

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM. Present: School Board Members John Harmon, Tony Clements, Stephen Scarfo, Joseph Saulnier, and Cindy Bennett; Student Representative to the School Board Tyler Dunphy; Superintendent of Schools Terry Leatherman; Business Administrator Marjorie Whitmore; Lamprey River Elementary School Principal Jessica Benson; Technology Director Matt Clifton.

Proof of Posting: It was noted that the meeting was properly posted.

Pledge of Allegiance: All those in attendance stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Recognition: The School Board recognized the following students for achieving the RHS Principal's List (earning all A's for the first quarter):

Grade 9

Andrea Alvino
Maddie Callahan
Madyson Elizabeth Dupuy
Lucy Ennis
Annaliese Hetherington
Allison McLaughlin
Alyssa Tilton
Koi Vincent
Jackson Waterhouse
Sara Wilkins
Logan Woods

Grade 10

Jordan Diaz
Madelyn Donohue
Broderick Dupuy
Gianna Gott
Claire Michalak
Rachel Ni
Theodore Pekalsky
Abigail Richard
Amber Sarofian

Grade 11

Tucker Sopha

Grade 12

Madison Ambrose
Madison Brannan
Jack Harmon
Aysha Hendrick
Jillian McGrath
Vicky Ni
Kylie Potter
Violet Reynolds
Isabella Waldron

Public Input: Public input was opened at 6:01 PM. Mr. Harmon noted that public input would be open for 30 minutes. If anyone arrives within that timeframe and would like to speak, they will be allowed to do so.

Gwen Clark approached the Board. She stated that she is the grandmother of a high school student and she has questions about competency-based education which was passed this past summer. She stated that parents are just discovering this in the past few weeks, and she asked why it's changing since the grading is not mandated by New Hampshire. She asked if there are any independent studies on whether competency-based grading projects an educational outcome in the long run. She asked if kids are doing competency testing and they pass all their tests does that mean that they "master" the class. She stated she also has a safety concern about students having to drive themselves, and potentially others, to games and asked if there is insurance coverage for those kids driving to games. Mr. Harmon stated that standards-based grading has been in place for a number of years. Mr. Leatherman stated that technically it was voted in a number of years ago. The middle school has been doing it for years, and it has been decided to put it into place at the high school as well.

Mr. Harmon read an email from Julie Laughner relative to her concerns about the consideration of solar panels and wood boilers as energy projects within the district. That email can be found at the end of these minutes.

Our Students/Our Schools: LRES Teachers Linda Chretien and Justine Dube and grade 1 students Anthony Bary, Leah Sawyer, Adriana Cafarella, and Ben Bronson talked with the Board about their study of the pilgrims and the Wampanoag. They discussed the Thanksgiving story bracelets, shared colored beads and the story with each, and talked about how they incorporated the Thanksgiving story in all parts of their day. The students read their stories of the pilgrims.

Student Representative to the School Board Report: Mr. Dunphy stated that there has been concern about competency recovery and referenced page 40 of the high school student handbook. He stated that teachers have expressed confusion about how it takes place and how a student goes through the

process versus a retake. He also stated that using PowerSchool in relation to it has been a tricky matter, and that teachers have said that there was nothing in writing or a formal announcement.

Technology Update: Mr. Clifton reviewed the technology update with the Board, which included staff updates, a monthly review of activities in the tech department so far this school year, projects, and a review of student data privacy.

During discussion:

- Mr. Saulnier noted that there are a lot of apps available for teachers to use and asked if it should be limited. Mr. Leatherman stated that the principals, teachers, and I.T. look at them. Mr. Clifton stated that most of them are free unless otherwise noted. The list was built last year but he hasn't confirmed if they are all being used this year.
- Mr. Scarfo asked if we are charged for the Microsoft 11 upgrades. Mr. Clifton stated we already have the disc, but the issue is some older laptops may not be able to go to Microsoft 11.

2024-25 Default Budget: Ms. Whitmore reviewed the 2024-25 default budget of \$31,392,336, which is \$609,775 higher than the proposed operating budget for 2024-25. She reviewed the additions and reductions. During discussion:

- Mr. Saulnier asked if some funding should be in place to purchase math kits again. Mr. Leatherman stated not with i-Ready, they were a one-time purchase.
- Mr. Clements stated that they should work to try to educate people on the difference between the operating budget and the default and why one is more preferable than the other. Ms. Bennett asked what the difference is between the two. Mr. Leatherman stated that the biggest impact is contracted services. Currently, some positions that fall under contracted services are being paid for with grant funds. When the grant is no longer available, if the budget doesn't pass, they would need to potentially look at contracting those services again, which is more expensive. He stated that he doesn't expect to have to do that, they can be kept on as employees, but they have to budget for it that way.
- Mr. Clements asked, as a hypothetical, if the operating budget passed without some teachers included, can they still hire those teachers? Mr. Harmon stated that the Board has discretion as of July 1 but that they would check with legal.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Stephen Scarfo, to accept the 2024-25 default budget of \$31,392.336. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Capital Improvement Plan/CRF Warrant Article: Ms. Whitmore reviewed the updated CIP with changes made from the meeting over the summer. Mr. Harmon stated that the CIP Committee has not yet met so they do not have their recommendations.

Mr. Harmon stated that on the last page of the proposed expenditures for 2024-25, the bottom line should be \$499,125 because of the additional 10% that the Board would like to increase the CIP allocations by, which is a difference of \$120,424. He suggested breaking that amount up proportionally to what they should be raising for each fund so that the new totals for each capital reserve fund in this 2024 warrant article will be: maintenance \$403,526, technology \$57,832 and food service \$37,767, for a total of \$499,125. MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Stephen Scarfo, to accept the capital reserve warrant article as amended. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Surplus Funds to Capital Reserve Funds Warrant Article: Regarding the warrant article(s) to transfer surplus funds to the maintenance capital reserve fund and the capital reserve fund for the purpose of educating educationally disabled children, Mr. Leatherman stated that the attorney has advised that whether or not they are separate warrant articles, whichever fund comes first would get the money if there is not enough surplus to fully fund both as voted.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Stephen Scarfo, to accept the surplus funds to capital reserve funds combined version as presented. Mr. Harmon suggested reversing the order of the funds so that the maintenance capital reserve fund comes second. Mr. Clements suggested increasing the amount for special education and Mr. Scarfo suggested allocating \$150,000 to special education and \$250,000 to maintenance. Mr. Saulnier amended his motion to have the fund for the purpose of educating educationally disabled students listed first and the maintenance fund second. Mr. Scarfo seconded the amendment. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

New/Revised Policies - First Reading: The Board reviewed the following proposed new and revised policies for the first of two readings: ACN Nursing Mothers Accommodation and EBCC Bomb Found or Threats. Regarding policy ACN, the Board discussed recommendations received by a staff member. It was the consensus of the Board that all of the suggestions should be incorporated into the policy other than whether to compensate hourly employees for the time nursing, as that would be a Board decision. After some discussion it was generally agreed that hourly employees would be paid for that time.

New/Revised Policies - Second Reading: MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to accept policy BEDG Minutes. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Cindy Bennett, to accept policy IKA-R Grading System. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Cindy Bennett, to accept policy KF-R Use of School Facilities. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Cindy Bennett, to accept policy JH Attendance, Absenteeism, and Truancy. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Cindy Bennett, to accept policy JHC Student Release Precautions. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Cindy Bennett, to accept policy JICDD Student Discipline Out of School Actions. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Monthly Financial Update: Ms. Whitmore reviewed the financial update for months ending October 31, 2023. Areas of largest variance were health insurance, student transportation, student tuitions, and books, periodicals, and software. During discussion, Mr. Harmon stated he's surprised that the variance in the salaries line is only \$130,000 with so many paraeducator positions open. He thought the impact of those unfilled positions would be about \$400,000, which would result in a positive variance in the salaries line and potentially eliminate the need for a budget freeze. Ms. Whitmore stated that she will be reconciling again for a new report. She stated that there is \$581,063 of district salaries that have yet to be encumbered.

Energy Efficient Investments: Mr. Harmon stated that [even though the Board did not receive updated numbers this evening for the energy projects], the Board should do something with the Energy Efficient Investments (EEI) projects to at least determine if the cost will be in the operating budget or as a separate warrant article. As it stands right now, they had talked about 20 years at a cost of \$317,880, which would be the worst case scenario because it doesn't include any of the projected savings.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Stephen Scarfo, to accept option three 20-year lease agreement for EEI at approximately \$318,000 and to put that in the operating budget. Mr. Harmon stated that this is more to show the Budget Committee their intent but they'll fine tooth with better numbers for savings from Mr. Davey and clarify what those numbers are going to be. Mr. Scarfo stated that the year two and three costs will be much lower at about \$33,000. Mr. Clements stated that he hates the idea of putting the solar panels on the field [next to the high school driveway] and prefers to see them in front of the school, since the field is a decent space that can be used for a multitude of things. Motion passed with Stephen Scarfo, Joseph Saulnier, and Tony Clements voting in the affirmative and John Harmon and Cindy Bennett voting in opposition. Mr. Harmon stated that he supports the project but he would rather it be done through a separate warrant article.

Donation Acceptance: MOTION: Stephen Scarfo moved, seconded by Cindy Bennett, to accept the donation of \$2,065.96 worth of school supplies from Walmart Distribution Center to Raymond High School. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Strategic Plan Update: Mr. Leatherman reviewed his update on the Strategic Plan - Districtwide Consistency: Communications, Process, Expectations, and Accountability.

Committee Reports: Mr. Saulnier stated that the Seacoast School of Technology Governing Board reviewed the draft calendar and things have fallen a little bit more in place. The four-year agreement will be coming to the Board at the next meeting.

Mr. Scarfo stated that the Budget Committee heard the presentation of the school district budget and that administration answered a lot of questions. They have an unfortunate situation where everything is higher and everyone understands that hard decisions have to be made. There was more discussion about solar. Mr. Clements stated that he liked the discussion that took place and that it was constructive.

Superintendent's Report: Mr. Leatherman stated that there are some professional development days coming up and they continue to have good, productive meetings. He gave kudos to the administrative staff that they are comfortable speaking up even when they don't agree.

Correspondence/Other: None.

Manifest Signing: A quorum of the Board signed the manifest. Accounts Payable total \$999,763.35. Payroll total \$509,370.81.

Approval of Minutes: MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Cindy Bennett, to accept the minutes of October 24, 2023. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Cindy Bennett, to accept the minutes of October 25, 2023. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Stephen Scarfo, to accept the minutes of November 1, 2023. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Stephen Scarfo, to approve the public minutes of November 15, 2023 with the following amendment: page three first bullet correct to "Mr. Clements." Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Stephen Scarfo, to accept the nonpublic minutes of November 15, 2023 and unseal Item E. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Cindy Bennett, to approve the minutes of November 16, 2023 with the following amendments: page two motion about ESSER funds add "motion does not include removing from the budget the purchase of Chromebooks or Promethean panels" and on page three second motion from the bottom, add vote of unanimously affirmative. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Non-Public Session: MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Stephen Scarfo, to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c) "Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting" and (m) "Consideration of whether to disclose minutes of a nonpublic session due to a change in circumstances under paragraph III." Upon the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Cindy Bennett, Stephen Scarfo, and Tony Clements. The Board entered into non-public session at 8:17 PM and resumed public session at 8:45 PM. Other than the vote to exit this non-public session and seal item A, as not doing so would negatively affect the reputation of someone other than a Board member (which was moved by Joseph Saulnier, seconded by Cindy Bennett, and upon the Board members being individually polled, was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Cindy Bennett, Stephen Scarfo and Tony Clements), no motions were voted during this non-public session.

Unsealing Minutes: MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements to unseal the minutes and all supporting documents of: February 1, 2023; February 15, 2023; February 22, 2023; March 22, 2023; March 27, 2023. Upon the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Cindy Bennett, Stephen Scarfo, and Tony Clements.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to unseal October 4, 2023 minutes item B and to keep item C sealed. Upon the Board members being individually polled, the motion was voted in the affirmative by Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon, Cindy Bennett, Stephen Scarfo, and Tony Clements.

Adjournment: MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to adjourn the meeting. Voted unanimously in the affirmative. Meeting adjourned at 8:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Heywood,
Raymond School Board Clerk

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Raymond School Board Non-Public Session
December 6, 2023

Not voted to be kept confidential.

Item B

Present: School Board Members John Harmon, Tony Clements, Joseph Saulnier, Stephen Scarfo, and Cindy Bennett; Superintendent of Schools Terry Leatherman.

The School Board reviewed sealed minutes for consideration of whether to unseal them.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Heywood,
Raymond School Board Clerk

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Email read during tonight's public input:

Dear Chairman Harmon and Members of the School Board:

I apologize I can not attend in person tonight. Please read my letter into the record. I watched with interest (most of) the meeting of 11/29/23 where solar panels and wood boilers were discussed. It sounds like this project has the support of the board. I have some concerns. First of all, this area of the country doesn't get much sun. Have you seen the documentary Planet of the Humans by Michael Moore? It gives a lot of information about how unreliable solar is, and also talks about biomass (wood).

I ask you to please consider some of these questions while you are making a decision. On rainy days, does the wood boiler kick in? How much kiln dried wood will have to be purchased? Is it cheaper than propane? The different options came with different mortgages. Is that for the boiler and the silo, or the solar panels? With the school's other loans coming to an end, can we please have a break for a few years?

I did appreciate Mr. Harmon's suggestion that any loan would be negotiated so that the principal can be paid back early to save interest costs. That has not been the case in the past.

It is a very slippery slope to rely on "free" money and grants. As we have seen, when the money dries up, the taxpayer must pick up the slack. Also, there is no "free money". Either it's been printed, which means we pay in inflation. We certainly saw that happen with all the "free" covid money. Or, the "free money" comes from taxes we've paid to the federal or state government.

Thank you for your time and all you do. I'm praying for each of you. You too, Terry and Marjorie and Jennifer.

Sincerely,

Julie Laughner

Raymond resident since 1994