

WARRANT ARTICLES
Rollinsford School District
County of Strafford
State of New Hampshire

Meeting began without Supervisors of the Checklist

(Supervisors of the Checklist arrived with ballot box at 9:20)

Joe Couette- Moderator, began meeting with Pledge of Allegiance and rules and regulations for debate:

No repetitious remarks

No personalities involved

Democratic process

To the inhabitants of the Rollinsford School District qualified to vote in district affairs.

You are hereby notified to meet on Saturday January 31, 2015, at 9:00 AM at the Rollinsford Grade School in Rollinsford, New Hampshire, for the first session of the Annual School District Meeting to hear explanation, discuss and debate the subjects in said Warrant. Articles 05-08 may be amended subject to the following limitations:

- (a) Warrant articles whose wording is prescribed by law shall not be amended.
- (b) Warrant articles that are amended at the January 31st session shall be placed on the official ballot for a final vote on the main motion, as amended.
- (c) No warrant article shall be amended to eliminate the subject matter of the article.

You are also hereby notified to meet again on Tuesday, March 10, 2015 for the second session of the Annual School District Meeting to vote by official ballot to elect officers, to vote questions required by law to be inserted on said official ballot, and to vote on all warrant articles from the first session. Polling hours for the March 10, 2015 sessions are 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM at the Rollinsford Town Hall.

Article 01: To choose by ballot a School District Moderator to be elected to serve for one (1) year.

Article 02: To choose by ballot a School District Clerk to be elected to serve for one (1) year.

Article 03: To choose by ballot a School District Treasurer to be elected to serve for one (1) year.

Article 04: To choose by ballot two (2) members of the School Board, to serve two (2) three (3) year term.

Article 05: To see if the Rollinsford School District will 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 of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$5,210,334 (five million, two hundred ten thousand, three hundred thirty-four dollars).

Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$5,208,334 (five million, two hundred eight thousand, three hundred thirty-four dollars) which is the same as last year, with certain

adjustments required by previous action of the Rollinsford School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with the RSA 40:13, X and XVI to take up the issue of the revised operating budget only.

Budget Committee and School Board Recommend *accepted as read and seconded*

Discussion:

Mr. Cassell: *Is this the actual cost for school budget? I do not calculate those figures. Is the budget high enough? The last page of the budget projects 110 student. That is not my calculation.*

Judith Nelson: *The budget can be confusing. We had to zero out some lines due to the Area Agreement; tuition to Somersworth, Marshwood Middle and High School will not be in next year's budget. The actual number of students is on page 6 of the budget.*

Kim St. Hillaire: *What is the cost of the SAU, transportation and Special Ed for this year, 14/15?*

Marie D'Agostino: *please look at page 5 of 8 and follow lines for the actual last known year.*

Peggy McClendon: *I would like clarification on ESOL and Speech Therapy.*

Jeni Mosca: *ESOL is English spoken as other language. There are many families who speak English as a second language in their homes. This service helps the student to be able to maintain this. Speech therapy is a service for those students needing speech therapy based on their IEP (individual education plan)*

JN: *These services are federally mandated. These services are not unique to RGS.*

Lucy Putnam: *As far as moving RGS students to Marshwood; are there ways to reduce costs to keep it viable based on numbers? There are other small schools making the hard decisions about class sizes, etc. In early 2000's there were 200 students at RGS. We have a lot less now. Can we bring grades 7 & 8 back to RGS? I love this school and there are a lot of others who also love this school.*

Joe: *I would like to defer to the attorney as to whether we can reduce figures.*

Legal: *You can make a change to figures by amending but not the contract.*

Legal: *no motion to amend- that discussion is further on in the articles*

June Gowen: *agrees with Lucy Putnam. It is time to change the class sizes if most of them average 15 students. This is equivalent to a private school class sizes.*

Joe: *There is not a motion to accept. Nathaniel Leach and Denise Knowles made motions to accept the article.*

Bill Hassett: *Someone called RGS a boutique School. We have well paid staff. Are the kids coming out of RGS doing well? Are we making annual progress in testing?*

Joe: *Before I ask the board, I will make a comment that several students from Rollinsford do well in getting scholarships*

Tia Pass: *Article 5, the budget, is the total to educate all of the students in Rollinsford, grades k-12, including Special Ed, transportation, tuition, staffing, etc.*

Jeni Mosca to answer Bill Hassett's question: *In regards to test scores, from a superintendent's standpoint, you could not ask for more dedicated, passionate, qualified teachers and staff at RGS. Test scores from RGS students are one piece of the bigger puzzle are in the high 80 %. You have a principal who is dedicated in educating the whole child and the staff supports her wholeheartedly. Hands down, you can put RGS against any school in this state, any other state and across the nation. (clapping)*

Bill Hassett: *to follow up....that is what I expected to hear.*

Issue with microphone

Chris Reishus: *According to the purple sheet that was on all of your seats, in 2014 RGS ranked 31st in the state of NH for test scores, out of over 227 schools. There is a website called*

schooldigger.com to look to see where RGS stands in the state. We rose from 39% to 31%. That is a fact. They are doing the best job ever.

Chris Merrill: was there a comparison between us and Marshwood schools?

Chris Reishus: No, this was only for NH. Testing for grades 3 and 4. Marshwood uses different testing so we could not compare. Schooldigger.com will also show Maine schools.

June Gowen: No one here is questioning quality of education at RGS. How can we afford to continue to educate our children with these costs? My taxes have doubled, etc. We cannot continue to provide our students with a private education which is what we are doing.

Kim St. Hillaire: Are there any cost cutting measures being looked at?

Judith Nelson: There are a lot of steps involved in cutting costs - Renovations to RGS are now off of the table, as the townspeople and budget committee very clearly stated. The School Board will be speaking with experts and considering all sorts of things in the upcoming year. The board's main job is to ensure the education of all students up to state standards. All costs have gone up. We have our work cut out for us but we need the help of the community to make that happen. We must separate fact from wishful thinking. We are not the only community in which costs have gone up. Funding has gone down.

Clapping.

Susan Janetos: I have had my house on the market at less than what I paid for it because of the high taxes. Only two people looked at it. Why are student numbers declining? Because people cannot afford to live here. As far as I am concerned, we are getting zero for our tax money.

Unidentified women: It is a slap in the face that teachers are getting a 3% raise. Has no one looked at consolidating classes. A three-year contract does not seem to be the way to go.

People are worried about their jobs. (Out of order- discussing article 5, contract is article 6)

Nathaniel Leach: We are all concerned with spending more money, etc.. My comment/question is, there are monthly school board and budget committee meetings in which there is an opportunity for residents to speak during public forum, correct?

Yes

NL: I have not seen this many people at a town meeting before and I just want to reiterate to townspeople that there are monthly meetings where people can discuss ways to address the issues. It is more pro-active to handle issues that way than at an annual town meeting.

Karen Arnault: Is there any way in which we can have someone from the RGS negotiating team address the questions/comments that were brought up concerning the contract?

Judith Nelson: That will be discussed when we get to that article (6). Right now we are discussing Article 5.

Carlton Spencer: I have been on the budget committee, etc. School board is protecting teachers and school is a hell hole. Teachers have been taken care of and taken care of and taken care of. It took me years to get them out of a two year contract and now they are trying to sneak in a 3 year contract. (Very loud and belligerently) outrageous. They should not be telling you that they cannot pull it back. We have created a private school with small numbers of classroom sizes. I went to a class where there were 42 and we did well. So this is bull. We need to get up to 25 students and get rid of some teachers. Three teachers retired last year. You know what they did...? Secretly they hired three more. Nervous laughter. We need to think about it and think about it seriously.

Judith Nelson: I would like to point out that all of our work is done in public. We are not allowed to have non-public meetings. Everyone is invited to meetings. Please come to meetings so that you can hear the facts. I do not have agreements with me but there are a few things I would like to point out: The salary increases for the teachers will look a little like a salary increase for teachers in year one. It is for STEPS only and not a salary increase in year one. It

may have been mis-stated about the steps but they are not \$5000 each. They are between \$2000 and \$2500. The budget will determine that if you look at it. In the second year there is a raise and also in the third year. In exchange for that, the teachers have given back on health benefits in the sense that they will give back on their doctor's visits. That is a savings year after year. In the second year they will give back to what they are paying for their portion of the medical premium. That is also a savings that you will see year after year. I was on the negotiating committee and that is why I am addressing it. One of the things about the 3 year contract is an arc. The teachers agreed in the contract to put in a lower cost health-care option and until it gets voted in, we cannot start putting teachers on that lower cost option. In the 3rd year it becomes the base so that any new teacher(s) hired will be on that lower cost option. The town only has to pay the portion of the lower one.

(at this point, it is very difficult to hear, many side conversations going on)

I hope this helps answer the questions about contract. To add on to what Mr. Leach stated, we have an incredibly dedicated staff. The school is an excellent school and do we need to look into some changes, absolutely, but we will need the town to pull together. The school board will be spending the next year with the help of the town, the staff and others to see what we can do.

Verne Crosier: I just want it noted that all comments about the teacher's contract are out of order. We are still discussing Article 5, the operating budget. I would also ask, could you please stand up, come forward so that you can be heard. There is not much that you can do about the budget now. You either vote it in or you vote it down. So we need to just move on. Much applause.

Joe Couette: We are currently discussing only the budget. Otherwise I am going to move for a motion to curtail all discussion.

Lester Wall: I am new to all of this. Can an amendment be made to Article 5? If it passes or fails, we are talking about \$2000 between last year and this year. Are we just talking about it or can something be done about it?

Jahn Janetos: There is lots of talk about doing studies, etc. I would say just vote the budget down, study it, do the reductions, but we should not be hooked to a three year contract. If it is decided that we move our children, which in my opinion is a better education, we are stuck with a three year contract. Who pays that? Vote it down, go with last year. Who is going to honor that budget? Clapping.

Joe C: I have to go back to the gentleman who asked about making an amendment to the budget. I was in error. You can amend the budget.

Alan Robinson, School Board member: the budget is one article, the teacher's contract is another article. If we pass the budget, it doesn't mean we pass the teacher's contract.

Joe Couette: I think we are ready for a vote

All in favor of accepting the budget signify by saying aye.

Asked again. Lots of side conversations

It seems as though the "no's" had it but it will still go on the ballot as written because it was not amended.

Unknown: Can we make a motion to go to secret ballot - no, we have already voted.

Michael Elwell, attorney: just so you all understand how this works, once an article has been posted under SB2, they all go onto the ballot that you will vote on in March. You are not voting to pass the budget today. You can only amend. The budget will go on the ballot on March 10. The moderator asked if you were finished discussing. No vote means we still talk about it.

JC: The vote was to curtail the debate but was defeated.

Nancy Dionne: Now is the time to make any amendments if you would like to.

Clem Michaud: *How much money would we have saved if we had not hired three new teachers?*

Judy Nelson: *We have not had a decrease in 50 students. We have had a decrease in about 20 students. Enrollment numbers are up to 16 and counting. I am not willing to speculate on how much we would have saved if we had not hired new teachers. I can tell you that we did not hire teachers at the same level. We have saved money based on the salary costs of new, younger teachers as you can see across the budget. The teachers that left were at the higher end of the scale. We hired teachers lower on the steps. Those are things we will be looking at as we move forward.*

John Bradshaw: *I would like to inquire about the class sizes and the maximum per teacher, etc. Where are we in those maximums? Could we reduce the staff by four teachers?*

Alan Robinson: *We started talking about this currently as I am the one who asked the question. The requirement per class size is 22 maximum and there is a waiver process.*

Jeni Mosca: *Our class sizes are 660 square foot. The law is 990 square feet minimum per class size. Things are different today with technology, etc. We may need more waivers. We are looking at it.*

Lucy Putnam: *I want to clarify from earlier in the spirit of saving RGS that times have changed.*

Unknown: *Special Education costs have sharply risen. Why are spec ed costs so high?*

Judy: *We are still in the area agreement and currently our special ed costs are built in to the cost of tuition. It is broken out in the budget. As we enter into a straight tuition contract with SHS and Marshwood, it will be the first year that the costs will not be built in in over 50 years. These costs are estimated and we hope that they have been estimated well. The cost to Marshwood includes base tuition and special ed costs are difficult to estimate based on the number and services of students. We must protect the privacy of students so we are not allowed to talk about specifics. It only looks like costs have drastically risen when they have not.*

Emily Leach made a motion to move the question

Michelle Small seconded the motion

JC: *the vote is to terminate the debate.*

JC: *No amendments made. We are not voting on the budget. We are voting to move on to next article. A yes vote will accept the article 5 to put on the ballot in March.*

Micheal Elwell: *The vote is to terminate debate. If you vote no, we will keep discussing article 5.*

Greg Walker: *can we still make an amendment?*

Kim St. Hillaire: *I would like to make a motion...*

JC: *you cannot make a motion to amend. There is already a motion on the floor.*

Vote taken. Ayes have it

Article 06: To see if the Rollinsford School District will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Rollinsford School Board and Rollinsford Education Association, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits and a decrease in health insurance at the current staffing levels

	Increase		Less:	Total Increase
	Salary Increase	FICA & Retirement	Health Insurance Savings	
Year 2015-2016				
Teachers	19,572	4,018	-1,695	21,895
Paraprofessionals	93	2,380	0	2,473
Total	19,665	6,398	-1,695	24,368

	Increase		Less:	Total Increase
	Salary Increase	FICA & Retirement	Health Insurance Savings	
Year 2016-2017				
Teachers	27,631	7,617	-1,930	33,318
Paraprofessionals	7,617	1,207	0	8,824
Total	35,248	8,824	-1,930	42,142

	Increase		Less:	Total Increase
	Salary Increase	FICA & Retirement	Health Insurance Savings	
Year 2017-2018				
Teachers	34,986	7,189	-3,859	38,316
Paraprofessionals	7,623	1,208	0	8,831
Total	42,609	8,397	-3,859	47,147

and furthermore, to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty four thousand three hundred sixty eight dollars (\$24,368) for the 2015-2016 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 current staffing levels paid in the prior fiscal year.

Budget Committee and School Board Recommend

Denise Knowles: motion to accept as read, Seconded by Michelle Small

Shelly Levy: What % does the town currently pay of teacher's medical insurance:

Judy Nelson: 92.5% of single staff member, 87.5% of family, year one of proposed contract.

Yr 2- 92% single, 87 % family

Yr 3- 91.0%, single, 86% family

Jim Jalbert: The contract will be voted on. The real issue is whether to pass it or not pass it. If we pass it, it is a three year liability. Vote down the article and they go back to the table and we don't get locked in to a three year contract. We have no fairy dust to change the costs. We need to vote it down.

Carlton Spencer: I want to make a motion that we go with a one year contract.

JC: There was a change to the law made about a year and a half ago that states that we cannot make amendments to teacher contracts. We have to vote it down.

Jahn Janetos: If we cannot amend it, the only thing we can do is vote it down in March.

Kim St. Hillaire: What is the tax impact for the 3 year contract:

Judy Nelson: first year- 10 cents per thousand and total for all three years - 50 cents per thousand.

Emily Leach: If the contract is voted on and passed, are we locked in to a three year contract:
Alan Robinson: It takes time to transition if that choice is made. It could take years with negotiations, etc. The contract does save money over the three years. It is long term savings.
JC: Do we have a motion to accept as written:

Michelle Small made a motion to accept as written, Jahn Janetos seconded
Vote taken
Ayes have it.

Article 07: To see if the Rollinsford School District will raise and appropriate one-half (1/2) 50% of any June 30, 2015, undesignated fund balance (SURPLUS) up to a maximum of two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) to be placed in the Capital reserve fund for the purpose of education of educationally disabled children for transfer on July 1st.

Budget Committee and School Board Recommend

Motion to accept as written by Michelle Small, seconded by Nancy Dionne.

Nancy Dionne: What happens to surplus money? Does it revert back to the town?

Judy Nelson: A la carte Special Ed costs stays in the trust fund.

ND: The same trust as before?

JN: yes, same trust

Marie D'Agostino: There were two warrant articles last year: \$50 thousand dollars went into Special Ed account and \$50 thousand dollars went into the building fund. Those were one-time appropriations. That money stays in the trust.

Frank Rosselli: How much money is currently in the trust:

MD: over \$100 thousand dollars in Special Ed fund and \$53 thousand dollars in building fund.

Lucy Putnam: Is this a new fund?

JN: no, this has been around for years. It does not affect taxes. Surplus money will go into fund. It is helpful to have the trust fund so that we do not have surprises.

Michelle Small: Both of these articles (8 & 9) will help to keep taxes down.

Ed Jansen made a motion to curtail debate. Seconded by Verne Crosier

Voted

Ayes have it

Article 08: To see if the Rollinsford School District will raise and appropriate one-half (1/2) 50% of any June 30, 2015, undesignated fund balance (SURPLUS) up to a maximum of two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) to be placed in the Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of Rollinsford school building improvement for transfer on July 1st.

Budget Committee and School Board Recommend

Motion to accept as read Nancy Dionne, seconded by Michelle Small

No discussion

Vote

Ayes have it

Article 09: By Petition: Shall we rescind the provisions of RSA 40:13 (known as SB2), as adopted by the Rollinsford School District on March, 2009, so that the official ballot will no longer be used for voting on all questions, but only for the election of officers and certain other questions for which the official ballot is required by law? A 3/5 majority required for passage.

Motion to accept as written by Bill Irving, seconded by Larry Larkin

Jahn Janetos: Vote no on this article

Carlton Spencer: *it was my idea to initiate SB2 because it gives people the right to vote. Those that cannot get out to a town meeting or are afraid to speak.*

Judy Nelson: *This was done by petition. School Board will hold public hearing on 2/19/15 at 6 pm. It is a public hearing.*

Mike Rhodes: *is there any way to remove this article from the ballot:*

JC: *No*

MR: *We need this article to be voted down so that we can maintain the democratic process.*

Clem Michaud: *Who permitted this petition and article? Why is there another meeting on 2/19?*

JC: *by law according to SB2 there must be a second deliberative session.*

Danielle Phipps: *Why does the town portion of the budget not go to ballot?*

JC: *it is voted on at town meeting. SB2 only accounts for school.*

Paula Woolley: *I would like to thank all who were involved in moving this meeting to the American Legion.*

Sonny Foss: *Why do we have to have the second meeting?*

Michael Elwell: *As per RSA SB2, it is to provide information and give residents opportunity to ask more questions.*

Andrea Cass: *What does voting down SB2 mean?*

JC: *It would mean that we would go back to town meeting forum. No ballot. A secret ballot vote could be used during town meetings if a motion were made.*

Motion to vote

Vote

Ayes have it.

Article 10: By Petition: To see if the District will vote to authorize the School Board to enter into a six-year tuition agreement with MSAD35 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..

Ed Jansen: *there is not enough information to respond to this article*

Bill Hassett: *Can we amend the language? I would like to make a motion to amend the language by adding in the first sentence to "formally investigate" entering into a six year tuition agreement.*

Lester Wall: *Can we take out the line about a six year agreement?*

Bill Irving made a motion, Nathaniel Leach seconded

Bob Brown: *sending our kids out of district to maine would cut into after school activities due to transportation times. It is a bad idea.*

Kim St. Hillaire: *changing this article does nothing*

Tom Kunz: *things to consider, closing this school means that it will not reopen. We must keep education in this town. Property values will drop. New residents will not come.*

John Fortier: *Can you comment on Dr. Nash' letter that was sent out in August?*

JN: *We will do research further to get factual information from the MSAD 35.*

Ernie Osborne: *How long until we get actual figures?*

They are on a different budget schedule and start later. We will provide information as we get it. On Dec. 15, 2014 we had a meeting to bring the town up to date on the cost of renovating RGS.

John Bradshaw: *The impact of closing RGS will be huge. We are looking at very linear numbers but not at the impact of our children. We need to choose solutions by working together.*

Michael Elwell: we need to vote on amendments made to this article.

Amendment #1: to add the following language. By Petition: to see if the district will vote to authorize the School Board to formally investigate entering into a six-year tuition agreement with MSAD 35. (The rest remains the same)

Amendment #2: to remove "six-year" from the article.

Clerk read the amended article (as seen below) as requested by moderator and Mr. Elwell.

Vote taken combining both amendments.

Ayes have it.

Article 10 now reads:

Article 10: by Petition: to see if the district will vote to authorize the school board to formally investigate entering into a tuition agreement with MSAD35 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.

Article 11: To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

Sally Putnam: thanks to the school board for all of their hard work in staying neutral during this budget season and preparing all of this information.

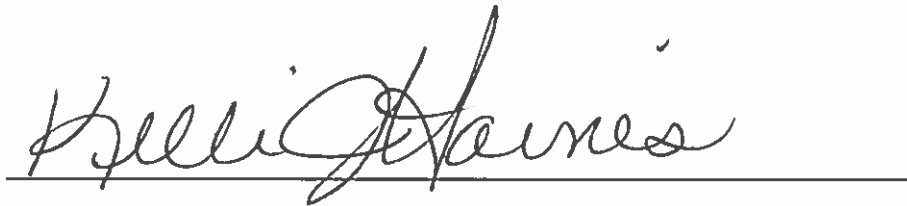
Sandy Early: is there a law about publishing info such as what is on our chairs today.

JC: freedom of speech states that it is legal

Meeting adjourned at 11:40

Prepared by Kelli Haines, School District Clerk

2/6/15



A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Kelli Haines", is written over a horizontal line.