

MINUTES OF THE DELIBERATIVE SESSION
ANNUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
KINGSTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE
FEBRUARY 6, 2019

The Meeting was called to order by Moderator, Richard “Rick” Russman at 7:03 PM, held at the Sanborn Regional High School Auditorium at 17 Danville Road in Kingston, New Hampshire.

The Moderator opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a welcome to student pledge leaders, National Anthem singer, and the public. The Moderator introduced the panel on the stage beginning with School District Clerk, Phyllis Kennedy, Business Administrator, Michele Croteau, Superintendent, Thomas Ambrose, and Legal Counsel, Peter Phillips. Next were School Board members, Electra Alessio, Corey Masson, Tammy Mahoney, James “Jim” Baker, Larry Heath, Vice Chair, Dr. Pamela Brown and Chair, Peter Broderick. Budget Committee Members followed with, Chair, Annie Collyer, Vice Chair, Charlton Swasey, Sandra Rogers-Osterloh, Jack Kozec, Mary Cyr, James “Jim” Doggett, and Cheryl Gannon.

The Moderator announced that all non-registered voters must be seated in the upper balcony. In addition, some ground rules are to please wait to be recognized before speaking, do not use names when referring to people who spoke, but instead use terms such as “the previous speaker”, which is more appropriate. He reminded everyone to be respectful and kind.

Mr. Russman also announced that the Second Session of the Annual Meeting for the ballot vote will be held on Tuesday, March 12 from 8 AM to 8 PM at the Swasey Gym for Kingston Voters and the Newton Town Hall for Newton Voters, also open from 8 AM to 8 PM.

Moderator announced that Article 1 concerning election of officers would be addressed at the second voting session in March.

Moderator read Article 2-General Acceptance of Reports

Article 2. Shall the reports of school district agents, auditors, committees, or officers chosen be accepted and placed on file?

Motion made to move question by Ms. Alessio and seconded by Mr. Masson.

Moderator announced that the Article will appear as presented.

Moderator read Article 3-Operating Budget

Article 3. Shall the Sanborn 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 at the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling Thirty Five Million Eight Hundred Eighty Seven Thousand Nine

Hundred Thirty Three Dollars (\$35,887,933)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Thirty Five Million Six Hundred Eighteen Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty Dollars (\$35,618,920), the same as last year with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Sanborn 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. (This warrant article does not include appropriations in any other warrant article.)

Recommended by the Budget Committee In Favor: 5 Opposed: 3

Recommended by the Sanborn Regional School Board In Favor: 4 Opposed: 2

Operating Budget Estimated Tax Impact

Kingston: \$1.23/\$1000 Newton: \$1.32/\$1000

Default Budget Estimated Tax Impact

Kingston: \$ 1.05/\$1000 Newton: \$1.09/\$1000

Motion made to move question by Ms. Mahoney and seconded by Mr. Baker.

Annie Collyer, Chairperson for the Budget committee, prefaced her presentation by saying that the estimated tax impact reflected is what was operative at that time and is different than what is before them on the warrant tonight. Since the Operating Budget Estimated Tax Impact is under the purview of the School Board, one of the Board Members would be coming up to explain what the difference is.

Chair Collyer demonstrated a slide presentation of the budget presented at the Public Hearing and explained each line item. She also reviewed the list of those people that have filed for Sanborn Regional School District Officer positions and encouraged everyone to get out to vote.

School Board Member, Larry Heath presented the Estimated Tax Impacts on the Default Budget.

Moderator asked for any questions or discussion on article 3.

Mr. Jamie Fitzpatrick (Newton)-Thanked the administration, school board, budget committee and all those who supported the budget and also those who opposed it. He appreciates the efforts that went into generating this budget and the concerns of those who voted “nay” due to the significant increase in taxes it contains, particularly when paired with different warrants being requested of the voters by the District. As was mentioned, the current 2019 budget is 4% higher than the actuals for 2018. We don’t know what the actual to actual comparison is and won’t know until the year-end closes on June 30th. The Proposed Budget with all the warrants included, is an additional 3.8% and with the contracts through 2021, there is already, if nothing else changes, a 1.7% budget built in for the following year, as part of the contracts. So, to the average voter, it would appear that we are again moving in an unsustainable trajectory of continued higher spending and tax burdens which will exceed the community’s ability to support. In Newton, voters face the possibility of \$600 a year in additional taxes on a 300K home, \$550 of which is relatively school-related spending. Kingston would have similar numbers, as we have just

seen. We could well be facing no votes across the warrants as voters are faced with this significant increase. However, he does recognize that structural issues are being discussed and he is pleased that we are taking a hard look at these areas to find the best manner in which to right-size our district to support our demographic realities while at the same time improving our children’s learning experiences and educational performance. It is my hope that the discovery process and the public discussion on the topic that we as a community can find the proper balance that we need to find for the good of all members in the community. We need to provide a quality education for our students and to do so in an economically sound and sustainable manner. He asks administration, school board and budget committee to expedite their instructional review and also to not wait until next year’s budget season to start immediately working to develop a plan for 2021 that reverses current increased spending and taxes trajectory and finds a way to creatively improve the educational outcomes for our students, and to do so at a reduced burden to the taxpayers.

The Moderator asked for any more comment, debate or discussion on Article 3. Seeing none, it announced it would appear on the ballot in March.

Chair Broderick made a Motion to restrict reconsideration of Article 3, seconded by Ms. Alessio. The Moderator explained that by saying “yes”, the Article will not be reconsidered and will stay as is on the ballot in March.

Vote: All in favor

The Moderator read Article 4- Professional Staff Collective Bargaining Agreement

Article 4. Shall the Sanborn Regional School District approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement for professional staff reached between the School Board and the Sanborn Regional Education Association which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at current staffing levels over the amount paid in the prior fiscal year:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Estimated Increases</u>
1 2019-2020	\$ 508,964
2 2020-2021	\$ 529,794

and further, to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty Four Dollars (\$508,964) for the 2019-20 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those of the appropriation at the current staffing levels?

Recommended by the Budget Committee In Favor 4 Opposed: 3 Recusal: 1

Recommended by the Sanborn Regional School Board In Favor: 6 Opposed: 0

Estimated Tax Impact Kingston: \$0.34/\$1,000 Newton: \$0.44/\$1,000

Motion moved by Annie Collyer and seconded by Mr. Masson.

Mr. Baker explained that Article 4, the Professional Staff Agreement, as read, defines the terms of employment, including the salaries and benefits between the school district and the professional staff. The Agreement covers approximately 175 employees. The term “Professional Staff” refers to teachers, including Special Education, Guidance Counselors, Occupational Therapists, and other specialists. The proposed Agreement is for two (2) years and under this Agreement, the salaries including benefits and all other costs are in addition to the previously discussed Operating Budget. According to the Business Administrator, based on current staffing, the estimated increased cost for the first year is \$508,964. The cost of the second year is \$529,794. In recent previous Agreements, 90% of employee health and dental insurance payments have been covered by the school district. In this Agreement, the employees will contribute an additional 1% in the first year and another 1% in the second year. Including health and dental insurance premium savings, the total cost for the district for the first year is 3.38% over the current costs and the second year, it a 3.41% increase. As you can see from the warrant article, the budget committee is 4 in favor, 3 opposed and 1 abstain. The School Board voted 6 in favor and 0 opposed.

Moderator asked for comment from voters and with no comment offered, Article 4 will appear on the Ballot in March as read.

Chair Broderick made a Motion to restrict reconsideration of Article 4, seconded by Ms. Alessio.

Vote: All in favor

Moderator read Article 5- **Special Meeting-Professional Staff Bargaining Agreement**

Article 5. Shall the Sanborn Regional School District if Article 4 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article 4 cost items only?

Recommended by the Sanborn Regional School Board In Favor: 6 Opposed: 0

Motion moved by Mr. Baker and seconded by Mr. Heath.

School Board member, Jim Baker gave detail for the School Board saying that Article 5, Special Meeting-Professional Staff Collective Bargaining Agreement, is put in place in the event that Article 4 fails to pass at the polls in March. A “yes” vote on the Article authorizes the school board, at their option to hold another public hearing and a vote on the Professional Staff contract. This is essentially a “do-over,” possibly with a new proposed agreement but not necessarily. A “no” vote means the public vote on March 12th is final.

Moderator asked for further comment, debate or discussion.

Kurt Baitz (Kingston) - is in favor of the Article but as you can see, the school board voted 6-0 so he would hope that the Chair of the school board and other board members will support the teachers’ contract so we don’t have to come to this. Since the budget committee supported this as well, he would hope that the Chair of the budget committee would support the previous warrant article and campaign for our teachers, so we don’t continue to lose them to Bedford.

Deborah Mullen (Kingston) - if for some reason as a community, we can't come together to support our teachers and vote "yes" on these contracts, is it really true that we as a community would continue to not recognize our teachers' contribution and experience that they are giving in our schools and reach a point where we would be freezing their steps? She remembers that many years ago, we made attempts to make sure that would not happen and wonders if with these warrant articles, there is something that insures that this would not happen.

Superintendent Ambrose responded that if the contract passes, teachers receive a percentage raise, plus steps. If it does not pass, the steps are frozen. There is nothing they can do to prevent that from happening, except to revisit it by way of this Article 5.

Mr. Baker clarified that regarding the steps, they are included in the numbers he quoted, including the increase in percentage. The total cost is included in the numbers that he quoted.

Ms. Collyer commented that in every single budget planning meeting, comments were made by school board, budget committee members and administration on how important passing the staff contracts are. For that reason, every attempt was made to keep the proposed operating budget as lean as possible, to make as much room as possible for these to pass. So, those efforts have been made and it is the hope of the majority of the members you see before you.

Moderator asked for further discussion or debate on the Article. Article 5 will appear on the Ballot as printed.

Moderator read Article 6-Support Staff Collective Bargaining Agreement

Article 6. Shall the Sanborn Regional School District approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement for support staff reached between the School Board and the Sanborn Regional Education Association which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at current staffing levels over the amount paid in the prior fiscal year:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Estimated Increases</u>
1 2019-2020	\$ 85,173
2 2020-2021	\$ 91,480
3 2021-2022	\$ 86,068

and further, to raise and appropriate the sum of Eighty-Five Thousand One Hundred Seventy Three Dollars (\$85,173) for the 2019-20 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those of the appropriation at the current staffing levels?

Recommended by the Budget Committee In Favor: 5 Opposed: 3

Recommended by the Sanborn Regional School Board In Favor: 6 Opposed: 0

Estimated Tax Impact Kingston: \$0.06/\$1,000 Newton: \$0.07/\$1,000

Motion moved by Ms. Collyer and seconded by Mr. Masson.

Mr. Baker, on behalf of the school board, explained Article 6, the Support Staff Bargaining Agreement, saying the proposed agreement defines the terms, including salaries and benefits between the school district and the support staff. The Agreement covers approximately 74 employees. The term “Support Staff” refers to paraprofessional educators, plus certain secretaries and office staff. This Agreement is for three (3) years. Under this Agreement, the salaries including benefits and all other costs are in addition to the previously discussed Operating Budget and the Professional Staff Collective Bargaining Agreement. According to the Business Administrator, based on current staffing, the estimated increased cost for the first year is \$85,173. The cost of the second year is \$91,480 and the cost of the third year is \$86,068. In recent previous Agreements, 90% of employee health and dental insurance payments have been covered by the school district. In this Agreement, the employees will contribute an additional 1% in the first year, an additional .5% in the second year and a .5% in the third year. Including health and dental insurance premium savings, the total cost for the district for the first year is a 2.78% increase over the current costs. The second year is a 2.91% increase and the third year is a 2.66% increase. As you can see from the warrant article, the Budget Committee vote was 5 in favor and 3 opposed. The School Board voted 6 in favor and 0 opposed.

The Moderator asked for any more comment, debate or discussion on Article 6.

Dan Guide (Newton)-Noticed on this Article and the other Article that there was 3 opposed on the Budget Committee. Who are the 3 that opposed this and what is their reasoning for why?

Moderator commented that he can pose the question, but they do not have to respond. Mr. Ambrose recommended that Mr. Guide is welcome to review the Board Minutes as the opposed names are noted there by meeting date on our website.

Krystal Brown (Newton)-It is important that the staff contracts pass and the statement was made that it is important that they pass, but when the voters see the number opposed on the warrant, it doesn't send the same message.

Moderator asked for further discussion or debate on the Article 6. Seeing none, Article 6 will appear on the Ballot as printed.

Chair Broderick made a Motion to restrict reconsideration of Article 6, seconded by Ms. Alessio.

Vote: All in favor

Moderator read **Article 7-Special Meeting-Support Staff Collective Bargaining Agreement**

Article 7. Shall the Sanborn Regional School District if Article 6 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article 6 cost items only?

Recommended by the Sanborn Regional School Board In Favor: 6 Opposed: 0

Motion moved by Mr. Baker and seconded by Ms. Mahoney.

Mr. Baker explained Article 7, Special Meeting Support Staff Collective Bargaining Agreement by saying that if Article 6 fails to pass at the polls in March, a “yes” vote on this Article authorizes the school board at their option to hold another public hearing and public vote on the Support Staff contract. Again similar to the Professional Staff contract, this is essentially a “do-over,” possibly with a new proposed agreement but not necessarily. A “no” vote means the public vote on March 12th is final.

Moderator asked for further discussion or debate on the Article 7. Seeing none, Article 7 will appear on the Ballot as printed.

Moderator read Article 8-Articles of Agreement between Towns of Kingston and Newton.

Article 8- Shall the Sanborn Regional School District vote to amend Article 3 of the Articles of Agreement between the Towns of Kingston and Newton to delete the word elementary from the sentence “Elementary schools shall be maintained in Kingston and Newton.” All other provisions of the Articles of Agreement shall remain in effect.

Motion moved by Ms. Alessio and seconded by Mr. Masson.

Ms. Alessio commented that this is the “sleeping giant” in the room and a great opportunity to have a discussion on this issue. The easy answer is to say that we are asking for this because we want to be in compliance with State law. In 1967, when the Articles of Agreement were formed, elementary school was defined as grades 1-6. Things have certainly changed a lot since then. In 1979, we moved the 6th grade to the Middle School when it was built. The bigger issue is that the board is asking for the voters to give us the flexibility to make some changes in the future as we move forward. Our enrollment is declining, as many of you are aware of, and those of you that had the opportunity to hear the report from the New England School Development Council (NESDEC) will know that in the next 10 years, we are anticipated to lose another 400 students. This would be a tremendous change in the makeup of our student population. In the meantime, we brought onboard a superintendent who gave us a totally different perspective on our costs. The issue of the costs and tax burden on the taxpayers has been ongoing for as long as she has been in Kingston, which is 40 years. We never really looked at it from the perspective of our buildings. As Mr. Ambrose has brought to our attention, we have 5 campuses that we are supporting; the old high school, the new high school, Middle School (brought about by a Grant from some great folks in Newton), and 2 Elementary Schools. Originally, the towns’ people wanted to make sure we had an elementary school in each town, but we may have to change the configuration of our schools to better provide the services we need for our kids, without bankrupting our tax payers. We would like to address in time, the high school but can we do something with the elementary school by putting K-3rd grade in one building, 4th-6th grade in another and then move 7th and 8th to the High School? These are all suppositions, nothing that has been decided to date, and we will have many

discussions over the next year or two in trying to make the best use of our property, eliminating other structures that we shouldn't have to support because we don't have the population to do so. We are also providing some ancillary support services to our average kids so that they learn to read earlier than they may have been, without struggling as much. There are some things we need to do to re-allocate resources, but in order to do that, we need your permission, to not necessarily designate elementary in the two buildings in Kingston and Newton.

Danielle Paris (Newton)-Is not sure what we this Article is asking. Are you asking to take out the word elementary? Do you need our permission to take out the word? Has it been proved that removing the word will be in the best interest of our budget moving forward? To her, that has yet to be proved by any stretch of the imagination. She is wondering why they should give permission to take an action before we know what is going on. We are being asked to do something before we know what the consequences are. She would rather see the plan for the future. What does it mean? What precautions are you going to take? What impact to the budget do your adjustments actually make? What are the consequences to the psychology of our children in their psychological development? There is not enough information for her to write a pass which is why she is asking, what are we really voting for?

Ms. Alessio responded that she appreciates the question, adding that she is right that we cannot say what the action is going to be because that decision has not been made. The Articles of Agreement say we will have an elementary school in each community and the current definition of an elementary school is Pre-K through grade 5. However, what if we built a school and put Pre-k through 5 in one building and had 6-12 in another. That means we would go from 5 campuses to 2. She is not saying that is what would happen, in all likelihood, it would not. It could be K-3 in one town, 4, 5 and 6 in another, and 7-12 at the High School. That is an example. Ms. Alessio closed by saying she is asking the public to have faith in the Board that we are going to make the right decision that not only provides a good educational system for the kids in our district, but also constrains the cost that keep going up. You could see from the presentation tonight that our elementary costs are higher compared to other districts, but that is because if we have three grade 3s in one building and 2 in another, can we combine those to make 4 rooms in one building instead of 5 rooms in 2 buildings?

Superintendent Ambrose added that he appreciated the comment as well and wanted to correct one subtle point that Ms. Alessio made. The Articles of Agreement are close to 60 years old. When they were written, he does not believe they had a grade span for an elementary school in the towns of Kingston and Newton. What has happened is that currently, the actual definition of an elementary school in Kingston and Newton or in the State by statute is grades K-6 or K-8. We are currently out of compliance with State law. The Bakie School is K-5. He does not believe this is going to cause a legal issue for us in the future, but the reality is that if we don't change the Articles of Agreement, there is no plan. The Board should not expend significant resources in administrative time (he is currently spending 10 hours a week just looking at the potential of moving the 7th and 8th grades to the High School) to reconfigure the Middle School which would be a significant cost to the district. Until the Articles of Agreement are modified, we cannot have a conversation. As our enrollments decline, running 5 campuses for 1600 students is very expensive. As the Superintendent, if you advise me as a community through the Board, to continue to run them the way it is laid out, he is happy to do that. However, we need to have the conversation so we can make a decision to move forward. The purpose of this warrant article is to have that conversation but if the word elementary stays in the Articles of Agreement, there is nothing to discuss. We have to, by State statute, have K-6 in each community.

Barry Gluck (Newton)-The Article is asking for permission to remove the word elementary and that is allowing you to have this discussion of different options. So presumably, if this passes, there will be studies, debates, deliberation and ultimately, the administration and school board will propose and vote on a plan. Am I correct that the plan would then become a warrant article or would they just act on it?

Superintendent Ambrose responded that legal counsel is here, but it is his belief that it does not have to be a warrant article. The Board can choose to have an advisory warrant article, but the Board is authorized to make decisions about the lay-out of the district and the schools.

Barry Gluck (Newton)-Practically speaking, if you were going to significantly change the structure, the lay-out, the number of campuses, there would have to be money appropriated to make accommodations, which would have costs associated with it.

Mr. Ambrose responded that he does not want to speak about anything that isn't a fact and that facts are that at this time, it is not even a possibility to have a conversation because of the Articles of Agreement. He could only answer the question at the conclusion of a study as to what the costs would be.

Cheryl Gannon-has two questions; one if the word elementary is removed, we could leave it as it is without changing anything, even though that has been removed. So, we could maintain exactly what we have, even though the word elementary has been removed.

Mr. Ambrose responded that, yes, if the word elementary is removed, things can be left exactly as they are and it would change our Articles of Agreement in a manner that would put us into compliance with State law. We are not currently in compliance with State law.

Ken Elwell (Newton)-commented that he attended the meeting in which more details of the capacity and age of the buildings was discussed. The public should trust the work that has been done, that it is in the best interest of the students, teachers and the community.

Jamie Fitzpatrick (Newton)-Is this Article one that requires a supermajority vote or a simple majority. If it requires a supermajority, shouldn't it be on the ballot?

Mr. Phillips (Legal Counsel) responded that it would require a 2/3 Supermajority and should be on the ballot. Moderator confirmed it would be.

Charlton Swasey-Has been watching this warrant evolve and has several things to say about it, not as a member of the budget committee but as a graduate of Sanborn and a member of the community, having grown up in Newton. He totally disagrees that there cannot be a discussion or a plan ahead of time. The Articles of Agreement on how the two towns operate is kind of like the Constitution. Come forward with a plan instead of saying "trust me". He does not believe there is malintent here but if you the voters, the citizens and owners of these properties and the parents just want to give up any future decisions on this, then they should vote for it. A previous speaker mentioned a warrant article. You may not see any of this as a warrant article, or a mixed up warrant article regarding certain costs. This is something to be very careful of and not just to enter into. Non-compliance; the district has been in noncompliance for years. The Articles of Agreement don't provide for Kindergarten, so this is nothing

to be concerned about. The concept of savings has been said a lot this year and can be misleading. There has been talk of saving a million dollars if the Middle School closes. The real plan is to reallocate the vast majority of that money, so if you have three apples here and you move them over there, you still have the same 3 apples so it won't save anything. One of the previous speakers said let's see some actual numbers before you give up your control of things. The other thing is that if you read this, there may not be any schools in Newton. As a parent, you should be really, really concerned, especially if you live in Newton because there may be something that qualifies a school, but all the kids will be boarding buses and going to Kingston. This is something you shouldn't pass until you know what the implications are. He would encourage everyone not to vote on this as it is way premature.

Corey Masson (Newton) - Speaking as a citizen, this is about transparency and accountability, two words that prior Board member from Newton, Jan Bennett, did not care for. One of the reasons he endorses this Article is because it is a necessary step to actually charge the Superintendent with effective needs analysis and effective strategic planning. There is nothing that will ever be done that goes by this Board because this Board has been working very well together to assure your voices are heard. So, this is a necessary transparent step in saying, do you allow us to go ahead effectively give you all options, all options to go ahead and present to you the net numbers. Again, as a community member, I want to see all the different numbers. We will fall into a trap if we don't do this effectively, where it would be the cart before the horse syndrome. This is opening up the opportunity to say what all the options are.

Superintendent Ambrose-One of the previous speakers made a couple of statements that are contrary to fact and I really believe in talking about the facts and transparency. The facts are that the Article itself says schools shall be maintained in Kingston and Newton if you approve it. There is no intention or plan by anyone to close the schools in Newton. That doesn't mean that we won't reconfigure things and yes, I have said that if I had my way, we would have one K-8 school that had a wing for kindergarten, 1st and 2nd, a wing for 3rd, 4th and 5th, and a wing for 6th, 7th and 8th. I would love that because I think it would save a lot of money and it would provide the best educational opportunity for your children. However, we have a couple of very nice schools that it would not make sense to do that to, particularly Memorial School and the Bakie School. So that was not an accurate statement and the warrant article itself contradicts that statement. So I just want to bring everyone back to the facts of what Article 8 says. Article 8 says to remove the word elementary. If we choose to do that, it means that the Articles of Agreement will read, "...schools shall be maintained in Kingston and Newton."

Kelley Cullivan (Newton)-commented that a lot of parents are scared of removing the word elementary. She understands that prior to this current sitting school board, there was a lot of fear in parents of the Board and the decisions that they made, not being in the best interest of the students and rightfully so. However, with this current sitting Board and our current Superintendent, she feels as though we really should have our faith behind them. She has had many meetings with Tom Ambrose and knows a few of the school board members personally and can tell you every single solitary thing they are doing is to help our kids. The fear that was implemented in parents in years past really needs to try and go by the wayside because these are people that we really need to have our support behind. It is time to do what is best for our kids.

Vanessa Matias (Kingston)-is torn about this one and almost agree with the previous speaker in the respect that it is not that there is not good intention, but her concern is that we have no additional say once you propose this. So, she believes a better way to approach it is to consider making a warrant

article upon your plans, and say as a stipulation, we agree to remove the word elementary but you agree to give us the choice to vote upon your proposal.

Moira Bashaw (Kingston)-If we were to close the Memorial School and the Middle School, would there be a town ballot for it?

Ms. Alessio responded that technically, we don't have to, but politically, emotionally and as community members, we probably should and I don't believe that decision has definitely been made. Any decision is not going to be made in a vacuum. We need input from parents and community members, all age groups and neighborhoods. Trust us is what is what I am saying to you. Any decision has to have your input; it cannot happen in a vacuum.

Ms. Gannon-My second question; if we are not in compliance with the State definition of an elementary school, which says it is K-6, is there a possibility that someday, the compliance police might come and say you need to put 6th grade into Bakie and Memorial?

Superintendent Ambrose-Agrees with the previous speaker who mentioned that we have been out of compliance for a long time, saying he needs to be transparent; the definition of an elementary school by State statute is K-6th or 1st-6th, K-8th or 1st-8th grade. He doesn't know why 7th grade isn't in there, but the reality is we could have a problem if someone wanted to make it a problem and he is glad no one has because we have enough to solve. So, technically, we are out of compliance and it depends on whether or not someone chooses to make it an issue.

Ray Paris (Newton) - has heard a lot that you can't have a discussion before the Article is passed which he finds hard to believe as there has obviously been discussion of hypotheticals. So, his fear is that no matter how well-intentioned the school board is, and how well you all get along, that school board can change within a few months, or by the time a decision needs to be made. By then, we may not be as welcomed to give our input as we might be now. So again, giving you the keys to our children's education, where we could end up sending however young children into the same building as high school kids, or whatever the case may be, he wants to make sure that he is part of that. This is where we put the brakes and say before you have any really good ideas, let's make sure you can't do anything without our being there.

Barry Gluck (Newton)-Understands the intent of this, is in support of this and believes it is a good thing. He does not see anything wrong with simply removing the word elementary. The fact that this Article requires a 2/3 majority to pass, his recommendation to the administration and the school board is to look beyond what you are legally obligated to do and to what would make sense to do, if we actually want it to pass. A simple statement from the administration or the school board saying that if this should pass and if we do our studies and come up with recommendations, those recommendations, if they include significant changes to the structure of the schools, will be presented to the public as part of the warrant article. This would make for a much better chance of the warrant article passing.

Corey Masson-There is a purple ballot box on the table as you are walking out the door and this coming Wednesday, there will be a public forum as part of the school board meeting where we welcome your questions, comments and suggestions. Please put your questions out there in the ballot box for the

public relations subcommittee and school board to hear. Also, we should remind ourselves that there is a campus still in existence here, the 5th campus of the Seminary. This building was built years ago and students went from one campus to another. There was no warrant article that occurred back then, but your vote mattered in the actual building of this structure. So, everything is due process and this is one of those moments where we are trying to dot the “i”s and cross the “t”s to assure that we are looking at all aspects and hearing you loud and clear.

Rhonda Allain (Newton) –she keeps hearing that we are maintaining 5 campuses, but since she has lived in Newton, there have only been 4 campuses where kids have gone to school. So, if we were to get rid of another one, who is to say it is a savings? We are still going to be paying for it from what she has seen.

Vanessa Matais (Kingston)-Something for folks to consider is there will be a change in the school board, so you have great intentions, but who is to say that when this plan comes to fruition and you are ready to implement it, that there will be the same members on the board, who could have different intentions. It is important that we have a say in the vote.

Jim McCarthy (Newton)-Is in favor of this Article, but feels we are going to run into a serious situation with the 2/3 majority of people within the towns voting for this. Voters are not going to understand it and will have the same questions and issues that were being presented tonight. His main question is hypothetically, if this fails and does not pass, how is it that the school superintendent cannot go forward without coming up with some type of proposed budget. Meaning if this does not pass with the public he cannot be dead in the water. So, there has to be some way for him going forward with this and present it again. Is there anything in the works for that?

Rhonda Allain (Newton)-There were 2 things mentioned at the beginning of the discussion; a reduction of over 400 students. Is that reduction coming from the anticipation of Fremont removing themselves from the Sanborn Regional School District? Also, if we are looking at this budget so closely, what is the benefit of maintaining the 5th campus and is there an opportunity to remove that burden from the budget, so that we can really focus on what we are using appropriately.

Kerry Cahill (Newton)-Can you direct me to the formal definition of elementary school? Having looked in the RSA and Administrative Rules, she cannot locate it.

Superintendent Ambrose asked that she email him and he will provide it.

Moderator asked for further discussion or debate on the Article 8. Seeing none, Article 8 will appear on the Ballot as printed.

Moderator read Article 9- Capital Reserve Fund-Unanticipated Educational Expenses

Article 9. Shall the Sanborn Regional School District vote to establish an Unanticipated Educational Expenses Capital Reserve Fund under RSA 35:1 for the purpose of unanticipated educational expenditures and to raise and appropriate up to \$75,000 to be placed in the fund; further to name the school board as agents to

expend from the fund. This sum to come from June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1 instead of returning the money to the community. No amount to be raised from taxation.

Recommended by the Budget Committee In Favor: 6 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 2

Recommended by the Sanborn Regional School Board In Favor: 6 Opposed: 0

Estimated Tax Impact Kingston: \$0/\$1,000 Newton: \$0/\$1,000

Motion moved by Ms. Collyer and seconded by Mr. Baker.

Ms. Mahoney, on behalf of the School Board, explained that this warrant Article 9 will establish a fund that will be available to the district in the case of a significant, unforeseen, unbudgeted expenditure. We currently have a fund for unanticipated Special Education costs. This new fund would begin to build up reserves to handle more general situations such as an unforeseen spike in enrollment which actually came close to being an issue this year. The money to fund it will come from the Unexpended Fund Balance at the end of the year up, to \$75,000. This means that instead of appropriating an additional \$75,000 and adding to the tax burden, the money will come from the amount already budgeted from funds that remain unspent at the end of the year. That will reduce the amount returned to the towns, but it still seemed to be a better option than to add another appropriation and increase the tax impact this year. Everyone involved in this process has been working hard to produce more transparent needs-based budgets, but in order for that to work smoothly, we need to have funds set aside in case of emergencies. That is what this fund will begin to do.

The Moderator asked for any comment, debate or discussion on Article 9. Seeing none, Article 9 will appear on the ballot as printed.

Chair Broderick made a Motion to restrict reconsideration of Article 9, seconded by Ms. Collyer.

Vote: All in favor

Moderator read Article 10- Capital Reserve Fund-Capital Improvement and Maintenance

Article 10. Shall the Sanborn Regional School District vote to raise and appropriate a sum up to \$25,000 to be added to the Capital Improvement and Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund previously established. This sum to come from June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1 instead of returning the money to the community. No amount to be raised from taxation.

Recommended by the Budget Committee In Favor: 8 Opposed: 0

Recommended by the Sanborn Regional School Board In Favor: 6 Opposed: 0

Estimated Tax Impact Kingston: \$0/\$1,000 Newton: \$0/\$1,000

Motion moved by Ms. Mahoney and seconded by Mr. Masson.

Dr. Brown spoke on behalf of the School Board and explained that if approved, Article 10 would increase our Capital Improvement Maintenance Reserves one time this coming July, adding another \$25,000 to the District Capital Maintenance Fund. The School Board and Budget Committee have unanimously endorsed passage of this small increase in our Capital Reserves. Because school enrollments have declined regionally and nationally, our district, along with others are reassessing our facilities' needs to avoid imbalances and growing excess capacity which would cause us to accumulate empty offices, unused work rooms and leave student programs underfunded. While we are reassessing our facilities' needs, we have aging structures requiring maintenance. As a member of the Facilities Committee, I have become acquainted with a number of projects which need attention. For example, the fire alarm systems at Bakie and Memorial schools both remain in satisfactory shape, but are reaching the end of their serviceable life. These two projects alone will cost approximately \$130,000. Our existing Capital Reserve Fund stands a little over \$143,000. It was established in March of 2016 at the amount of \$153,000. So, as you can see, we have expenses coming and a small reserve fund for Capital Expenses. The Article would add a modest amount of \$25,000 to the Reserve.

The Moderator asked for any comment, debate or discussion on Article 10. Seeing none, Article 10 will appear on the ballot as printed.

Chair Broderick made a Motion to restrict reconsideration of Article 10, seconded by Ms. Alessio.

Vote: All in favor

Moderator read Article 11- Sanborn Ice Hockey Team

Article 11. Submitted by petition: On behalf of the self-funded Sanborn Ice Hockey Team and registered voters of Kingston and Newton, shall the Sanborn School District raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Five Hundred Sixty Eight Dollars (\$10,568.00) to partially fund the High School hockey team. These funds will be used to cover non-Ice Time expenses to include: away game transportation; coaching stipends; game official fees; uniforms and athletic dues/fees. (The Sanborn Ice Hockey team is playing its seventh season with the last five as a varsity program. The costs associated with each of the six seasons have been covered by the fundraising efforts of the Sanborn Ice Hockey Boosters Club. This article provides partial funding for varsity ice hockey with an additional \$14,500 of funding to come from Sanborn Ice Hockey Boosters Club to cover Ice-Time expenses.)

Recommended by the Budget Committee In Favor: 4 Opposed: 3 Abstained: 1

Recommended by the Sanborn Regional School Board In Favor: 4 Opposed: 2

Estimated Tax Impact Kingston: \$0.01/\$1,000 Newton: \$0.01/\$1,000

Motion moved by Mr. Masson and seconded by Mr. Heath.

Mr. Masson asked Jon LeBlanc (Submitter of the Petition Warrant Article) to speak to the Article.

Jon LeBlanc-Seven years ago in 2011, parents from Newton, Kingston and Fremont approached the Sanborn Regional School Board and asked for permission to create and fund a Sanborn Ice Hockey program. That permission was granted seven years ago and for the last seven years, Sanborn High School has been able to field a Sanborn Ice Hockey program team that is almost the same as all other athletic programs at Sanborn. The Hockey Team has coaches that have to be paid a stipend under Collective Bargaining Agreements. The team is required to provide bus transportation to away games. The game referees need to be paid for as otherwise they will not referee the games. When our uniforms wear out, the team pays for those and student athletes, like all student athletes have to maintain good grades at school in order to be able to participate. It is an official Sanborn Varsity sport. What is different about the High School Hockey program is seven years ago, that group of parents raised all the money for that first year and every year since then, to pay for all of those expenses as well as to pay for the ice time expenses. Article 11 which is recommended by the school board and not recommended by the budget committee is seeking to raise \$10,568 that will cover the costs that all other programs at Sanborn High School receive, all those costs that I mentioned. What Article 11 does not do (and he wants to call this out specifically as he believes it is the reason that past Articles haven't passed) is ask the public to pay for the ice time. The petitioners of this Article realize that ice time is an expense that no other high school sport has. What the hockey board is asking is to partner with the community in this venue where the board will continue to raise money for the ice time going forward and we are hoping that Article 11 will pass and allow that level of funding to be provided by the district at \$10,568. This Article is 1cent per \$1000 of tax impact, so if you have a \$300,000 home, it will cost \$3 dollars the entire year for your support. He believes that participation in athletic sports, athletic activities or any extracurricular activity leads to more well-rounded students. Learning to compete, learning to work with others, achieving goals, learning to deal with adversity, all of these things are benefits of participating in a team sport or other extracurricular activities. He is not sure if there is a price that can be put on the benefits to the students that participate, but in addition to them, you have the students who go and watch the game. They get out there and have team pride, school pride, they root their team on and he hopes that the community sees the value in the tiny costs in helping to make sure that this program continues. Raising approximately \$23,000 to 24,000 per year for the last seven years is a lot of work and there has been a lot of dedication from parents that are involved and he hopes to see this pass and that the program can continue to be a part of Sanborn.

Corey Masson- As Moderator Russman and Mr. LeBlanc indicated, your school board endorses and supports warrant Article 11 labeled Sanborn Ice Hockey Team. I would like to call something to the table and ask you also recognize the following: When Mr. Heath voted during the budget committee meeting for which he attended as a budget committee representative of the school board, he voted not in favor of, which was not the direction he should have gone, so actually this should be a 5/3 vote. The board voted in support of this

warrant article as Mr. LeBlanc indicated for non-ice time expenses. It is important to recognize that the efforts of all student athletes, you and other parent guardians have done in raising the ice rink rental fees. There are fields here that students are playing football, lacrosse and other sports on that are being maintained by this budget. Needless to say, that is not the case for ice hockey and I want to thank them for their continued support and helping their cause to get kids out there on the ice, being student athletes and representing our community. I will leave you with two comments touched upon by Mr. LeBlanc. If you Google why sports are important for students, you will most likely find statements such as, increase in health, wellness, fitness, stress relieving, character building, confidence boosting, overcoming challenges, improvement in academics. Now if you do the other Google search and probably the most important one here, is why are sports important for communities? You will most likely find statements about bringing people together, providing opportunities for social interaction, creating positive alternatives to youth offending, especially in these challenging social-emotional times and anti-social behavior. The binding of families and communities through shared experiences, the galvanizing of communities in times of need and more importantly, what we actually see when we walk into this building; the word pride. By supporting athletics, as your board does this year because we recognize the efforts that have been put forth, this helps foster community pride. We hope you endorse this as well, as we do.

Mr. Heath-Explained that he did not vote for the hockey Article with the school board because he was not present at the meeting and at the time it was not explained as well as it was tonight. He will be changing his vote tonight because both the school board and the budget committee will be meeting to revote on these Articles.

Ms. Collyer-Is in favor of this Article and feels that sports are extremely important. She likes the definition provided of non-ice time. One of her reservations is that it creates a line item in the budget which in the future, with other administrations, could hopefully include ice time. She would like to offer a friendly amendment *that these funds will never be used to cover ice time expenses* and will include the following, so that it is clarified and all voters understand what the intent is and what the Superintendent has stated in budget committee meetings about his intent and his interpretation of this warrant article.

Moderator expressed that there are issues around binding what future people might want to do in the town, so to say never is a long time. Since this is a Petition Warrant Article and not a warrant put forth by you folks, it is different.

Ms. Collyer-Added that she is speaking as a citizen, not as a budget committee member. She knows the Petitioners intended to make this clear, and is just asking if it could become clear, so that people who are voting on it understand what it is they are being asked to do in creating a line item for future years.

Mr. Broderick called a Point of Order, asking if this was a Motion made.

Moderator replied yes, but no Second.

Ms. Gannon Seconded the Motion by Ms. Collyer.

Moderator counseled that you cannot make a speech and then make a Motion, you must make a Motion first and then the speech, which we will overlook tonight.

Moderator asked Mr. LeBlanc is he was interested in amending the Article to essentially say it would never include ice time.

Mr. LeBlanc-The hockey board actually discussed limiting to say never ask for ice time in the future but we can't forecast the future, so we did not feel comfortable saying never ask for ice time in the future. He is on the board until May and does not want to speak for future boards' needs if something comes up, for whatever reason that they feel obligated to come to the voters to ask for ice time to be included in a separate warrant article as this particular warrant article does not ask for ice time to be funded.

Mr. Masson-wants to remind folks that Mr. LeBlanc is one of many petitioners and the language written here was signed off on by the petitioners. If that language is changed, this is changing the discussion relative to what your petitioners signed and also to what the school board has signed. As you indicated, this was brought up to the school board and we signed off in support of this language, so I warn you all to please vote no because it is not good governance practice and I advise you to start good governance practice as you are now in being here tonight.

Ms. Gannon-questioned legal counsel as to whether it is possible at this Deliberative Session to amend a Petition Warrant Article.

Peter Phillips (Legal Counsel)-Yes, you can amend a Petition Warrant Article as long as you don't delete the purpose of it. This body does have the authority to do that.

Ms. Gannon-Asked for the amendment to be read again.

Ms. Collyer read the amendment she is requesting as follows: "These funds will never be used to cover ice time expenses and will include away games transportation, etc."

Mary Athena (Newton)-has a child who would never play hockey and asked what does it matter if it is ice time? We are splitting hairs and this is ridiculous.

Peter Broderick-Has been in town politics for a while now and does not believe it is a good idea to restrict future citizens and future leaders of the town, whether it is selectmen or school board to something by saying never. A rule of thumb that we should all go by is "never say never".

Kurt Baitz (Kingston)-This discussion has been going on for seven years. Football tried this back when he sat on the Board. You are either in it or you are out. The Sanborn Regional School District should step up to the plate and be in it. If these people have had

this going on seven years, we have a track record now. This is a success record. Put it in your budget and let's move on so this gentleman and the other people don't have to sit here and beg like people do out in the streets or they do for sports with a can. Step up to the plate and support it.

Ms. Alessio made a Motion to move the question, seconded by Mr. Masson.

Moderator said to move the question cuts off the debate, so a yes is to cut off debate and a no will continue the discussion.

Vote- All in favor.

Moderator asked to vote on amendment to never ask for ice time. All those in favor of inserting that into the Article certify by saying "Aye". Nays have it.

Vote-All opposed.

Moderator asked if there was any more discussion or debate on this Article.

Tammy Najim- Elwell (Newton)-This is a perfect example of what is going on in our community. We have a wonderful program that kids can positively learn from, grow from, develop good coping skills, develop good all-around people skills and we are fighting over a penny per \$1000. From the very beginning, people have stepped up from the community to try and help alleviate the costs, so we can stay in our homes as we age. This is a perfect example of the fighting that is going on for small things when we should be looking at the bigger picture, like the 5 buildings, and to control costs so we can put great programs in for the kids. It makes perfect sense to control the costs where we can and support the programs that we want. Thank you to both boards for all the hard work they have done over the last 5-6 years.

Jim Doggett-When people are out there doing their Google searches, look up student athletes with concussions. You will find several *Journal of American Medicine Reports* that directly correlate student athletes and high school concussion and later disabling brain damage. The other thing you may want to Google is student athlete and opioid use. The second largest introduction of opioids to students are children of student age in the State of New Hampshire, is through sports injuries at school that lead to opioid use and abuse. These are two things that are major topics of today and yet we are considering putting in a sport that is known to cause both concussion and injury. If you say you are good parents, then you would actually say, no, we should not be having hockey.

Cheryl Gannon-would like to make a friendly amendment because she believes transparency is the buzz word now and her concern over this is that if people vote for this particular amount that is mentioned in here, they may not understand that the intent of this is that it is going to become a line item in the budget after this is approved. She is going to propose an amendment a little bit different from the previous one. It would read as

follows: *If this Article is approved by the voters, non-ice time expenses will be included in subsequent operating budgets when an ice hockey team is in existence.* Just to clarify I am not just asking for \$10,568 for this year because in past articles, there has been debate over “you didn’t tell us that this money was going to continue to be paid”. That is the reason for the amendment

Amendment made by Ms. Gannon seconded by Mr. Swasey.

Moderator asked Ms. Gannon to deliver amendment in writing to District Clerk.

Mr. LeBlanc-commented on prior speaker’s mention of injuries in hockey (they do happen) and painkillers. He doesn’t have data to back this up, but would be willing to say that keeping students involved in athletics and plugged into extracurricular activities is a much bigger deterrent to getting them hooked on opioids. He knows that is a path that can be taken, but believes participation in sports can be a much bigger deterrent. The amendment does not detract from the intent of the warrant article. If this passes, that part of the funding will come from the schools, next year, the year after, until the school board or someone else decided there will be no hockey program. I am not in total favor of the amendment, but it is not taking away from the intent, so he wants to make that clear.

Barry Gluck (Newton)-Is opposed to the amendment because the warrant article is very clear and does not think anyone would be confused by it. He feels the amendment adds some limiting language that is unnecessary. He would urge people to vote down the amendment and wants to point out that we have spent more time debating \$10,000 than we have on a \$35M budget.

Peter Broderick-Asking Legal Counsel if a Petition Warrant Article can carry for more than one year. Does a change like this force the budget committee, the school board to make a line item for the future?

Peter Phillips (Legal Counsel)-It does go into the budget and it would be there for next year unless changed. You can change the intent but not the subject matter.

Moderator recognized Ms. Alessio has moved the question, seconded by Mr. Masson.

Moderator read the amendment again: *If this Article is approved by the voters, non-ice time expenses will be included in subsequent operating budgets when an ice hockey team is in existence.*

Moderator asked if you are in favor of this amendment, you will vote yes, if you are opposed you will vote no.

Amendment does not carry.

Mr. Swasey-said this is a tough one. There are a lot of programs at the high school and he is in favor of all of these things and thinks it is a great idea to keep the kids occupied and divert their attention. There are many other clubs and teams that are not being funded. As a member on the Board of Trustees, we have privately paid for some of these in the past to keep them going. Mr. Ambrose, could you give us an account of what other clubs, teams, groups and sports that exist now and are not being funded under the budget?

Superintendent Ambrose-Responded that he will need to ask the Athletic Director to provide him with the actual list to answer.

Mr. Doggett-With what just transpired with that amendment, should somebody wish to go to court, they could say that this Article is a one-year payment. It could not be included in the budget because this body just agreed that it will not be perpetual. Therefore, any injunction would simply revert and say that this is a one-year only item and that the board does not have the authority in the future to include it in the budget because the legislative body chose not to include that as the Minutes will show.

Jon LeBlanc-Would like to make a slight clerical amendment to the Article. Where it says, The Sanborn Ice Hockey has played its 6th season, he would like to change it to 7th season. And where it says the last 4 as Varsity, it should say 5.

Moderator asked for further discussion or debate on the warrant article.

Mr. Masson-There was a prior comment made about this being a one-time discussion. Could we have clarification from legal on that? Is that true?

Peter Phillips (Legal Counsel)-Does not believe this is true. Once you add this money to the budget, it is there as a baseline for next year.

Mr. Masson-We are elected officials and there is a long budget season that started and is basically ending here tonight. If this line item and sport is no longer in existence, it will get weeded out. So, let's just remind ourselves that you elected us as fiduciary agents for you and for those kids.

Moderator asked for further discussion or debate on the warrant article. Seeing none, Article will appear on the ballot as amended with the two small clerical changes (6th-7th season and 4-5th year as varsity)

Chair Broderick made a Motion to restrict reconsideration of Article 11, seconded by Ms. Alessio.

Vote: All in favor

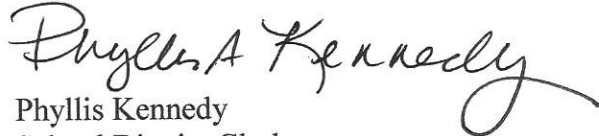
Moderator asked for a Motion to adjourn, moved by Ms. Mahoney and seconded by Mr. Heath.

Moderator asked if there was any other business to come before the meeting. Seeing none, he asked for a Motion to adjourn, moved by Ms. Mahoney.

Vote: All in favor

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Phyllis A. Kennedy". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.

Phyllis Kennedy
School District Clerk