

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM. Present: School Board Members John Harmon, Tony Clements, Joseph Saulnier, Tony Clements, and Cindy Bennett (6:04 PM); Superintendent of Schools Terry Leatherman; Business Administrator Marjorie Whitmore.

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.

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. There was no public input forthcoming.

2024-25 Budget: Mr. Leatherman reviewed with the Board some proposed budget adjustments and Ms. Whitmore reviewed estimated revenues for 2024-25. The final tax rate for Raymond has been set at \$20.72 broken down as follows: Municipal \$4.49, County \$.76, Local Education, \$13.95, and State Education \$1.52, based on a valuation of \$1,354,042,681.

During review of revenues, Ms. Whitmore stated that the Hold Harmless Grant will phase out over the next few years.

Mr. Harmon asked to clarify that the budget that's currently being proposed by administration, before any changes made this evening, is \$30,836,637. Ms. Whitmore confirmed.

Mr. Harmon suggested first discussing whether to reduce teaching positions. During discussion:

- Mr. Saulnier stated he could support reducing two as administration recommended, but keeping UA at the elementary school.
- Mr. Scarfo stated that even with new numbers presented for the specific positions, the impact is \$.34. He asked if that's already included in the current tax rate.
- Mr. Clements stated that he's going to refer back to the discipline numbers for grades 1 and 2 and asked how reducing teachers will affect that.
- Ms. Bennett asked how the proposed cuts would be affected by someone voluntarily resigning. Mr. Leatherman stated that he would assume through attrition that no one would be cut, though there can be no guarantee.

MOTION: Stephen Scarfo moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to not cut any of the teachers [at the elementary school]. Mr. Harmon stated he won't support the motion; that they need to be fiscally responsible. Mr. Scarfo stated that he feels their primary responsibility is to the students. Mr. Harmon reviewed class sizes by policy. Mr. Scarfo stated that he feels the ratio should be on the higher end. Mr. Saulnier stated that teachers helped the School Board come up with those class sizes in the policy. Mr. Clements stated that his main concern would be increased discipline issues with large class sizes and

with test scores improving he feels it would be a bad time to reduce teachers. Mr. Leatherman clarified that the proposed reductions are second grade, third grade, and UA. Motion failed with Stephen Scarfo and Tony Clements voting in the affirmative and Joseph Saulnier, John Harmon and Cindy Bennett voting in opposition.

Mr. Leatherman clarified that the teaching positions that are proposed reductions are in grades K-3, but they can say grades 2 and 3 for more specific explanation of the reductions.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by John Harmon, to add a UA teacher back in. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Regarding the middle school, Mr. Scarfo stated he would be in favor of a motion that specifically keeps the FCS teacher.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Stephen Scarfo, to keep the [IHGMS] teachers in the budget, keep the FCS teacher, and reconstitute one of the lab teachers into a foreign language teacher. Mr. Saulnier clarified that this motion would add all three teachers back into the budget for \$178,529. Ms. Bennett asked what they would do for the math lab without those teachers. Mr. Leatherman stated that they wouldn't have lab. Ms. Bennett stated that she feels whatever most closely affects the students should be unchanged, but other budget items such as electric bills are not changeable. Mr. Harmon stated he won't support it because he doesn't agree with adding a foreign language teacher as it doesn't support the strategic plan, and if we keep adding to the budget it won't be supported by the voters and it will then be the default budget. Motion passed with Stephen Scarfo, Tony Clements, Joseph Saulnier, and Cindy Bennett voting in the affirmative and John Harmon voting in opposition.

Mr. Saulnier asked if the districtwide psychologist is in the grant now. Ms. Whitmore stated yes, the ESSER grant runs through September 2023 and that position is salaried starting July 1.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Stephen Scarfo, to pay the remainder of the salary of the districtwide psychologist through ESSER funds for \$33,194. Ms. Bennett asked how much money was left in ESSER. Ms. Whitmore stated \$179,306. Mr. Saulnier stated that we're trying to get on a rotating schedule for replacing them to appear in the default. Mr. Harmon stated he is not going to support the motion as he thinks they should be doing everything that Mr. Leatherman suggested - they would be on a rotation they're striving for, the only difference being it wouldn't be in the default budget. Motion passed with Joseph Saulnier, Cindy Bennett, and Stephen Scarfo voting in the affirmative and Tony Clements and John Harmon voting in opposition.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Stephen Scarfo, to reduce the districtwide curriculum line by \$50,000, to increase the [regular education] high school tuition line by \$25,000, and to decrease the insurance \$2,610 [increase property and liability by \$11,789, decrease workers compensation by \$14,399]. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to reduce the middle school substitute line by \$32,493 to bring it down to \$70,000. Mr. Harmon withdrew his motion and Mr. Clements withdrew his second.

MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to reduce the middle school substitute line by \$22,493 to bring it down to \$80,000. Mr. Saulnier suggested leaving a little room for an increase in substitute pay rates next year. Motion passed with Cindy Bennett, Stephen Scarfo, Tony Clements, and John Harmon voting in the affirmative and Joseph Saulnier voting in opposition.

MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Joseph Saulnier, to reduce the middle school line 500733 new furniture fixtures for traveling carts to \$1300. Mr. Harmon amended the motion to \$1320 and Mr. Saulnier seconded the amendment. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to reduce the technology director benefits and salary by \$27,211. Voted unanimously in the affirmative. (Stephen Scarfo was not present for this vote.)

MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Cindy Bennett, to change object 500580 high school principal mileage from \$2,000 to \$200, a reduction of \$1,800. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION: Mr. Harmon moved, seconded by Joseph Saulnier, to eliminate the following co-curriculars, as they are programs that, except for one, were not run last year: Boys JV Soccer (\$1800), Girls JV Soccer (\$1926), Basketball (\$2404), Boys JV Baseball (\$2061), Girls JV Softball (\$3672), Cinematography (\$735), Drama (\$1070), Forestry (\$995), and Interact (\$687) for a total of \$15,350. Mr. Leatherman stated that there is a strong possibility that drama will be coming back. Mr. Harmon amended his motion to add back in drama for \$1070, for a new total reduction of \$14,280. Mr. Clements seconded the amendment. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to reduce the middle school co-curricular for Chess Club (\$1378), Strategic Card Club (\$995), Intramural Volleyball grades 5-6 (\$1717), Intramural Volleyball grades 7-8 (\$1407) for a total of \$5,497.

Mr. Leatherman suggested the mentor program stipend be budgeted for \$10,000. MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to add \$3,000 to 500126 to make it \$10,000. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to increase the school board clerk pay from \$135 per meeting to \$145 per meeting. Mr. Harmon stated that according to the information they received, this rate hasn't been increased since 2018. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Raymond School Board Meeting
November 16, 2023
Raymond High School Room 109
Minutes Page 4
DRAFT

MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to decrease the overall salaries, social security, and retirement in the amount of \$150,000 district-wide. Mr. Harmon stated that historically, the District has underspent the budgeted salaries, social security, and retirement. Mr. Saulnier stated he would be willing to go to \$75,000 but not \$150,000. Mr. Scarfo stated he would rather go to \$75,000. Motion passed with John Harmon, Tony Clements, and Cindy Bennett voting in the affirmative and Stephen Scarfo and Joseph Saulnier voting in opposition.

Ms. Whitmore asked if the Board would like to reduce the budgeted amount for FICA by \$2,980 based on salary line adjustments. MOTION: John Harmon moved, seconded by Joseph Saulnier, to reduce the budget by \$2,980 as a result of Ms. Whitmore's calculations for FICA. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

It was noted that the changes made this evening resulted in a decrease of the originally proposed budget by \$54,076.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to accept the 2023-24 budget of \$30,782,561. Mr. Harmon asked if Ms. Whitmore could calculate the tax impact. Ms. Whitmore stated she calculated \$5.79 but she's not certain that number is accurate. Mr. Harmon stated that he opposes the budget because he feels it's too much. Motion passed with Tony Clements, Joseph Saulnier, Stephen Scarfo, and Cindy Bennett voting in the affirmative, and John Harmon voting in opposition.

Motion to Amend the Agenda: Mr. Leatherman asked the Board to amend the agenda to discuss the Presidential Primary day of January 23, 2024. MOTION: Stephen Scarfo moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to amend the agenda to talk about the Presidential Primary day at the request of the Superintendent. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by Tony Clements, to take election day [NH Primary on January 23, 2024] off and make it up in June. Voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Other: Mr. Clements thanked the Nutrition Services Department for lunch the other day and the Thanksgiving lunch at LRES.

Adjournment: MOTION: Joseph Saulnier moved, seconded by John Harmon, to adjourn the meeting. Voted unanimously in the affirmative. Meeting adjourned at 8:19 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Heywood,
School Board Clerk