

1. **Call to Order-Roll Call- Pledge of Allegiance:** Paula Woolley called the meeting to order at 5:30pm and upon call of the roll the following board members were present: Kunz, Woolley, Robinson and Nelson. Absent: Pass
2. **Comments by Visitors:** None
3. **Consent Calendar**
4. **Announcements:** Supt. Mosca stated that she has a conflict on the 15th and asked the board if they could move the meeting from the 15th to the 14th. The meeting was moved to January 14th at 6:30 at RGS.
5. **Discussion Items:**
6. **Action Items**
7. **Financial Update:**
 - 7.1 **Budget:** Supt. Mosca stated that the last time they met the board asked us to take time to think about cuts to the current budget. She stated that she met with Kate and had some discussions. She stated that it was difficult because there are not a lot of extra things in this budget and any cuts that are made will have a direct impact on the kids and the building. She stated that they did a level one and a level two possible cuts. Lucas stated that at the last meeting she walked away with the feeling that the board felt that that we needed time to slow down and to be deliberate with the decisions going forward by looking at projections and data with a whole town view versus reactionary decisions. She stated that the need to be thoughtful moving forward and then being asked to look at the budget and make cuts in a hasty way which will have a dramatic effect on children and making cuts on positions she is feeling conflicted. She stated that you are saying slow down and be thoughtful but now come up with cuts in two weeks' time which has a direct impact on students is in direct conflict with what she thought she heard. Nelson stated that she agrees that the request was in the 11th hour. She stated that she has been saying for six months that she wants to keep education in Rollinsford and show that town that we are being thoughtful. She stated that this is only her second time through the budget process and she doesn't know it very well. She stated that it is a learning process and she asked for this to see what we could do if we had to do something immediately, we may have to look at some of these things. Lucas stated that her fear is that this is in isolation of the big picture and it could have long term impacts. Supt. Mosca stated that it was a difficult task to look at this because if we are slow and methodical and looking at the entire budget she is not sure that this is what we would end up with. Nelson asked if they do this exercise when you do the budget, she is not sure how things are done. Supt. Mosca stated that Marie did a budget presentation last spring on the steps in the budget process. Nelson stated that was on how you put the budget together this wasn't included. Supt. Mosca stated that Kate and I communicate and look at enrollment projections, instruction practices and the direction we are moving in. She stated that two years ago we came forward to increase literacy support with a part time literacy specialist. She stated that we came forward with a facilities

director. She stated that we looked at increasing the media specialist, the librarian and guidance counselor and most of that did not pass the first time we went forward. She stated that last year they all passed and we brought a budget in lower. She stated that we are being mindful of money and how it is spent and the importance of people over things. She stated that we constantly have conversations around can we eliminate. These are conversations we have prior to coming to the board and then the budget gets put together and brought to the board. Lucas stated that we have been bringing cuts to you from lines, we are being fiscally responsible. Supt. Mosca stated that on the sheet we handed out on the left side are the areas we have identified and the right side is the impact. Robinson stated that he appreciates what you did on a short notice. He stated that he missed the first few minutes of the discussion. Woolley stated that Kate explained how she interpreted what we asked her to do. Robinson stated that he appreciates the impact statement. He stated that one item that he wanted to see is the number of classes and class size. Lucas stated that in Kindergarten there are 19; first grade 21, and second grade 22, third grade 30, fourth grade 21, fifth grade 23, sixth grade 24. She stated that we have one kindergarten class, and three one/two, three/four and five/six. Robinson stated that in review of what we requested, was it looked at to reduce classes and what was your analysis. Lucas stated that we did look at it, for k-3 it is recommended that you have 13-17 students per teacher, as you approach 20-22 it would be a teacher and an aide and then over 24 you would need two certified teachers. She stated that next year if you did two one/two classes would be 20 kids per class, in three/four you couldn't do it and in five/six the class size is too small to accommodate that many kids as we are given waivers for size. Robinson stated that the physical space of the class is too small, that is a good point to communicate to the town. He asked how many classes currently have an aide. Lucas stated only kindergarten. Robinson stated that listed on the budget we have mainstream coaches listed and he asked a question and he doesn't have a clear answer on it, is each coach assigned to a single student. Lucas stated that one or sometimes two. Robinson asked what is that decided by. Supt. Mosca stated that it is decided by the IEP team. Robinson stated that it is based on interpretations and opinions as well. Supt. Mosca stated that it is based on test results and a variety of things. Robinson stated that if it is based on an IEP and a child moved in would we hire a coach to fit that role. Supt. Mosca stated yes and no. We have students who have an IEP who don't need one; if the needs are severe enough a mainstream coach would be hired but it also could be shared with another student. Robinson stated that if a student comes in assigned an IEP and a coach is required we could pull from our current coaches. How often do we evaluate the coaches and is it possible to pull coaches and is there time not spent with students. Supt. Mosca stated that it could mean that student needs part time assistance and the other part of the day may be with another student. Robinson stated that coaches are hourly and only come in when they are required. Supt. Mosca stated that they are hourly employees who work all day; they could be with one kid or multiple kids. She stated that IEP meetings happen 2-3 times per year where they evaluate the needs and testing occurs and adjustments can be made based on the IEP. Robinson asked if we hire them for a set amount of hours. Supt. Mosca stated that every coach has a full schedule

and if a child moves in we would have to hire but we also do the reverse if a child leaves we have to eliminate a position. Robinson asked what the requirements are for aides in Kindergarten. He stated that there are 19 students with a teacher and an aide and we as a board voted to bring kindergarten to full time, if we made it part time what is the requirement. Lucas stated that the aide doesn't do instruction planning, she supports Becky in implementation. She stated that she is hands on every day and does small groups. Robinson asked if there is a state requirement. Lucas stated it is the same recommendation K-3. Robinson stated that as a board we are looking for a budget for next year. He stated a potential cut would be the kindergarten aide; there is not much else we can cut without increasing class sizes. Kunz stated that a lot of this discussion on reducing the budget is a knee jerk reaction to folks on the budget committee who don't pay close attention to what we are doing and they don't see what we do all year long to get the bigger picture. He stated that if we are concerned about staffing we need to look at this year round, they can't come now. He stated that we have a meeting with the budget committee tomorrow. He stated that we are hyper sensitive to it now because there is a lot of talk about closing the school. He stated that in order to be the best stewards of our budget we need to look at this early so by the time we get to this point everything is done. He stated that rather than being reactive which is a mistake we can have a level headed discussion on what is important. He stated that we should have a workshop on how to do this in the future. Nelson stated that she supports tom on that, she stated that she appreciates the work that everyone put in. She stated that she would like to get a better sense of the process. She stated that as we think about the number of students and classes, we have one kindergarten, three one/two, three three/four and three five/six, why don't we have ten teachers and move the kids around as we need to. She stated that we are at a point where we may need another kindergarten teacher. She stated that maybe we need to look at adjusting staff in the classes so it is more equal across. She stated that she doesn't want to micromanage but it is our job to understand our process so we can ask good questions and know if the answers make sense. She stated that we are reacting to what we are hearing in town and we need to be focused on making sure we keep the school here in Rollinsford. Kunz stated that he got the impression from the budget committee that the budget coming in under what we did last year was by accident and there was no effort in that. He stated that we did a good job in our workshops and we did our due diligence and this year and this budget has to go in the books and we can look at changing our process in the future. Robinson stated that when we charged the administration to look at this it wasn't to change the budget it was to come back with answers to the questions we asked and now we have decent answers. He stated that education in Rollinsford is not cheap, it is an expensive bill and this year when we started the initial budget didn't have all the numbers in it and it was around a \$300,000 decrease and it has slowly worked itself down to a small decrease. He stated that he is not here to micromanage but we are here to guide. He stated that our town is saying that education is expensive and it is our job to look at decreasing costs and this budget does not do that. He stated that he is ready to make hard cuts to the budget before he is ready to look at tuitioning out. He stated that the level one cut is \$140,000 and

that would cut \$1000 per student if we do that, that is a substantial number. He stated that the cost per student to Marshwood and this gets narrower as you level budget. He stated that he didn't expect to get hammered in the town on the building renovations and the budget committee asked questions that he had no idea on. He stated that he would like to start the budget process in July and look at hard cuts for next year. D'Agostino stated that this was a transitional year and even if we start sooner we will still have different versions because there is information we don't receive that early. She stated that this is the first time we will be tuitioning kids to Marshwood. She stated that the first version of the budget there was a decrease of \$140,000 and the last one there is a reduction of \$160,000 due to the concrete numbers from Marshwood. She stated that we don't get our insurance rates until mid-November and it is very difficult to get concrete numbers until November.

Robinson stated that he appreciates what everyone does and the reasons to start in July is we want to have conversations on class size and aides in the class, we don't need to have all the concrete information we can have philosophical conversations. He stated that budget season is very short and so fast that they couldn't do anything and that is how he truly felt. He stated that he is new and experience may change that. He stated that he likes the presentation of the cuts that we were provided with the impacts; he stated that the impacts are small and he thinks that they are greater than written here and he will be looking for impact statements next year. He stated that those are the conversations that he expects to have in July, staff levels, class sizes. Kunz stated that if we do any of this we need to have a meeting as a board it is a lot of work to put together and we can't know what the questions are if we don't know what the questions are. He stated that if we need data we need to make sure that it is all set up front. He stated that we all need to think about it and bring to the table what we think is important. D'Agostino stated that we have a budget committee meeting tomorrow night and asked if we are going forward with what we have. Robinson stated we should stay the same course.

8. **New Business:**

8.1 Dick Fortier Facilities Presentation: Dick Fortier Facilities director gave a presentation. (See attached) He also handed out a six year plan for possible warrant articles using a \$200,000-400,000 warrant article figure. He stated that he met with Mark from Harvey to come up with these figures. Nelson thanked Dick and stated that he is making a big difference. She asked if we heat the building through the holiday. Fortier stated that we shut it down to 60 degrees and at 6pm it goes down to night mode. Robinson stated thank you this is exactly what he was looking for. He stated that we have this list and we should talk as a board. He stated that the budget committee tasked us to look at what we have to do all in one and now to do it in pieces and it is in our best interest to go forward with something. Nelson stated that Dick broke this out in a way that made most sense but we need to be careful we don't do something that has to be undone. She stated that the three phase power is something that has to be done. Fortier stated that he talked to PSNH and this is to get the power to the transformer we still have to run the pipe and we would supply the pad. Woolley stated that cost would be above and beyond. Robinson stated that he remembered that from the building committee it was around a half million dollar expense. Fortier stated that we need an electrical consultant to tell us what we

need. Nelson stated that it is important to bring in regardless of what this building is used for we are going to three phase power. Robinson stated that we are not going to have that information tonight. Maybe we could look at removing and brick up windows in the gym. Kunz asked if there is a chance to put the cupola off a couple of years. Fortier stated that we need to do some repairs but it needs more investigation. Kunz stated that the security camera is a great idea and asked if that would include monitors and wiring. Nelson stated that we can't do anything electrical until we have three phase power. Fortier stated that we don't have a lot of amps left. Nelson asked what the reasoning is behind bricking up the windows in the gym. Fortier stated that there is a lot of air coming in. Nelson stated that with the cupola we either need to do something or take it down. Lucas stated that there are differing opinions and it is not that simple and there is history attached so there are only certain things we can do. Nelson stated that she started conversations with Peter Michaud and there is money available for that type of restoration with a grant. D'Agostino stated that Dick did an excellent job but her concern is that these are rough numbers and if we put them on a warrant article people will expect that cost and unless we have concrete numbers we can't do a warrant article. Nelson stated that having Dick on board gives me more confidence and it is important to have a forum to keep working and it is an excellent approach to take a year and work as a board to figure out what we can do. Woolley stated that the last time we presented repairs to the cupola we had to fix the front steps. She stated that the cupola is like Pandora's Box because when you get up there you don't know what you will find. She stated that \$40,000 is a very conservative figure and it may not be enough. Supt. Mosca stated that it would be great to explore grant money and we could use this money somewhere else. Nelson stated that as we look at changing the budget process next year we should not go forward with any board warrant articles and take this year to regroup. D'Agostino stated that she would suggest if there is money left at the end of the year in the fund balance that you replenish the facility trust fund because it has only approximately \$53,000 in it today and that will not increase the tax rate. Supt. Mosca stated she would recommend the special education fund as well. Nelson stated that she would put the special education one first and the facilities second and up to \$50,000 in each one. She stated that it is a transitional year next year and she hopes that no petition warrant articles push us into something and she hopes people will give us a year. D'Agostino stated that she needs to set up the warrant articles so she will list the elected officials first, the operating budget second, the negotiated contract third and then the warrant articles for special education and facilities trust fund. She asked what dollar amount. Robinson stated that he would like to see 50% of the fund balance for special education and 50% for facilities. D'Agostino stated that those would be fourth and fifth and then any petition warrant articles and those need to be turned in by January 13th. Nelson asked if we will be able to project the three year collective bargaining agreement. D'Agostino stated that it will show based on the negotiations and it shows the savings. Supt. Mosca stated that we can't project year to year because it could change. D'Agostino stated that it is based on today's figures. Nelson stated that it would help to show the savings. Lucas stated that you can talk about it in the presentation. D'Agostino stated that one of the pieces that was negotiated was an increase to the buyback and there may be a savings there but it is unknown. A motion made by Kunz seconded by Nelson to go forward with version three of the 2015-2016

budget. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously. A motion made by Kunz seconded by Nelson to draft warrant articles for 50% of the fund balance to be placed in the special education trust fund and 50% of the fund balance to be placed in the facilities trust fund. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously.

9. Old Business

9.1 **Transition Update:** None

9.2 **Building Committee-Judy:** Nelson stated that they decided not to bond and there will be no warrant articles to raise money.

10. Future Meeting Dates/Suggested Agenda Items:

- January 13 2015- Somersworth School Board Meeting
- January 15 2015- Rollinsford School Board Meeting
- January 27 2015- Somersworth School Board Meeting

11. Closing Comments:

11.1 **Visitors:** Lori Hess stated that the play at RGS is on Friday at 7 and Saturday at 2 and 7.

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 7:00pm.

Katie Krauss
Board Secretary

Pending Board Approval