

## **Weare Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, January 18, 2023**

Present at meeting:

- Finance Committee: Janice Mathews, Maria Fossiano, Tom Clow, Tom Flaherty, Gary Evans, Bill Anderson, Elizabeth Evans, James Drury
- Finance Committee Members not present: John Merva
- Town Administrator: Naomi Bolton
- Guest Speakers: Dr. Jacqueline Coe, SAU 24 Superintendent

Chair Tom Clow (TC) called the meeting to order at 7:04pm. He indicated the need to review and approve DRAFT minutes from the January 4, 2023 meeting:

- Minutes had one small change. TC motioned to approve minutes from Jan 4, 2023 as amended, second by Janice Mathew. The motioned carried unanimously, 8-0.

TC mentioned that the committee needs to prepare recommendation on the various school articles, starting with the Weare School District para-professional contract.

Janice Mathews (JM) asked for clarification about an earlier question, relating to paragraph 15.4 (the “everyone else” clause). Dr. Jacqueline Coe said it would be clarified and that the article was not finalized.

Various members provided their input on the contract, mostly in favor of it.

Tom Flaherty motioned for the committee to recommend the para-professional contract for the Weare School District, seconded by Elizabeth Evans. Maria Fossiano added that the new pay would be in range with pay she researched from other districts. The motion carried unanimously, 8-0.

Bill Anderson agreed to draft committee statements for or against each article for distribution and review at the next meeting.

Discussion followed about the hiring and contracting of paraprofessionals.

The committee then discussed the Weare School District Proposed Budget, with Tom Flaherty, Elizabeth Evans and Bill Anderson providing their opinions. Other members added to the discussion.

James Drury motioned to recommend the Weare District School budget, seconded by Gary Evans. The motion failed with a vote of 3-5.

- Voting Yes: Tom Clow, Gary Evans, Elizabeth Evans
- Voting No: Bill Anderson, Janice Mathews, Tom Flaherty, Maria Fossiano, James Drury

Janice Mathews then motioned to not recommend the Weare District School budget, seconded by Tom Flaherty. The motioned passed with a vote of 5-3.

- Voting Yes: Bill Anderson, Janice Mathews, Tom Flaherty, Maria Fossiano, James Drury
- Voting No: Tom Clow, Gary Evans, Elizabeth Evans

Bill Anderson took feedback from committee members to document the minority opinion for the handout.

The committee then discussed the John Stark School District Proposed Budget.

Tom Clow motioned to recommend the John Stark District School proposed budget, seconded by Gary Evans.

Discussion took place on the proposed budget among various members. A key point of discussion was the ability for the John Stark district to put some excess funds at the end of the year into a rollover account, potentially reducing the amount that would be returned to the taxpayers, and that the article creating this provision was not recommended by the Finance Committee at the time.

The motioned failed, with a tie vote of 4-4.

- Voting Yes: Tom Clow, Maria Fossiano, Elizabeth Evans, Gary Evans
- Voting No: Bill Anderson, Tom Flaherty, James Drury, Janice Mathews

Tom Clow motioned to not recommend the John Stark District School proposed budget, seconded by James Drury.

- Voting Yes: Bill Anderson, Tom Flaherty, James Drury, Janice Mathews
- Voting No: Tom Clow, Maria Fossiano, Elizabeth Evans, Gary Evans

The motioned failed, with a tie vote of 4-4.

As a result, the Finance Committee has no recommendation to provide on the John Stark School District proposed budget.

Discussion then took place about the Town working with default budgets for 4 of the last 5 years and the difference in various costs since 2019. Janice Mathews and Tom Flaherty detailed some points on various articles from a recent Board of Selectmen budget work session they attended, with other members providing comments.

Gary Evans motioned to adjourn at 8:29pm, second by Janice Mathews and the motion passed.

Minutes Submitted by Tom Flaherty (Secretary) 1/28/23