

1. **Call to Order-Roll Call- Pledge of Allegiance:** Paula Woolley called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and upon call of the roll the following board members were present: Kunz, Woolley, Robinson, Pass and Nelson.
2. **Comments by Visitors:** None
3. **Consent Calendar**
 - 3.1 **Removal of items from the consent Calendar:** None
 - 3.2 **Approval of consent calendar:** A motion made by Pass seconded by Kunz to approve the consent calendar as presented. Approved were:
 - December 18, 2014-Minutes of the Rollinsford School Board
 - December 15 2014- Minutes of the Rollinsford School Board Public Forum
 - Enrollment: January
4. **Announcements:** Supt. Mosca stated that the Somersworth Middle School was recognized for the distinguished award for greatest growth in gap scores based on NECAPS and they will be recognized at the National Title I Conference in Utah on February 5th. A motion made by Pass seconded by Nelson to move item 7.1 budget to be discussed first. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously.
5. **Discussion Items:**
 - 5.1 **Principal Update:** Woolley stated that you received this in the packet. Lucas stated that the play was outstanding; the students were joyful and celebrated and did a phenomenal job. She stated that they also shared it with the students during the day. Congratulations to Lori Hess and Amanda Russell. She stated that Kathy Collins was here today and she is really well versed and educated. She stated that Caroline Carrell and Shawna are rebuilding the website so look for that it should be done by mid-week next week. She stated that it is on point and really celebrates the accomplishments of the students and staff. Pass stated that she would have loved to see the play and they should advertise around town for the parents without kids.
 - 5.2 **Somersworth High School Update:** None
 - 5.3 **Somersworth Middle School Update:** None
 - 5.4 **Rollinsford Student Representative Report-Bailey Haines:** Bailey Haines stated that play practice has started at the high school and they will be doing little shop of horrors in March. She stated that the math team has a meet on January 28th. She stated that basketball season has started and the boys have a home game tomorrow. She stated that hockey is also in full swing. She stated that the junior class is having the prom fashion show on February 7th from 2-4. She stated that February 7th the student council is also hosting the Mr. SHS contest. She stated that the winter formal was supposed to be January 18th but it has been moved to February 13th.
 - 5.5 **Feasibility study from Mark Joyce:** Supt. Mosca stated that in the packet is a proposal from Mark Joyce with the scope and the process to be completed and a timeline. Nelson stated

that she would like to amend the process and steps on #3 on page 2 where it says to determine Marshwood's willingness and she would like to make it known that this is just exploratory. Supt. Mosca stated that if you decide to enter into this agreement he will sit with you and gather information, it will be board driven. Nelson stated that is very important. Woolley stated that the last process was very successful and he was very open to what we asked. Kunz stated that right from the ground up we can make any requests, the investigation is catered to what we were asking and there may be additional things we think of along the way. Supt. Mosca stated that this is a guideline and you have flexibility. She stated that she would ask that they suspend rules to take action. Nelson stated that there is money attached to this and we heard from the town on December 15th that people want to know the options to decide if we think it is worthwhile to spend \$10,000 on it and she thinks that it is and it is important to have all the facts. Robinson stated that we started the ball rolling on this to have the facts. He stated that he is assuming that there are not many organizations around that do this and we don't need an RFP. D'Agostino stated that we did reach out last time and nobody else was interested. Pass stated that there is a lot of misinformation around town and the only way to put it to rest is to get the facts. Supt. Mosca stated that there is money in the current budget and you could make a motion not to exceed so we are not locked in. A motion made by Robinson seconded by Pass to suspend board rules to vote on this tonight. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously. A motion made by Robinson seconded by Nelson to accept the proposal with Mark Joyce not to exceed \$15,000. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously.

- 5.6 **Budget Process Presentation:** Woolley stated that we will move this to another meeting. Nelson stated that last time we met to review the budget the process wasn't clear and she went to the NHSBA delegate assembly and she got to find out what other boards are doing and Berlin did a presentation and she realized what she was missing from the board process. She stated that they do a pre-budget discussion on how they reach their education goals; she stated that she knows that this happens on the administration level but I am missing those. She stated that in order for me as a board member to give clear direction to support it has to start earlier in the timeline. Pass asked if she could put the presentation on the website. D'Agostino stated yes. Robinson stated that the budget presentation is a good presentation and he would second what Judy is saying providing clear direction early on and asked how we make sure that we are involved. Supt. Mosca stated that if Kate and I can sit first we can engage you in conversation and do that for you in April. Nelson asked if this is something that we have to vote on. Woolley stated no, it is a consensus of the board and this sounds like a logical way to address it.

6. Action Items

7. Financial Update:

- 7.1 **Budget:** D'Agostino stated that she is handing out a copy of the draft warrant articles because we are still waiting for approval from the DRA. She stated that we should start with articles nine and ten while we have legal counsel here. Mike Elwell stated that article 10 was by petition to see if the district will vote to authorize the school board to enter into a six year tuition agreement with MSAD elementary schools and Marshwood Great Works school

for education of Rollinsford students, Kindergarten through Sixth grade beginning July 1 2016 on such terms and conditions as the school board shall determine are in the best interest of the school district. He stated that the legal question was whether or not this is binding. He stated that this article is not binding on the board and is advisory only. He stated that based on New Hampshire law it is up to the board to decide and it is up to the voters to decide to approve the money to fund it. He stated that it is two parts the board decides to enter into a contract and the voters approve to spend money. He stated that it is proper to vote on it but it is not binding so if it passed the board could decide not to do it but it would be up to the board. A motion made by Pass seconded by Nelson to suspend rules to allow the public to speak. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously. Emily Leach stated that when the board decided to send grades 7-12 they went through a preliminary investigation and asked what kind of responsibility the board has to do that work. Elwell stated that grades 7-12 was different because you were disengaging from an area agreement and there are statutes that have to be followed that doesn't apply to this situation, it may make sense to look at the ramifications but there is no area agreement. Woolley stated that item 5.5 is that we are considering doing a feasibility study with Mark Joyce so we are committed to doing an investigation so it is not something that if it passed that we would jump right into. Mike Elwell stated that Article 9 is a petition article to rescind SB2 voting for annual meeting. He stated that the language is required by statute and has to pass by a 3/5 majority and it will be binding and next year you will go back to the traditional meeting. D'Agostino stated that article 5 is the operating budget in the amount of \$5,210,334. She stated that on Wednesday the budget committee agreed to move forward with that to the public hearing and at the hearing they can amend so we may want to have another meeting the following week to discuss. She stated that the default budget number is not on here yet because it depends on the final number of the operating budget. She stated that article 6 is the collective bargaining agreement which is a three year agreement with each year listed but voting will be on the increase for the first year. She stated that article 7 and 8 are warrant articles to put 50% of the fund balance in each of the trust funds and based on legal counsel advice we need to have a maximum amount. She stated that based on the budget presented we have \$288,000 remaining at this point and that can still change. She stated that you could choose a maximum of \$300,000 of which 50% would go to the special education fund and 50% to facilities but she will need an amount tonight to give direction on what you would like to see. She stated that based on and as long as we move on the operating budget as is for reference right now if the warrants passed there will be a decrease of .69 cents on the tax rate, if the contract passes that will be a .10 cent increase so the net effect will be a .59 decrease on the tax rate. She stated that when you add in the loss of revenue for catastrophic aid it increases the tax rate by .11 cents. She stated that the net effect is a .48 decrease on the tax rate estimated. She stated that she also did a projected salary grid on the far left if the contract moves forward and on the right side where the staff is placed on the grid. She stated that through negotiations you can only have a track change or a step you can't have both. She stated that she also included the health insurance information. She stated that it shows how many people

participate in the plans. She stated that in the first year of the contract the buyback increases to \$5,000 so if someone is on a single plan which is approximately \$10,000 there will be a savings of \$5,000 and if someone has a two person plan which is approximately \$19,000 and they change to a buyback there will be a savings of \$14,000 and if someone has a family plan for approximately \$25,000 and they take the buyback there will be a savings of \$20,000 but we can't indicate that because we don't know if anyone will change plans. She stated that the first year the teachers agreed to an increase in the office visit copay from 10-20 which decreased the premium approximately 1.6%. She stated that the teachers also contributed more to insurance and that is a savings as well. She stated that in the third year any new employees hired instead of HMO as the driver open access will be the driver which is an annual savings for single of 760, two person 1400 and family 1900. She stated that is the advantage of a three year agreement as there may be a cost increase but there is also savings potential. Nelson stated thank you Marie, when we negotiated the contract we looked the three year so we could introduce open access in the first year and by the third year it is the driver for new employees and that is huge. She stated that we had excellent negotiation sessions. She thanked Marie for putting this together to show the real and possible savings. Woolley stated that Marie needs us to take action on the two warrants. D'Agostino stated that in the packet is the current budget as of January 2nd and there is approximately \$280,000 remaining and the board just approved another \$15,000 so it can change. She stated that one suggestion is to pick a high number if the board chooses so if it is \$300,000, \$150,000 would go in each. Nelson stated that last year we had a set amount \$50,000 in each. Woolley stated that the reason we didn't go with a set amount is the unknown with Marshwood special education that is why we went with a percentage for both. Nelson stated that her thought is \$200,000. Robinson stated \$100,000 in each. A motion made by Nelson seconded by Kunz to approve a maximum of \$200,000 on Article 7 and 8. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously.

8. New Business:

9. Old Business

9.1 **Transition Update:** Pass stated that she had a meeting scheduled with first student and she needs to reschedule.

9.2 **Building Committee-Judy:** Nelson stated that she is not sure if we still need this committee. Supt. Mosca stated that we are pretty much done based on the decision not to go forward. Nelson stated that we are going forward with the community building group and we have our first session tomorrow to firm out who is interested in helping the board get information out to the community and information from the community to the board. She stated that we can see how we can get information to go back and forth better.

9.3 **DFA- Investment Policy:** D'Agostino stated that the auditors when they did the audit commented that the board needs to review the investment policy on an annual basis. She stated that the policy did not change but it needs to be approved annually. Pass asked if they recommended any changes. D'Agostino stated that they can't but we looked at the NHSBA policy and it hasn't changed. A motion made by Robinson seconded by Nelson to approve policy DFA Investment as read. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously.

10. Future Meeting Dates/Suggested Agenda Items:

- January 21 2015- Marshwood School Board Meeting
- January 27 2015- Somersworth School Board Meeting
- February 4 2015- Marshwood School Board Meeting
- February 19 2015- Rollinsford School Board Meeting

11. Closing Comments:

11.1 **Visitors:** Chris Reishus stated that when the building project first came out she thought that there were three levels if we couldn't do the 7 million there was another one below that. Nelson stated that there were a number of options discussed; we presented the least expensive option. She stated that there were not levels we decided to bring two options to the town one was 6.8 million and one was 7.7 million. Reishus asked if that was going to be discussed tomorrow. Nelson stated no tomorrow is to help get information out to the community. She stated that we are not going forward with the building right now the building committee has taken a step back for a year. Reishus asked if the marshwood budget it out now. Supt. Mosca stated no probably not until June. Reishus stated that they probably have a reasonable idea of special education and asked if the \$100,000 was to cover that. Supt. Mosca stated that every year the board creates warrant articles to put money into funds to build up the capital reserve for building and special education for any catastrophic issue that may occur. She stated that if a student moves in with an out of district placement if we had not budgeted for it we could use these funds. She stated that next year everything is a la carte and we have assumed what it will look like but it could fluctuate and we won't know until we spend a year there. Nelson stated that there is a line in the budget for special education to marshwood to cover that and also for Somersworth. Reegan Spinney asked what the meeting with first student was about and if she was going to ask about bussing to both schools. Pass stated that they have agreed to provide transportation next year but everyone starts at the same time so she wants to make sure that they are prepared for that. Spinney stated that is it just for one year or more. Pass stated that the contract expires at the end of the year. Spinney asked what the timeline is for the feasibility study. Supt. Mosca stated that they will share the results in the late spring and they will bring the final report to the board. Emily Leach asked if that will encompass looking at ways to increase revenue to our building like tuitioning kids into our school. Nelson stated that what is in the letter is a study of what is happening here in this building and they will do enrollment history and projections and people in town asked us to do this and it can be what we direct him to do. Emily Leach stated that there is a significant portion of the town that was not represented at the hearing and asked what those of us who want to explore renovating the building can do so they continue to look at that option. Woolley stated that we need to hear from that group. Emily Leach asked if they need to do a petition to influence you. Supt. Mosca stated that it is too late now. Leach stated not a warrant article just a survey. Kunz stated that at that meeting he left there upset that side of the room was absent or didn't speak. He stated that he understands that we went with one option to move forward but if we had gone with 10,000 different things it would have

been chaotic and all our meetings were open to the public. He stated that we had followed a directive we were given and now we are taking a step back. He stated that he would love this school to remain open and he would also like to do critical things to keep the building safe and educate the kids even better but we need buy in from the town but there was a loud voice for considering other options and these folks no longer have kids in school but he would love to hear from those that do. Nelson stated that it has been a struggle to get the word out and 7 million got everyone's attention so we took a step back but we didn't say we are not going to do anything we are taking a year to look at things slowly. She stated that personally she wants to keep this school open. She stated that we are going to take a year to regroup and tomorrow night we will see if we have enough citizens with different points of view to work together to get information out. Robinson stated that the past two weeks he has a lot of people telling me what my views are. He stated that he asked tough questions to the administration to look at the budget and staffing and the objective is to have a clear picture of what we need to do to keep the school open. He stated that we need to sell a package to the town to keep the students going to RGS. He stated that we don't need to bond we can build in money every year to get the school up to caliber, there are a lot of options and he is open to whatever it takes for the best education. Woolley stated that this school needs to be celebrated on a daily basis and the only people that know are people who have kids here and she is going to make it a goal to make sure everyone celebrates what is happening in this school. She stated that what we pay in taxes is well worth it. This school is the heart of this town and people who think otherwise have been heard loud and clear and those who are intimidated need to band together and it is time for what we feel about this school to be made known to this community. Pass stated that rather than us versus them battle we have to have intelligent conversations about how we can fund the school and get a viable and agreeable solution. Nelson stated that there was an exit survey done on the 15th and the majority said that things need to happen but they can't afford 7 million. Kunz stated that if we close this school it will never be reopened. He stated that he heard an interesting comment on turning this into a rec center but you have to spend money to do that but they don't want to spend money for education. He stated that he loves this school and he loves being on the board and he has learned a lot. He stated that he was shocked at the quick about face from let's see what we need for improvements to lets close the school. He stated that he hopes that we get a lot of different folks involved in discussions. Lori Hess stated that the students going to Marshwood are still NH residents and asked if we still have to pay to oversee what NH requires. Nelson stated that we are still a member of SAU 56 and will be whether or not we have students in NH. Supt. Mosca stated that the NH law supersedes the Maine Law so you still have SAU costs. Lori Hess stated that Maine students also receive laptops. Nelson stated that the contract says that they supply them. Nancy Dionne stated that there is a .48 cent decrease why are you putting the \$100,000 back in. D'Agostino stated that the operating budget is down 161,000 and then there are two separate warrant articles last year \$50,000 for each facilities and special education fund. She stated that the warrant articles get added into the operating budget. She stated that of the 161,000, 100,000 of that is the capital reserve

funds. Dionne stated that it is not going back this year. D'Agostino stated that at the end of the year if there is money remaining unless there is a warrant article the money goes back. Dionne asked with the warrant articles how long we can hold the money. Woolley stated that it goes into a fund. D'Agostino stated that there are two funds and a few years ago we used that and put in the fire alarm system rather than raising taxes. Karen Eddleman asked if Marshwood had room. Woolley stated yes they have room. Sharon Pinard stated that if all the kids went to Maine they will not all go to the same school and asked how they would learn NH history. John Bradshaw stated that questions will be answered after the feasibility study and he likes that the board took a step back. He apologized that he has not been involved enough and the sleeping giant has woken up and become involved to help give another view and it is great to hear that you want to keep the school open.

11.2 **Board Members:** Nelson stated that Saturday she will be in concord at the NHSBA delegate assembly. She stated that the topics were in the December packet if anyone has anything they want brought up. Robinson thanked everyone for putting things together and responding to the questions. He stated that they are moving forward this year but at the next meeting he wants to be prepared to put dates to the building items list estimates and how we get out for hard numbers to be prepared. He stated that this gives us a starting point and it shows the town we are listening and willing to do things differently. Woolley stated that the reason last night's meeting was cancelled is that I shut off my iPad over the holiday and didn't approve the draft agenda and it didn't get posted.

12. **Non-Public:** None

13. **Adjournment:** A motion made by Kunz seconded by Nelson to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:13pm.

Katie Krauss
Board Secretary

Pending Board Approval