Deliberative Session.

Mrs. Sherman read through the list.

MOTION: Mrs. Sherman motioned to accept the list of nonresident speakers as presented; seconded by Jack Sapia.

VOTE: There being no discussion, the motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Moderator Ranlett then read the first and second sessions of the annual meeting as well as the election of officers as presented on the warrant, noting officers will be elected by vote at each town’s polls.

First Session of Annual Meeting (Deliberative)

You are hereby notified to meet at the Timberlane High School, 36 Greenough Road, Plaistow, New Hampshire, on Thursday, the 4th day of February 2016, at 7:00 p.m. This session shall consist of explanation, discussion, and debate of warrant articles number 2 through number 9. Warrant articles may be amended subject to the following limitations: (a) warrant articles whose wording is prescribed by law shall not be amended, (b) warrant articles that are amended shall be placed on the official ballot for a final vote on the main motion, as amended, and (c) no warrant article shall be amended to eliminate the subject matter of the article.

Second Session of Annual Meeting (Voting)

Voting on warrant articles number 1 through number 9 will be conducted by official ballot to be held in conjunction with town meeting voting to be held on Tuesday, the 8th day of March, 2016, at the Town election polls in Atkinson, Danville, Plaistow, and Sandown, New Hampshire.

Atkinson	Voting will be conducted at the Atkinson Community Center from 7am-8pm
Danville	Voting will be conducted at the Danville Community Center from 8am-7pm
Plaistow	Voting will be conducted at Pollard School from 7am-8pm
Sandown	Voting will be conducted at the Sandown Town Hall from 8am-8pm

Article 1 - Election of Officers

To choose the following school district officers:

Danville Voters	School Board Member	3-year Term
Plaistow Voters	School Board Member	3-year Term
Sandown Voters	School Board Member	3-Year Term

Atkinson Voters	Budget Committee Member	1-Year Term
Danville Voters	Budget Committee Member	3-Year Term
Plaistow Voters	Budget Committee Member	3-Year Term
Sandown Voters	Budget Committee Member	3-Year Term

Article 2 – Operating Budget

Shall the voters of the Timberlane Regional School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$69,333,958? Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be \$70,108,969 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Timberlane Regional School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. Note: Warrant Article 2 (the operating budget) does not include appropriations proposed under any other warrant articles. (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Recommended by the School Board 7-0-1

Recommended by the Budget Committee 7-0-0

MOTION: Dennis Heffernan of Plaistow motioned to put Article 2 on the floor for discussion; Kate Delfino of Atkinson seconded the motion.

Mr. Heffernan reviewed the budget process, outlining the need-based budget requests, percentage of change from the previous year and historical budget trends. He reviewed budget increases and decreases, the proposed budget versus the default budget and the estimated tax rate impact.

Mrs. Green of Sandown stated as a school board member that she abstained from the recommendation vote on Article 2 Operating Budget based on her concern of the historical increases of the per student costs over the past five years. She further stated she chose not to vote against the proposed budget since she could not support the default budget, which is a larger than the proposed.

Mr. Bealo of Plaistow noted insurance rates continue to increase while salaries have decreased due to lower enrollment and reduced staff.

Mr. Heffernan reported the budget committee considered a decrease of 64 students when developing the budget.

Mr. Green of Sandown reviewed his concerns of the past two budgets and stated he believes the district has generous resources.

MOTION: Kelly Ward of Sandown motioned to increase the operating budget by \$50,000 bringing the proposed budget total to \$69,383,958. Lee Dube seconded the motion.

Mr. Ward clarified the increase would be in consideration of legal expenses for the district should Sandown decide to withdraw from the TRSD.

Dr. Farah of Danville asked for justification of the \$50,000 amount.

Mr. Ward stated he based his estimate on the previous budget amount of \$30,000 (estimated cost for withdrawal consultant) plus \$20,000; he decided up to \$50,000 would be an adequate amount.

Dr. Farah asked for justification of the \$30,000 amount.

Mr. Collins of Danville described the process to develop the cost amounts for Sandown's withdrawal based on a historical search back to 1965. Based on the importance of an accurate amount for legal documentation and since the current climate bodes a legal contest, it is the best to have that information. He noted the study was never completed and the amount is up to \$50,000.

Dr. Farah asked the cost of the previous consultant? Mr. Collins indicated it was \$100 per hour.

Dr. Farah stated she would not support this motion but does support the Timberlane Teachers Association (TTA) collective bargaining agreement.

Mr. Sapia of Atkinson stated the other three towns should have a fair and accurate amount so everyone has a clear understanding of the cost.

Mr. Grosky of Atkinson, who was a member of the committee for the Sandown Withdrawal Feasibility study, stated he is in favor of this motion so residents of all four towns will have a clear understanding of the cost.

Mr. Blair of Plaistow stated he would not support the motion since the district has been operating with a surplus and the monies could come from the surplus.

Mr. Green seconded Mr. Blair's comments and stating he also would not support the motion.

Mr. Heffernan and Mr. Zukas of Plaistow both would not support the motion.

Mr. Dube of Sandown supports the motion since the Town of Sandown currently has an Article on their town warrant that may require this expenditure.

Mr. Springer of Danville is against the motion restating the money could come from a surplus amount.

Mr. Horns of Danville also did not support the motion.

Mrs. Steenson of Danville stated a responsible budget was developed and then the Town of Sandown produced an unfunded article on their town warrant causing the cost for this motion. Mr. Collins affirmed Mrs. Steenson statement.

Dr. Farah, also a member of the Sandown Withdrawal Feasibility study, stated the cost for the consultant was \$10,000.

VOTE: Moderator Ranlett called for a vote on the motion to add \$50,000 to the proposed operating budget. The motion failed by voice vote.

MOTION: Dr. Kim Farah motioned to reduce the budget from \$69,333,958 to \$69,000,000; seconded by Shawn O'Neil of Danville.

Dr. Farah explained her rationale for the motion was due to her concern of the TTA contract being approved by the voters as well as her understanding there is an estimated surplus of over \$333,938.

Mr. Broad, TTA-Teacher's Union President, stated he understands the gesture but does not support this motion.

Mr. Green stated his support of the motion noting student enrollment has reduced over the past nine years.

Mrs. Springer of Danville asked if it is true that the cut would cost teaching positions.

Dr. Metzler clarified it would cost six teaching positions. He noted that we are scheduled to reduce 21.6 positions in the proposed budget and this cut would increase it to 27.6 positions.

Mrs. Sherman of Plaistow stated she would not support this motion since it could impact facilities repairs or renovations.

Mrs. Green declared there is a structural surplus in the budget thus this motion would not result in job loss. There is a need to lose some staff and the money will just come out of surplus.

Mrs. Delfino of Atkinson reviewed the budget process and addressed the expected reduction of 21.6 staff.

Mr. True of Sandown requested the Moderator ask for a card vote and not the voice vote.

Mr. Springer expressed his concern that Dr. Metzler would consider reducing six teachers as opposed to administrators. Dr. Metzler outlined the comparison of \$300,000 in a \$69 million dollar budget as well as the hope the Guarantee Maximum Rate (GMR) comes in at a favorable rate. He stated the district worked hard last year to achieve a surplus.

Mr. Sherwood of Atkinson stated he would not support the motion since a cut in the budget for a few less students does not reduce class size or reduce staff.

Mr. Collins noted the employee insurance cost alone is in increase of \$1.6m dollars; a 2.3% increase over the previous year's budget. Without this increase the budget actually would have reduced by \$500,000.

VOTE: Moderator Ranlett called for a vote on the motion to reduce the budget to \$69,000,000. The motion failed. Article 2 will appear on the budget as written.

MOTION: Mrs. Pajak of Sandown motioned to restrict reconsideration of Article 2. Robert Collins seconded the motion. Moderator Ranlett called for a vote on the restrict reconsideration motion; the motion passed.

Article 3 – Capital Reserve Fund

Shall the voters of the Timberlane Regional School District raise and appropriate up to \$250,000 to be placed in the School Building Construction, Reconstruction, Capital Improvement and Land Purchase Capital Reserve Fund established in 1996, with such amount to be transferred from those funds in the June 30, 2016 unassigned fund balance available for transfer on July 1 of this year which were apportioned as Capital Expenses in 2015-2016 in accordance with Article 6 of the Timberlane Regional School District Articles of Agreement? No amount to be raised by taxation. (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Recommended by the School Board 7-1-0

Recommended by the Budget Committee 7-0-0

MOTION: Robert Collins motioned to put Article 3 on the floor for discussion; Jack Sapia of Atkinson seconded the motion.

Mr. Collins read the intent of the article which [puts money aside for future capital improvements. Money is only put into this Capital Reserve Fund if it is available at the end of the fiscal year. Capital expense appropriations are calculated in accordance with the Timberlane Regional School District Articles of Agreement (Article 6) apportionment formula as follows:

“The capital expenses of the Timberlane Regional School District payable in each fiscal year shall be apportioned on the equalized valuation as most currently available as determined by the State Tax Commission”.]

Mrs. Green indicated the money is not raised by taxation at this moment, but it takes money from future years resulting in the same as taking it by taxation.

Mr. Green is not in support of this Article, stating his concern of Article 2-Operating Budget amount.

Mr. Hammond of Atkinson asked for the balance of the current Capital Reserve Fund to which Mr. Stokinger replied the current balance is \$863,000.

Mr. Collins informed the assembly the Capital Improvement Plan committee is expected to meet in March to create a Capital Improvement Plan. This would put money away for future use so the taxpayers will not be burdened. The monies can only be used by a vote of the taxpayers.

Mr. Hammond stated it is a small amount for a district in need of improvements. If repairs continue to be deferred the delay will cost the taxpayers more money instead of planning effectively.

Mr. Sapia voiced his support of the motion.

Mrs. Green expressed her desire to have the public understand the money is coming from money that has not been spent on capital improvements for the district. It is not coming from a capital expense surplus; we should spend all the money marked for capital improvements as budgeted. She stated she would not support this Article.

Mr. Collins noted that the budget is developed 18 months in advance and when work is completed for less or when bids come in lower than expected, this creates the surplus.

Mr. Blair noted amount in the article is “up to” \$250,000, thus it could be a less amount. It is only taken from what is left in the capital surplus.

Dr. Farah asked the total expense of the 2015-2016 capital expense line to which Mr. Stokinger estimated approximately \$4million; however, from that amount, principal and interest payments for the bond are paid which he estimated at \$2million.

ARTICLE TO BALLOT: Moderator Ranlett noted with no further discussion, Article 3 will appear on the budget as written.

MOTION: Michelle O’Neill motioned to restrict reconsideration of Article 3. Kate Delfino seconded the motion. Moderator Ranlett called for a vote on the restrict reconsideration motion, the motion passed.

Article 4 – Three Year Collective Bargaining Agreement (Timberlane Teachers Association)

Shall the voters of the Timberlane Regional School District approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Timberlane Teachers Association and the Timberlane Regional School Board, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels over the amount paid in the prior fiscal year:

Fiscal Year	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Estimated Increase	\$611,032	\$633,573	\$724,684
3-Year Total			\$1,969,289

And further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$611,032 for the 2016-17 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at the current staffing levels? (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Recommended by the School Board 8-0-0

Recommended by the Budget Committee 7-0-0

Mrs. Sherman reviewed the intent of this article [Intent: This article will allow the school district to enter into a successor three-year contract with the Timberlane Teachers Association. The proposed contract ratified by the union and the school board represents a 3% increase in salaries and a \$210k cost savings in insurances for year one, a 2.3% increase in salaries in year two, and a 2.5% increase in salaries in year three.]

MOTION: Mrs. Sherman motioned to put Article 4 on the floor for discussion; Mr. Sapia seconded the motion.

Mrs. Green noted a material difference from the public hearing, which is an increase of \$5.00 for unused sick day redemption. Mr. Blair noted the previous contract had already increased the amount of sick leave redemption in year three of the three-year contract.

Mr. Sapia stated his support of Article 4 and thanked the teachers.

Mrs. Sherman-DeRoche of Plaistow thanked all who supported the district and all the dedicated professionals.

Mr. Heffernan and Mrs. Steenson expressed their support of Article 4.

ARTICLE TO BALLOT: Moderator Ranlett noted with no further discussion, Article 4 will appear on the budget as written.

Article 5 - Authorization for Special Meeting on Cost Items

Shall the voters of the Timberlane Regional School District, if Article 4 is defeated, authorize the Timberlane Regional School Board to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article 4 cost items only? (Without this Article the District would have to petition Superior Court for a Special School District Meeting. This saves the District the expense of attorney fees and court costs). (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Recommended by the School Board 8-0-0

Mrs. Sherman reviewed the Intent: This article is suggested by the NH Department of Revenue Administration as a cost saving measure.]

ARTICLE TO BALLOT: Moderator Ranlett noted no discussion, thus Article 5 will appear on the budget as written.

Article 6 – Danville Elementary Sprinkler System

Shall the voters of the Timberlane Regional School District raise and appropriate up to \$503,000 for the installation of a fire suppression sprinkler system (“Fire Suppression Sprinkler System Capital Project”) in the Danville Elementary School. This amount would be combined with \$250,000 previously raised and appropriated in the 2015-2016 budget for this purpose with the balance of \$503,000 to be raised by taxation in 2016-2017. (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Total Project Cost:	\$753,000
Amount to be expended from 2015/2016:	- \$250,000
Amount to be raised by taxation in 2016/2017:	\$503,000

Recommended by the School Board 7-1-0

Not recommended by the Budget Committee 3-3-1

[Intent: This article will allow for the installation of a fire suppression sprinkler system (FSSS) at Danville Elementary School. All of our schools have FSSS although some only have FSSS in their boiler rooms. The schools

in Sandown and Danville have FSSS in their boiler rooms only. The \$503,000 requested this year will be combined with the \$250,000 previously raised and appropriated from the '15-'16 budget for a total project cost of \$753,000.]

MOTION: Mr. Collins motioned to put Article 5 on the floor for discussion; Mrs. Sherman seconded the motion.

Mr. O'Neil referred to a letter from the Danville Fire Department citing four questions/statements.

1. Why weren't the Fire Chiefs in Danville and Sandown contacted about proposed sprinklers being installed in the schools?
2. When the school was built a waiver was received for any sprinkler requirement, what has changed?
3. Is this a life safety or property conservation improvement?
4. The boiler rooms and kitchen area over cooking appliances have sprinkler heads.

Mrs. Sherman responded she performed the research for the board. The money was originally put into a line item and then it was decided to put in into a special warrant article. She spoke with Plaistow Fire Chief for the general information.

Mr. Collins explained when the board learns of a deficit in the fire suppression sprinkler system in two of the district schools; this board should correct that deficit.

MOTION: Susan Sherman motioned to amend the intent for article 6 to include "The schools in Sandown and Danville have FSSS in their boiler rooms and kitchen only. Lee Dube seconded the motion.

VOTED: The motion passed by a voice vote.

MOTION: Robert Collins motioned to amend the intent for Article 6 to add the word "hoods" after the word kitchen; seconded by Kate Delfino.

Mr. Sotirakopoulos of Sandown clarified that water would not be used in a kitchen.

VOTED: The motion passed by a card vote.

Mr. Costanzo of Sandown asked why no funds were appropriated for the fire suppression system at Sandown. Mrs. Sherman clarified installing a suppression system at Sandown North would be the next consideration via the Capital Improvement Plan. Mrs. Green stated that the board discussed several options to address the fire suppression systems in both schools, i.e. piping the schools in year one, connecting to water in the next, funding Sandown North's system via capital reserve fund and appropriating Danville's, but chose to propose the Danville system only. She added she supports a Sandown system as that system is supported by the Sandown Fire Chief.

Mr. Wisecarver of Atkinson asked for clarification of the total cost which he felt was not specific and indicated the opinion of the fire chief of Danville should be considered.

Mr. Horns of Danville asked about the total cost of \$753,000 as was previously indicated in the warrant article. Mr. Stokinger responded that after speaking with the DRA, the article had to be reworded to clarify only \$503,000 is to be raise and appropriate in the 2016-2017 for this project.

ARTICLE TO BALLOT: Article 6 will appear on the ballot with changes in the intent statement.

MOTION: Mrs. O'Neill of Danville motioned to restrict reconsideration of Article 6. Mr. Collins of Danville seconded the motion. The motion passed by a voice vote.

Article 7 – Middle School Renovation Study

Shall the voters of the Timberlane Regional School District raise and appropriate \$30,000 to be used to study improvements to the educational experience of the students utilizing the 21 classrooms at Timberlane Regional Middle School that currently have no windows or skylights. (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Not recommended by the School Board 6-2-0

Not recommended by the Budget Committee 7-0-0

[Intent: These 21 classrooms make up one third of all the classrooms at TRMS. All of our 6th and 7th grade students spend time in these classrooms that do not provide any light from the sun or have full spectrum lighting. Studies have shown significant improvement in student achievement when attending school in classrooms with sunlight. This money would be utilized to study available options to improve the experience of the students utilizing these classrooms, such as, but not limited to, lighting and/or skylights.]

MOTION: Mr. Collins motioned to put Article 7 on the floor for discussion. Mr. Blair seconded the motion.

Mr. Collins clarified this warrant article and reviewed the intent statement noting that it is for a study only.

ARTICLE TO BALLOT: Article 7 will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 8 – General Acceptance of Reports

Shall the voters of the Timberlane Regional School District accept reports of agents, auditors, and committees as written in the 2015 Annual Report? (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Recommended by the School Board 8-0-0

MOTION: Mr. Sapia motioned to put Article 8 on the floor for discussion. Mr. Blair seconded the motion.

ARTICLE TO BALLOT: Article 8 will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 9 – Self-Funding of Full-Time Kindergarten on Warrant Petition by Cathleen Gorman et al

Shall the Timberlane Regional School District require all costs associated with funding a full-time kindergarten program be completely self-funding by private tuition? (MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

MOTION: Mr. Collins motioned to put Article 9 on the floor for discussion. Mr. Blair seconded the motion.

MOTION: Mr. Collins motioned to add the wording at the end of the warrant article: “This article is advisory and non-binding”; seconded by Mr. Ward.

Mrs. Green asked Atty. O’Shaughnessy if this motion would be a change to the subject matter of the Article to which he responded it would not and would be allowable by law.

Mr. Springer of Danville asked why the article is advisory only? Atty. O’Shaughnessy clarified that this article itself is non-binding since this meeting cannot legally bind future boards. Future boards decide each year on educational programs for their district.

Mrs. Green indicated she would not support this motion.

Mr. Blair believes the text helps clarify the vote.

VOTED: Motion to amend the article by adding the advisory and nonbinding statement passed by card vote.

Mr. Green described his concerns of the Article noting the cost of the program and the effect on local businesses.

Mr. Blair would not support the article since the costs and funding information is not clear.

Mr. Grosky of Atkinson asked for an explanation of the costs outlined in this Article. Ms. Gorman, Budget Committee who submitted the Article was not in attendance.

Mrs. Collins of Plaistow stated he will not support this article as all students should have access to kindergarten. Mr. Green stated all students have access to half day kindergarten.

ARTICLE TO BALLOT: Article 9 will appear on the ballot as amended.

Mr. Heffernan recognized Mrs. O'Neill for her dedication to the district and as an outstanding member on the Budget Committee for the past twelve years. She received a standing ovation.

Moderator Ranlett adjourned the meeting at 9:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Nancy Louiselle
School District Clerk