

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

5 FINAL MINUTES
6 Thursday February 5, 2026
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9 Committee Membership: Bill Ryan (Chair), Alyssa Lavoie (Vice Chair),
10 Lavallee (SB rep), Bridget Mooney (Secretary), Craig Alley, Phil Brooks, Harold Melcher
11 III, Bob Silva, Jonathan Vanderhoof
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13 Present: Alley, Brooks, Lavallee, Lavoie, Mooney, Ryan, Silva,
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15 Absent: Melcher, Vanderhoof, vacant Wilton position
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17 The meeting was recorded.
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19 The meeting was called to order at 6:35
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21 Alyssa Lavoie explains that the purpose of this hearing is to present the proposed
22 budget for the upcoming district meeting on March 7th. Following the budget
23 presentation the Budget Committee will listen to the vital public input. This will be a
24 comment only session and will not allow for questions and answers. If a public member
25 has a question for the committee, please send it directly to Alyssa Lavoie via email.
26 Following that we will do a final discussion amongst the Committee and a final vote for
27 the budget as well as a couple of Warren articles that the Budget Committee needs to
28 vote on as well.
29

30 Alyssa Lavoie then gives the budget presentation.
31

32 Brianne Lavallee announced that there will be a public hearing on Tuesday, February
33 10th to explain Open Enrollment and the Warrant Article associated with Open
34 Enrollment.

35 She also spoke to the Collective Bargaining Warrant Article and explains that the school
36 board's negotiating team met with our attorney and an independent mediator on
37 January 23rd. They worked towards a mediated agreement with the support staff
38 association regarding wages which was ratified by the school board on February 3,
39 2026. Lavallee went on to explain the negotiations which follow us the AI transcript
40

41 The Sports Staff Association consists of current employees, paraprofessionals, special
42 education and classroom aides, part-time secretaries, defined as those that do not work
43 full-time hours during the school year, bus monitor, and part-time custodians. Working
44 less 30 hours a week or less. The following wages were negotiated. This is the bulk of
45 the membership and the positions we routinely fill. Year one, the increase in the bottom
46 step starting wage will go from 15.76 an hour to 17.50 an hour and 9.23% percent

increase and then a 13 sorry between 9 and 13 year between 9 and 13 increase for current employees the average is 11.5 year 2 be a 4.25 percent increase year a 4.25 percent increase the average increase over the three-year contract for 18.94 percent for current attendant secretaries and 21.15% for current paras. The custodians who regularly work 30 hours a week or less, we have three in this class. Year one, the increase in the bottom step starting wage will be from 17.86 cents an hour to \$19.80 and 50 cents an hour. A 6.67 to a 10.48% increase for current employees. Year two will be a 3.57% increase to a 4.74% increase. And year three will be a 3.45% increase to a The average increase over the three-year contract is 14.93% for staff on longevity and 20.95% for staff not on longevity. The best monitor we have in year one will be a 4% increase, year two a 3.85% increase, year three a 3.7% increase. The increase over the three-year contract will be a total of 12%. The year-end cost, the estimated increase is \$66,818, fiscal year 27-28. It will be a \$26,599 increase, and for fiscal year 28, will be \$27,572 total. The net tax impact for Lyndeborough will be point, or it will be six cents per 1,000 assessed value. And then estimated tax impact for Wilton will be 81 cents per 1,000 assessed value. Correction, that is 8.1 cents.

Next up is Article 8, to appropriate the capital reserve fund for building equipment and roadway. This is for a total sum of \$190,000 to be added to the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative Building Equipment and Roadway Capital Reserve Fund. The estimated tax impact is \$0.16 per \$1,000 assessment. We were able to get that number down because we had cost savings and projects over the last few years. We were able to save \$8,811 the WLC parking lot project. We saved \$6,138 in the WLC tile replacement, phase one part of the project, and we saved \$14,415 in the WLC art room project. Because of those savings, we were able to adjust the original number of \$272,000

There was a brief discussion by the Budget Committee about setting time limits for Public Comment.

Craig Alley made the motion to limit public comments to five minutes. Phil Brooks seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Frank Bujack – Lyndeborough – (taken directly from AI transcript) Thank you, Alyssa, I appreciate the presentation and the information to all the Committee members, staff and Budget board that's not even here, the school board for all the work that they do throughout the year to get us to this point. I know too well exactly how much it takes to do all this. Some feedback, I would strongly recommend that you take out the slides for each of the schools, unless you're a stat person like some of us are, it's probably too much. Most of the stuff that changes is based on things that affect them all, or you have no control over. Personnel changes, transportation contracts and stuff you've already talked about. When you get to the tax impact slide, I would strongly recommend that you change the first part, because when you say it's a 50-50 split, that's the first thing you say. Everybody from Lyndeborough is going to have a heart attack, because that's not what it is, half of it is enrollment, so I would recommend changing that. I would add a last slide to reiterate the fact that almost everything you have driving this is the \$400

93 plus thousand-dollar cost. So, in the middle of somewhere you have a cost, you have a
94 slide where it shows 500 and something thousand is your yearly increase year over
95 year. I would put that at the very end and put thank you at the bottom of it, but I would
96 also show under that slide, 400 plus thousands of that is specifically going to things you
97 don't control in insurance, and then show the difference, and then you'll show your true
98 increase being less than 1%, which I think would be important for everyone to hear. On
99 the Warren articles, I would suggest that a little bit more I'm sure it was just a Freudian
100 slip, we've all done it, but that's the total, not the average. On the CIP one, and I'm not
101 going to go into the details of the CIP one, but I'm going to talk a little bit about the CIP
102 one, and then I'm going to talk a little bit about the CIP two, and then I'm going to talk a
103 little bit about the CIP three, and then I'm going to talk a little bit about the CIP four, and
104 then I'm going to talk a little bit about the CIP five. And I had the same concern when
105 you showed it the first time, the 82,000. So we've all done this long enough to know that
106 short-term we cut CIP in order to make increases look less, and then we pay for it later
107 on. And your math shows that we saved about 28,000, not the 82,000. I'm dyslexic, so I
108 can mix up those numbers. Most of the people won't. So you probably need a better
109 explanation as to how 28 gets you to be able to cut 82 adversely affecting people further
110 down the line. And let's see. The last thing I would remind everyone of is because I'm
111 sure you're going to have a number of people come to this microphone and tell you how
112 expensive their property taxes are. And the slide that never shows up here is while
113 property taxes in the state of New Hampshire are amongst the highest in the country,
114 the overall tax rate for the residents of New Hampshire is 48th in the country.
115 We are third from the bottom. We pay the highest property taxes because we don't pay
116 any other taxes. And you have the most controllable tax rate, and you have the most,
117 um, the tax rate that is most available to be able to plan what you're doing twice a year,
118 you're going to get a bill. And no matter what we do here, it's only, it's going to go up at
119 worst a few hundred dollars. So, I want to just thank everybody for what you did.
120 Appreciate it. Nice project, nice presentation. Thank you.

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122
123 Geoffrey Allen – Lyndeborough – (taken from AI transcript)

124 I have a bunch of questions that I will email to you, but I'll just, for the sake of the board,
125 go over some of them here. Some of the things I would like the, first, I appreciate, I've
126 been on that side. I know how much you guys go through. I've been on a different side
127 of a Budget today that almost gave me a heart attack. So I appreciate the work that you,
128 the staff, the administration put into doing the best you can for our kids and our teachers
129 still being sensitive to the Budget. That being said, I know there's been a lot of talk over
130 recent years, even when I was on the board, about the superintendent's position being a
131 three-fifths position. While it isn't broken out here, I certainly would like to see the
132 Budget Committee maybe consider reducing that by the bring it to 40% the three-fifths
133 position that the administration has said it should be, and that previous administrations
134 said it should be, but for some reason we keep kicking that can down the road. For your
135 presentation, I'd like to see, if possible, a breakdown by what the Lyndeborough
136 residents pays for Lyndeborough students versus what Wilton residents pay for the
137 Wilton students that go to the school, so we can see the true, what each individual
138 family member pays for the students that they send to this district. I don't know how

much you can get into this, but I'll send you an email. I'm curious as to what the employee cost sharing is for health benefits. They've gone up a lot, and I know a lot of districts and a lot of towns are now looking at how the employees participate in the benefits program. And so if we could get some information on that. I don't know that anybody would care about for the presentation, but I would like to know. When they refinance again another question that you're not answering today so I'll send you a list but I'm curious about the details of the bond refinancing if that did anything to the term or if it just got us a better rate for the same term and then is the presentation available online or will it be so I will ask you that question by email as well this presentation won't be available online but once we finalize the district one we'll get that up as quick as possible I appreciate it. Thank you all.

Bob Newton – Lyndeborough- (taken directly from AI transcript)

First, I'd like to say that this presentation is so much better than the first draft that I saw. You did a really good job improving it. Thank you. I have a few questions, which I suppose I could email, but once again, I'd like everybody to hear them, particularly other members of the Public, because they might want to think about them. I would find it useful to know the number of students each grade from each town. And I would like to know also what is the number of teachers in each grade and the number of support staff in each grade so that we can get a sense of what the student teacher ratio is in each of the schools. I guess I'm looking at bottom line for those questions is what is the cost per student per that we've made in our schools. I'd kind of like to know what is the capacity of each one of our buildings in terms of the number of students it's designed to handle, and how does that compare to the number of students that are actually being schooled there? I think capacity utilization is a very important measure of efficiency in a fixed-cost operation like a school system. I'd kind of like to know where we stand. Are we operating efficiently or are we operating at a structurally very high cost because we have so little throughput? Special ed, I know it's a thorny topic. It's a question that I asked at a previous meeting, a school board meeting, actually. I'm guessing that the special ed costs that are in the Budget presentation are the gross But there's no analysis of what is the net cost after the government pays its mandated share. Every year this question comes up at district meeting. Is the government actually paying us their legally mandated share of the cost burden of special ed? And in other words, are we collecting everything that we're owed? And if we're not, what is the gap? And what are the reasons for the gap? I think we need to know that. Because I think that if we're leaving money on the table for really our single biggest cost factor, then there are things that management ought to be doing to correct that problem. I have heard at a previous school board meeting that this iReady program, which I understand is costing something like \$50,000 or more, gives useless results for a number of reasons, including the fact that the students know it's meaningless, so they blow it on purpose. What is the total spend on iReady, and why not just eliminate it if it's not doing anybody any good? I think you need to give more thought to that topic. Lastly, there's a Budget item every year that I see for financial \$25,000 audit. On the school's website, there is an audited financial statement section, but that ends at the year June 2020. There have been no audited financial statements for the school district filed, or at least not available

on the website, since June of 2020. I kind of wonder why not, and perhaps the audited financial statement should be part of the regular school district annual report for everybody to iReady. Also, when a financial audit is done of a business or government operation, there is typically a management letter from (the AI transcript ended here).

He said that Warrant Article 6 is not included in the overall budget and asked that there be a footnote indicating that.

Jeff Jones (online) – Wilton – Thanks Alyssa and the budget committee. Questions the big increase in insurance over the last three to four years and wonders how we are looking into controlling those costs.

The Budget Committee moves onto addressing Warrant articles.

Warrant Article 4: Open Enrollment

Phil Brooks makes the motion to approve Warrant Article 4 as written.

Bob Silva seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

Warrant Article 5: Operating Budget

It is determined that the Budget Committee does not need to vote on Warrant Article 5: as it had already voted on it in the previous meeting.

Warrant Article 6: Collective Bargaining Agreement between School Board and Support Staff

Craig Alley makes the motion to approve Warrant Article 6 as amended (correcting the typo on the tax rate to Wilton residents from 81.0 cent per \$1,000 to 8.1 cent per \$1,000). Bob Silva seconded the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

Phil Brooks makes the motion to adjourn the meeting. Craig Alley seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

The meeting adjourns at 8:14