



BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING MINUTES
March 30, 2026
5:30 PM - NEW YORK MILLS UFSD LIBRARY

- Kristin Hubley
- Robert Mahardy, Jr.
- Sandra Dare
- Sara DeFazio
- Jacqueline Edwards
- Jeremy Fennell
- Abbie Taylor

Agenda Item	Who	Information Distributed	Action	Notes
1. MEETING CALL TO ORDER		5:30pm		
1.1 Pledge to the Flag			Procedural	
1.2 Reading of the New York Mills UFSD Mission Statement.			Procedural	<i>In partnership with students, staff, families, and the community, our mission is to create an educational environment that inspires confidence, builds character, and fosters respect – empowering every student with the knowledge to become a productive, responsible citizen.</i>
1.3 Acceptance of Agenda	K. Hubley	Yes	Action	1 st R.Mahardy, Jr. 2 nd J.Fennell / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____
2. NEW BUSINESS				
2.1 Resolution to set the Tax Levy.		Yes	Action	1 st S.Dare 2 nd A.Taylor / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ____

K.Hubley – We had some discussions in the March meeting and I think we all wanted to digest the financial picture we were given. We did adopt the Budget in the March meeting so now we are talking about where we want to set the tax levy.

S.DeFazio – I don't mind being the first to say out loud I prefer 3. I would like to go out on top. I think the demographics that Mandy had supplies us were really helpful in looking at the number of voters who come out, verses the "yes" and "no" votes. I think considering right now, we know we have 1 candidate running for Board, and if another pops up we are going to get people out to vote. I'm on board with a 3% to get us in a good financial position. Personally.

A.Taylor – When we had our workshop and we talked about strategic planning the word that kept coming up was sustainable. That's what I keep thinking about is our 5-year plan. Right. So, how are we going to align with that? What we do now has to align with that plan and that is also why I said at the last meeting I think 3% is reasonable and we know historically, we know why voters vote "no". This year we don't have a capital improvement project; people may be coming out to vote "no" if they don't disagree and I think compared to other school districts we have historically been responsible to our tax payers. This is not a slap in the face to them at a 3, because we really are invested in our school and the sustainability of it. That is my opinion.

R.Mahardy, Jr. – I was a little bit more on the conservative end than most of you at this point. I worry about the jump from 1.9 to 3%. I do. I agree with what the demographics look like I don't think we won't pass it going out at a 3. So, I have rethought this a lot and I don't like the thought of leave stuff on the table and we have talked about that with Dr.Timbs a lot and those sort of things. And really, I'm worried. For maybe not next year but the year after that. That if we don't start growing a cushion. Start doing all that sort of stuff, we're not going to be in great shape in a couple of years.

K.Hubley – I will just piggyback off you. I was conservative too. I have been very conservative and very leery of the taxpayers and responsible to the taxpayers. However, we have two unfunded mandates now. The electric buses are still hanging out there and now we have the Pre-K Program. We really don't know at this point don't know where or how we are going to house that. And we only received a 1% bump in our Aid this year. Everyone is struggling with that. We have always talked about our "no" votes and like I've said to anyone who have asked me when running, "How do we change the "no" vote?" You're never going to change a "no" vote, you've got to get more "yes" votes out there. Building the demographics of getting more parents coming out to vote. I like that we are holding something here at the school that night, hopefully getting more votes down there, that maybe might not have come out to vote. So, I have really thought about it a lot these last few weeks. I am in agreement with 3%. I think we can do it. I think our demographics can do it and our community will stand by that.

M.LaGase – Lisa, can you just go through the increments of percentages? I just want everybody to understand, the one thing that I worry about is this is the last year we have some aid coming in. It is very uncertain what will happen next year. Whether we get one percent, zero percent increase or a reduction, we could be at a very different point in our conversations next year. I just want to make sure everybody has all the information when deciding.

L.Stamboly – every 1% is about \$85,000.00 that you would be giving up. M.LaGase – it is not a lot of money, but it adds up when people start seeing 1.9 to a 3%. I want everyone to be confident in that decision, because, if there is a defeated budget that is a whole another story S.Dare – we could get defeated at 1.9 S.DeFazio – Can you explain to me when Dr.Timbs came in he talked about the tax cap. How will this effect our tax cap for next year? L.Stamboly – we may not have the ability raise to 3. You may only have the ability to raise it to... the variable that exists with a tax cap the only exclusion that remains is the Capital Exclusion. The Capital Exclusion has to do with bonding, debt service. So, you're at a 3 because debt service was on the books through this fall budget and gave you the ability to max at 3.04%. I believe last year the max was 2.79%. IT can be anywhere the growth factor is and that is just slightly above 1. So, if you had nothing else you would only be able to go to 1%, in the past we have been hovering below 3 and slightly above 3 this coming year. M.LaGase – we need 2% for a balanced budget.

S.Dare – I still like a 3. Maybe 2.9 but I don't want to go below that and put us in a bad position. I sent an article New Hartford is nose diving. Liverpool, nose diving. And I don't want to be in that situation, so, if looks ugly like we are going from a 1 to 3 or a 2 point increase because people are only looking at that front digit. I'm cool with 2.9, I really don't want to go below that. From a sale pitch 2.9 just looks better, it's not a significant amount of money. I just think if people in the community care about the school existing and if they don't, I mean, they don't but, we can't keep going out with zeros, 1.9, we need at least a 2.

A.Taylor – We talked about the Budget Newsletter, is there an area where we can capture that? K.Hubley – Can we say this is what we have coming up? The unfunded mandates, or, but you got to be careful. M.LaGase – Right, you have to be careful how you present the information that and there are also certain perimeters regarding required formatting You certainly in your conversations with your neighbors, friends and people in your community share that message of this is the thought processes in term of the strategic planning. S.Dare – 2.9 isn't a max, right? We didn't go with the max we went with what we thought was

reasonable. J.Fennell – I think everyone has brought up the same kind of points that I would bring up. I’m in agreement with whether it is 2.9 or 3. I just think after we really got a better understanding of everything. It might not seem like \$80,000.00 is not going to save us in anything but it is certainly nice to have because we don’t know things that are going to happen, what we are going to have or what we are going to be able to raise. Next year if we are in a pickle, so if 80 grand this year turns into 160 thousand or something next year would mean a lot. And because we’ve done what we’ve done with the no increases, we have to start building for things we can’t control. Everything is going up. To me, I feel as a School Board it’s our fiscal responsibility to create some padding and I think we all collectively agree it is our job to go to the community and talk to them and let them know how important it is. So, they understand why we did it. Not asking them to say yes but get them educated enough. S.Dare – I mean we are at 2.78 before COVID then stuff went down, fine. COVID is done, over with. If it was at 2.78 what’s the difference of 2.9? We are right back to where we were before the slump. S.DeFazio – I don’t know if this is silly, but is it appropriate to set up at any school events that are happening a table to ask questions to a board member? M.LaGase – You are allowed to share your perspective as a board member but you can’t solicit yes votes. If you are present in the community, you have the authority to educate and share your perspective on the decision-making. J.Fennell – If they want to ask what’s the difference between a 2 and 2.9 or what it will be used for and not swaying the like we need to you to do this because. Or what happens if it was voted down? I think that would be a huge thing that people don’t understand. If it gets voted down you aren’t really doing anything to us particularly but to the whole school. It’s not like if you just keep voting “no” we have to go back to the drawing board and cut areas. It would be we are where were at. It’s not, like, we’re trying to put a pool in. R.Mahardy, Jr. – What do you have against pools? Are you anti pool? K.Hubley – make sure you say we are NOT putting in a pool. J.Fennell – Right. We are NOT putting in a pool. A.Taylor – 1968 was the last time a building happened, outside the lunchroom reconstruction. S.Dare – upgrades are inevitable. K.Hubley – the one question I have left. We have the 2 other items we have to vote on. The 2 Reserves. Is that going to cause confusion? I don’t remember voting on those before, as a tax payer. How often do they come up? M.LaGase – They have a 10-year term. K.Hubley – Is that going to add to the picture too. So, now we are coming out with a tax increase and a proposition for a cash reserve. L.Stamboly – it’s not saying you are going to fund them. It’s to establish them, should there be the funding. A.Taylor – It is for what? M.LaGase – Capital and Transportation Reserve Funds whose terms are expiring. K.Hubley – I’m just looking at the perspectives of what we are asking for. The last few years all we have done is a Board seat and a budget. L.Stamboly – What the need to understand is those reserves are what have enabled you to go out and do the capital projects at zero impact to the tax payer. J.Fennell – Right. Like do you want an incremental effect or be in a panic situation or we are looking at cutting significant things from the school. R.Mahardy, Jr. – It still gives you a perspective. R.Mahardy, Jr – I think those are the conversations we need to have if things look bleak in a couple of years. K.Hubley – alright so what I’m hearing, we are at a 2.9. R.Mahardy, Jr – I’m good with a 2.9. J.Fennell – Yeah, 2.9. A.Taylor – I’m okay with that. S.Dare - Thumbs up. S.Defazio – Good. K.Hubley – Okay so 2.9 tax levy. Thanks everybody!

3. EXECUTIVE SESSION ** ** (If Needed)	BOE		Discussion/Action	1 st _____ 2 nd _____ / Yes ___ No___ Abstain ___
3.1 Return to General Session (time)	BOE		Action	1 st _____ 2 nd _____ / Yes ___ No___ Abstain ___
4. ADJOURNMENT				
4.1 Adjournment		5:53 pm	Action	1 st J.Fennell 2 nd S.Dare / Yes 6 No 0 Abstain ___

****§105. Conduct of executive sessions.**

1. Upon a majority vote of its total membership, taken in an open meeting pursuant to a motion identifying the general area or areas of the subject or subjects to be considered, a public body may conduct an executive session for the below enumerated purposes only, provided, however, that no action by formal vote shall be taken to appropriate public moneys:

a. matters which will imperil the public safety if disclosed;

b. any matter which may disclose the identity of a law enforcement agent or informer;

c. information relating to current or future investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense which would imperil effective law enforcement if disclosed;

d. discussions regarding proposed, pending or current litigation;

e. collective negotiations pursuant to article fourteen of the civil service law;

f. the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation;

g. the preparation, grading or administration of examinations; and

h. the proposed acquisition, sale or lease of real property or the proposed acquisition of securities, or sale or exchange of securities held by such public body, but only when publicity would substantially affect the value thereof.

2. Attendance at an executive session shall be permitted to any member of the public body and any other persons authorized by the public body.