

**REPORT OF THE ANNUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING
FOR THE TOWN OF RYE, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

February 3, 2016 and March 8, 2016

DELIBERATIVE SESSION

At 6:30 p.m. on the 3rd day of February, 2016 at the Rye Junior High School cafeteria, Moderator Robert Eaton convened the meeting and led those in attendance in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. He then noted that Mike Moody was stepping down from the Board, thanked him for his service, and led the audience in a round of applause. He then introduced all the other people seated at the table: SAU 50 Superintendent Salvatore Petralia, School Board Chairman Scott Marion, and School Board Members Kate Hillman, Kevin Brandon and Jeanne Moynahan. In addition, he introduced long time SAU 50 Business Administrator Jim Katkin, SAU 50 Assistant Superintendent Kelli Killen, SAU 50 Special Education Director Pat Dowe, Rye Junior High School Principal Chris Pollet and Rye Elementary School Principal Suzanne Lull who were seated in the audience.

He then introduced the candidates running for office. Scott Marion is running for School Board, Donna Decotis is running for School District Clerk, and Mark Zartarian is running for School District Treasurer. Mr. Eaton noted that there is a second School Board seat open, which will be filled by whoever gets the most write-in votes.

Mr. Eaton noted that the New Hampshire Presidential Primary will be held on February 9th, and that the Town and School Election will be held on Tuesday, March 8th, both votes to be held at the Elementary School. Polling hours are from 8:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.

Moderator Eaton read his rules for the meeting:

MODERATOR'S RULES

1. **Meeting Purpose.** The purpose of this meeting is to discuss and debate the articles on the school warrant. However, because the Rye School District has adopted the SB2 Deliberative Session form of government, this meeting may not exclude articles from the ballot. Up or down voting on an article only occurs at the March election. Nonetheless, you may amend most articles to change how they appear on the ballot.
2. **Moderator's Rules.** By state law, the Moderator sets the rules and procedures of the meeting. I won't follow Robert's Rules of Order or any other complicated rules of parliamentary procedure. Instead, we will follow **my rules**. I may not run a perfect meeting, but I will do my best to run a fair meeting. Ultimately though, this is **your meeting**. By majority vote, you can change my rules, or overrule any decision I make.
3. **Procedure.** I will read each article in the order that it appears on the warrant, unless somebody moves to take an article out of order. After reading an article, I will ask for a motion to move it to the floor for debate. Like all motions, it must be seconded. I will then recognize the article's sponsor. After that, everyone here is invited to speak. If you want to speak to an article, come to the microphone and introduce yourself by name and street address. I will recognize everybody who wants to speak to an article before I permit someone to speak twice. Please **address all comments to me**, not to other people here. I am not setting a time limit for speaking, but use common sense, and

consider that you may lose your audience if you speak too long. And if I ask you to wrap it up, wrap it up. I also remind you that we are here in the spirit of fair debate. **I realize that people may feel very passionate about some of the articles on the warrant today. However, I urge you not to let your passion get the better of you – I expect everybody to be civil and courteous, not to raise their voices, and to avoid bitterness, and I will not permit personal attacks against people or their motives.** When there is no more discussion on an article, I will order it to be placed on the ballot, either as written or as amended.

4. Amendments. Any registered voter can move to amend an article. Amendments must be **in writing**, unless they are very simple. I will read the amendment, and then open the floor for discussion. When you are ready to vote, I will restate the amendment. There are **5 limits to amendments**. **1st**, articles whose words are prescribed by law may not be amended. **2nd**, to avoid confusion, I will not permit amendments to amendments before the original amendment is voted on. **3rd**, an amendment may not add a new subject. **4th**, you cannot increase the budget, including warrant articles, by more than 10%. **Finally**, amendments cannot **eliminate an article's subject matter**. This means that you cannot amend an article to delete all but a few words of the text and you cannot insert the word "not" into an article; nor can you offer any other amendment that would "nullify" an article or make an its subject matter meaningless. However, changing the dollar amount of an appropriation does **not** eliminate its subject matter.

5. Voting. If you haven't already done it, check in at the clerk's table, get a blue voting card, and sign it. To vote, I will ask you to raise your card. I will only vote if my vote will break or create a tie. We will vote by **secret ballot** if, before voting on an article, **5 voters present** sign a **written** request for a secret ballot.

6. Recounts / Questioning a Vote. A recount will be taken of non-secret ballot votes if 7 voters, either orally or in writing, make such a request. Such recounts will be conducted by secret ballot. The recount of a secret ballot will be taken on the request of **5** voters.

7. Reconsideration. Any voter can move to reconsider a vote. You do not need to have been in the majority to make such a motion. However, I will not permit multiple motions to reconsider.

8. Restricting Reconsideration. You may also move to restrict reconsideration of an article. Such a motion may be made after I order an article to be placed on the ballot. It is **not debatable**. If the motion carries, this meeting may not reconsider that article later.

9. Calling the Question. This is the same as moving to end debate. This motion is **not debatable**. It requires a **two-thirds majority** to pass.

10. Non-Voters Who Wish to Speak. Sometimes a person who is not a registered Rye voter may wish to speak. I will ask if there is any objection. If nobody objects, I will permit that person to speak. If there is an objection, I will call for a vote. The will of the majority will prevail. However, I will allow School Principals and officials who do not live in Rye to speak to issues relating to their responsibilities.

11. Your Meeting. I remind you that this is your meeting. You may appeal any ruling I make, and I will entertain any motion that is made.

Moderator Eaton read Article 1.

Article 1:

Shall the Rye 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 **\$13,496,384 (Thirteen Million Four Hundred Ninety Six Thousand Three Hundred Eighty Four Dollars)**? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be **\$13,349,549 (Thirteen Million Three Hundred Forty Nine Thousand Five Hundred Forty Nine Dollars)**, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Rye 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. (Majority Vote required.) (Note: This warrant article [operating budget] does not include appropriations in ANY other warrant article.)

The Rye School Board recommends the operating budget. (Vote 5-0)

The Rye Budget Committee recommends the operating budget. (Vote 8-0)

Article 1 was **moved** to the floor by Scott Marion and **seconded** by Kevin Brandon.

Scott Marion spoke to Article 1, the operating budget. He said the budget is only up slightly from last year because the staff and Board showed great fiscal responsibility. He then noted that the budget included \$60,000 for an additional bus route in case Portsmouth High School changed its starting time. Because the High School decided not to do that, **Mr. Marion moved to reduce the budget by \$60,000 to \$13,436,384. Kate Hillman seconded the motion.**

Paul Goldman applauded the Board's fiscal responsibility, and noted that the Rye Budget Committee would have to vote again on its recommendation of Article 1 if the dollar amount of the budget changed.

Hearing no more discussion on Mr. Marion's amendment to Article 1, **Mr. Eaton called for a vote on the amendment. The amendment passed.**

Joe Cummins moved to reduce the Rye Elementary School heating oil budget contained in account number 10.2620.624.00.10 by \$4,305, and to reduce the previously amended budget in Article 1 by that amount to \$13,432,079. Peter Crawford seconded the motion.

Mr. Cummins said that the dollar price used to budget heating oil was too high. He said the price of \$3.19 per gallon assumed in the budget resulted from a scrivener's or arithmetic error because the price was intended to be \$2.90 per gallon. He noted that other area towns, including the Town of Rye, had budgeted oil at anywhere from \$1.97 to \$2.50 per gallon.

Scott Marion opposed the amendment because it represented such a small percentage of the overall budget. He said that nobody knows what the price of oil will be in the winter of 2016 to 2017. The Board calculated the oil budget based on a multi-year average of past use. Also, Mr. Cummins's motion could not prevent the Board from moving money between line items, it could only reduce the overall budget.

Peter Crawford spoke in favor of the amendment. He said the current price of heating oil from area dealers is between \$1.52.9 and \$1.69.9 per gallon, approximately half the price that has been budgeted. He also said that the oil budgets were overstated by \$50,000 to \$60,000, even though he does not want to reduce the budgets by that much. He thinks the motion is a first step.

Phil Winslow asked what happens to any oil money that is not spent for that purpose. Jim Katkin said such unspent money can be spent in another account, but that it is usually returned. He also noted that the price of gas last year was much higher, and that there is no way of knowing if it will go up again. He said heating oil prices in the last five years ranged between \$2.25 and \$3.46 per gallon. He calculated the oil budget based on a three-year average. If the oil budget is cut and there isn't enough money, it will have to be taken from another account.

Joe Cummins said that the Rye schools are currently paying \$2.25 per gallon. He reiterated that other school districts are budgeting a much lower price. Also, his amendment seeks to correct a clerical error in the budget as it was \$2.90 per gallon that was intended to be budgeted.

Randy Crapo moved the question on the Cummins amendment to Article 1. Ralph Hickson seconded the motion. The motion passed. Mr. Eaton called for a vote on the Cummins amendment. The amendment failed.

Hearing no further discussion on Article 1, Moderator Eaton ordered Article 1 placed on the ballot as amended.

Article 2 was read by Moderator Eaton.

Article 2:

To see if the Rye School District will vote to establish a Wedgewood Farms Building & Grounds Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 198:20-c, V for the maintenance and upkeep of buildings and grounds on land previously referred to as the Wedgewood Farm and now owned exclusively by the Rye School District and to raise and appropriate up to **\$60,000 (Sixty Thousand Dollars)** to be placed in the fund; to be funded from unreserved fund balance; further to name the school board as agents to expend from the fund. (Majority vote required.) (Note: This appropriation is in addition to warrant article 1, the operating budget.) (Note: This appropriation has no tax impact.)

The Rye School Board recommends this appropriation. (Vote 5-0)

The Rye Budget Committee recommends this appropriation. (Vote 8-0)

Article 2 was **moved** to the floor by Kate Hillman and **seconded** by Jeanne Moynahan.

Kate Hillman moved to restrict reconsideration of Article 1. Mr. Marion seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Kate Hillman said that Article 2 is a housekeeping article. The School District has \$60,000 in excess funds to care for Wedgewood Farms, the land adjacent to the Junior High School that it recently purchased. The money has already been donated for that purpose, so the Board is not asking the

Town to raise more money. To carry the money from year to year, the money must be put into an expendable trust fund.

Scott Marion said that the fundraising for Wedgewood Farms was phenomenally successful. This article is needed to be able to use the extra money raised in future years.

Peggy Balboni asked whether the Board will be raising more money for Wedgewood Farms, and whether there is a line item in the budget for that purpose. Jim Katkin said there is no such line item because the money would be in an expendable trust. He also explained why New Hampshire law prohibits donated money from going straight from the donor to the expendable trust – it must go through the school first. Scott Marion said that the Board did not expect to raise money for Wedgewood Farms for a while, but the Board and staff will need access to the money in order to pay for such things as an agreed-upon fence and other expenses related to the use of the property.

Joe Cummins asked Mr. Katkin why the Legislature would not let donated money go straight into an expendable trust fund. Mr. Katkin said he didn't know.

Phil Winslow moved the question on Article 2. Steve Hillman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Moderator Eaton ordered Article 2 placed on the ballot as written.

Ralph Hickson moved to restrict reconsideration of Article 2. Steve Hillman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Moderator Eaton read Article 3.

Article 3:

To see if the Rye School District will vote to establish an expendable trust fund, entitled the Heating Oil Expendable Trust Fund, under the provisions of RSA 198:20-c, for unanticipated heating oil costs, to raise and appropriate **\$10,000 (Ten Thousand Dollars)** to be placed in this fund; and further to name the School Board as agent to expend. (Submitted by resident petition.) (Majority vote required.) (Note: This appropriation is in addition to warrant article 1, the operating budget.)

The Rye School Board does not recommend this appropriation. (Vote 5-0)

The Rye Budget Committee does not recommend this appropriation. (Vote 8-0)

Peter Crawford moved Article 3 to the floor for discussion. Laura Brown seconded the motion.

Joe Cummins said he was in favor of this article for the same reasons he thought the school oil budget should be reduced. He reminded the meeting that the oil budget was too high because of an arithmetic error.

Peter Crawford said he wanted a small amount – \$10,000 – to fund the heating oil expendable trust. He had hoped that that amount would be reciprocated by a \$10,000 reduction in the heating oil budget. The expendable trust would create a useful tool for future years to prevent budgeted heating oil money from being used for a different purpose. He noted that the School District has other expendable trusts, and that if the trust were to be fully funded, \$50,000 would have been sought, the

amount by which he thinks the heating oil budget is too large. In response to the earlier statement that unspent money would go back to the taxpayers, Mr. Crawford noted that there is currently \$297,000 in the unassigned fund balance that has not been returned to taxpayers. Thus, unspent heating oil money might be spent on something else, without the voters' consent. He felt that heating oil should be budgeted at the current market price and any reserve needed for oil price shocks should be placed in the expendable trust.

Kevin Brandon called the question to end discussion on Article 3. Randy Crapo seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Moderator Eaton ordered Article 3 placed on the ballot as written.

Moderator Eaton then adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Amy Reynolds