

**LINCOLN-WOODSTOCK
COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
Annual School District Meeting Minutes
March 21, 2023**

The Annual Meeting of the Lincoln-Woodstock Cooperative School District was held Tuesday, March 21, 2023, at Lin-Wood Public School in the Middle/High School multi-purpose room and gymnasium. The Moderator, Robert Wetherell presented the ballot box, confirmed with the School District Clerk, Ballot Clerks, and Supervisors of the Checklist in the room that the ballot box was empty, stated that absentee ballots would be announced as early as 4:00 PM, and declared the polls open at 2:00 PM.

The Ballot Clerks were:

For the Town of Lincoln:

- Kristyn Daigle-Brophy
- Jennifer Franz

For the Town of Woodstock:

- Cheryl Bourassa
- Maureen Polimeno

The Supervisors of the Checklist were:

For the Town of Lincoln:

- Janet Peltier
- Patti Jo Ouellette

For the Town of Woodstock:

- Barbara Avery
- Helen Jones
- Faith Desjardins

At 6:01 p.m. Moderator Robert Wetherell declared the polls closed.

The Moderator called the business portion of the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Approximately 80 people were in attendance.

Moderator, Robert Wetherell welcomed attendees: “Good evening, I call the annual meeting to order. Thank you for joining your school district annual meeting. I am glad you appreciate the importance of this meeting and being the decision makers. I encourage you to ask questions and make comments. Thank you to the facilities department for setting up.”

The Moderator lead the meeting attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance

Moderator, Robert Wetherell presented the moderator’s rules for the meeting: “All cell phones should be turned to silent. Each participant will treat every other participant with respect and courtesy. The moderator will not allow personal attacks or inappropriate language. Anyone wishing to address the meeting will use the microphone and first be recognized by the moderator. Speakers will begin by stating their name. All other speakers will be considered out of order. I will allow non-voters to speak, however please identify yourself as a non-voter. While allowed to speak, you are forbidden from voting. The initial presentations on articles will be limited to ten minutes, all speakers in debate will be limited to three minutes (including a warning at one minute remaining). Time to be determined by the moderator. All new speakers who desire to speak will be

given a chance to do so before one is given a second opportunity on the same issue. Each Article needs a motion and a second in order to discuss it. Only one amendment to a motion will be allowed on the floor at any one time. No amendment to an amendment will be allowed; such proposals will be dealt with as subsequent amendments after the first amendment has been voted upon. All amendments will be submitted in writing to the moderator. The subject of the original article must be addressed in the amendment and it cannot be a negative amendment. The moderator can be overruled by a majority of the meeting. State statutes do govern legal procedures not listed here.”

The Moderator announced the following results of the afternoon voting:
Number of ballots cast: **154**

Article 01: To choose, by non-partisan ballot, a moderator for the ensuing year.

Robert Wetherell **150 (elected)**

Article 02: To choose, by non-partisan ballot, three members of the School Board for a three-year term ending in 2026.

Tamra A. Ham	118 (elected)
Paul H. Schirduan	29 (not elected)
Jasmine Weeden	127 (elected)
Casey Caulder	143 (elected)
Kelsee Beaudin	1 (not elected)
Zach Vigneault	1 (not elected)
Darlana Clark	1 (not elected)
Carol Smith	1 (not elected)

Moderator, Robert Wetherell explained: “We have one bond article tonight. We will discuss and vote on it. Bond articles require 3/5th in favor in order to pass. They also require one hour for voting. Once it appears most everyone has voted on article three, we will reconvene the meeting and move on to article four while voting is still open.”

Article 03: Shall the District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,362,712 for the design, renovation and replacement of the MHS HVAC systems and to authorize the issuance of four hundred thirty thousand dollars (\$430,000) of bonds or notes under and in compliance with the Municipal Finance Act, RSA 33:1 *et seq* as amended; to authorize the School Board to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver said bonds and notes and determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; with the remaining balance of \$932,712 to come from the following sources:

1. \$535,564 from a federal ESSER Grant,
2. \$150,000 to come from the year end fund balance on June 30, 2023 available for transfer on July 1 and not from additional taxation,
3. \$100,000 from the School Facilities Expendable Trust Fund established in 1999, which the School board has been appointed agents to expend, and
4. \$147,148 to come from general taxation;

and further to authorize the School Board to apply for, obtain and accept federal, state, or other aid, if any, which may be available for said project, and to comply with all laws applicable to said project and to authorize the School Board to take any other action, or to pass any other vote relative thereto; and to raise and appropriate the additional sum of ten thousand six hundred three dollars

(\$10,603) for the first year's interest payment thereon? The School Board recommends this appropriation. (3/5/ballot vote required)

Tamra Ham made a motion, seconded by Jay Duguay, to accept Article 3.

Discussion: The Moderator recognized School Board member, Brian Angelone: Brian Angelone mentioned the Elementary School HVAC system was renovated this past summer. Renovation of the Middle/High School (MHS) HVAC system has been under discussion for the past 7-8 years. Although the Elementary School is newer, the decision was made to renovate the Elementary HVAC system first due to a piping issue. The MHS boiler and much of its HVAC system has been in use for sixty years, original to the 1963 construction, although there have been some upgrades done to the system over the years and the system has been maintained. The current HVAC system is pneumatic and it is becoming increasingly more difficult to find parts to continue to maintain the system. The renovations and replacement plans for the MHS HVAC project would digitize the system, increase efficiency, and improve the air quality within the building. Additionally, the MHS system would link with the updated Elementary system, allowing both to be monitored and controlled by staff remotely.

The Moderator recognized District Financial Manager, Debbie O'Connor: Debbie O'Connor noted Article 3 references a number of funding sources for the MHS HVAC project. \$535,564 from a COVID related Federal ESSER grant which will have no tax impact, \$150,000 from the year-end fund balance on June 30, 2023 which will have no tax impact and \$100,000 from the Facilities Trust Fund which will have no tax impact. Additionally, each year the Board generally places one or more articles on the Warrant for facilities projects totaling around \$150,000. This year, the Board decided to set-aside other facilities projects in order to utilize those funds for the MHS HVAC project while staying consistent with past facilities spending. This results in \$147,148 for the project coming from general taxation. The remaining portion of the project, \$430,000 will be through a Bond. Therefore, the tax impact for the full project will be the \$147,148 plus the Bond. The District has received \$300,000 in grants for other facilities projects including windows and doors. The Board is doing a great job finding other funding sources that do not affect taxation.

The Moderator recessed the meeting at 7:13 PM to conduct a secret ballot vote on Article 3 noting the polls would remain open until at least 8:13 PM.

The Moderator reconvened the meeting, calling the meeting back to order at 7:22 PM.

Article 04: To hear all reports of Agents, Auditors, Committees or Officers chosen, and pass any vote relating thereto.

Tamra Ham made a motion, seconded by Jay Duguay, to approve all reports as written.

Discussion: None.

The Moderator called for a voice vote to approve all reports as written. Motion passed by a unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Article 05: To see if the District will set the salaries of the School Board at \$1,000, the Vice Chairperson at \$1,250, the Chairperson at \$1,500, the Board Negotiation Team at \$150 per day, the Moderator at \$90 per meeting, the School District Clerk at \$250 per meeting, the Ballot Clerks at \$80 per meeting, the Supervisors of the Checklist at \$90 per meeting, and the School District Treasurer at \$4,180 per year. The money for this article is included in Article 6.

Jay Duguay made a motion, seconded by Brian Angelone, to approve Article 5 as written.

Discussion: None.

The Moderator called for a voice vote to approve Article 5 as written. Motion passed by a unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Article 06: To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the School Board's recommended amount of eight million eight hundred twenty-nine thousand four hundred ninety dollars (\$8,829,490) for the support of schools; for the salaries of school district officials, employees and agents, and for the payment of statutory obligations of the District, and to authorize the application against said appropriation such sums as are estimated to be received from state aid, together with other income; the School Board to certify to the Selectmen of each of the Towns of Lincoln and Woodstock, respectively, the balance to be raised by taxes by the Towns of Lincoln and Woodstock in accordance with the formula adopted by the Lincoln-Woodstock Cooperative School District; and the School Board further to certify to the Selectmen of each of the Towns of Lincoln and Woodstock the amount to be raised by taxation by each of said two towns. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. (Majority vote required)

Jay Duguay made a motion, seconded by Tamra Ham to approve Article 6 as written.

Discussion: The Moderator recognized School Board Chair, Jay Duguay: Jay Duguay mentioned this is the second year the budget has been crafted solely by the School Board with collaboration from the Administration, School departments, and teachers. 78% of the budget relates to salary and benefits. The budget supports 42 teachers, 24 support staff, and 6 administrators and approximately 270 students. The Board did its best to create a budget that responsibly balances tax payer dollars with providing a quality education for the District's students in a year of high inflation. The budget brought forward notes a moderate 1.3% increase over the current year's budget excluding the collective bargaining agreement to be voted on separately.

The Moderator recognized community member, Helen Jones: Helen Jones asked about the current student population of the school and about predicted future student population?

The Moderator recognized School Board member, Tamra Ham. Tamra Ham answered there are currently approximately 270 student in the school which is up from last year's number of 265 students. In general, the student population has trended down by one or two students each year for the last few years. Unfortunately, future student population is unpredictable. There were two births noted in the Lincoln Town Report this year.

The Moderator recognized community member, John Kimball: John Kimball asked for clarification between the number of staff members Mr. Duguay mentioned, 42 teachers, 24 support staff, and 6 administrators which totals 72 compared to the 80 staff members included in the list of wages section of the Annual Report?

The Moderator recognized District Financial Manager, Debbie O'Connor: Debbie O'Connor answered the budgeted staffing levels are based on the current staffing levels which are as Mr. Duguay mentioned, 42 teachers, 24 support staff, and 6 administrators. The staffing and wages mentioned in the Annual Report are from last year (2021-2022) additionally, staff members may have left during the year and been replaced by a different person, therefore two people may be included in the wages list for one position.

The Moderator recognized community member, John Kimball: John Kimball noted the Resource Officer position was passed by the Town of Lincoln voters and inquired if the expense for the Resources Officer was included in the School District budget?

The Moderator recognized School Board Chair, Jay Duguay: Jay Duguay noted \$18,000 is included in the budget for the first year of the Resource Officer position. With the grant received by the Lincoln Police Department for the Resource Officer, the District and Town are required to cover 25% of the position the first year, 50% the second year, 75% the third year, and a fourth year at the full expense. Therefore, the expense included in the District's budget for the Resource Officer position will increase each year.

The Moderator called for a voice vote to approve Article 6 as written. Motion passed by a unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Article 07: To see if the School District will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Lincoln-Woodstock Cooperative School Board and Lin-Wood Education Association/NEA-New Hampshire which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits over those paid in the prior fiscal year:

YEAR	ESTIMATED INCREASE
2023-2024	\$183,413
2024-2025	\$110,298

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred eighty-three thousand four hundred thirteen dollars (\$183,413) for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional cost attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those that would be paid at current staffing levels in accordance with the most recent collective bargaining agreement. The School Board recommends this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

Tamra Ham made a motion, seconded by Jasmine Weeden to approve Article 7 as written.

Discussion: The Moderator recognized School Board member, Tamra Ham: Tamra Ham noted the negotiation team made up of Board members, administrators, and representatives from the Lin-Wood Education Association held a number of meetings. The meetings were respectable and cooperative and an agreement was reached that was believed to be fair for all parties. The agreement increases a starting BA teacher to \$40,000 and includes a 5.6% salary increase the first year and 3% the second year.

The Moderator recognized community member, Helen Jones: Helen Jones mentioned the 5.6% salary increase and asked if there was also an increase relating to benefits?

The Moderator recognized School Board member, Tamra Ham. Tamra Ham answered the benefits, such as insurance, remain the same.

The Moderator called for a voice vote to approve Article 6 as written. Motion passed by a unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Article 08: Shall the District, if Article 7 is defeated, authorize the Lincoln-Woodstock Cooperative School Board to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article 7 cost items only? (Majority vote required)

Jay Duguay made a motion, seconded by Tamra Ham to table Article 8.

Discussion: Moderator, Robert Wetherell explained as Article 7 passed, Article 8 is unnecessary. Laying Article 8 on the table means the Article is removed from discussion and will not be voted upon.

The Moderator called for a voice vote to table Article 8. Motion passed by a unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Article 09: To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of sixty-thousand dollars (\$60,000) to be added to the Special Education Capital Reserve Fund. This sum represents the amount estimated to be received from state Special Education Aid from the prior year expenditures. The School Board recommends this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

Tamra Ham made a motion, seconded by Jay Duguay to approve Article 9 as written.

Discussion: The Moderator recognized School Board Chair, Jay Duguay. Jay Duguay noted Article 9 moves monies received through State Special Education aid into the Special Education Capital Reserve Fund. Articles 10 through 12 are relating to the Trust Funds and are Articles that generally appear on the Warrant. These Articles allow for monies from the unassigned fund balance to be placed in the District's expendable Trust accounts.

The Moderator called for a voice vote to approve Article 9 as written. Motion passed by a unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Article 10: To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate sixty percent (60%) up to the amount of sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000) to be placed in the School Facilities Expendable Trust Fund, with said funds to come from the June 30, 2023, unassigned fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2023. The School Board recommends this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

Tamra Ham made a motion, seconded by Jay Duguay to approve Article 10 as written.

Discussion: None.

The Moderator called for a voice vote to approve Article 10 as written. Motion passed by a unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Article 11: To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate thirty percent (30%) up to the amount of thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000) to be placed in the School Technology Expendable Trust Fund, with said funds to come from the June 30, 2023, unassigned fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2023. The School Board recommends this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

Tamra Ham made a motion, seconded by Jay Duguay to approve Article 11 as written.

Discussion: None.

The Moderator called for a voice vote to approve Article 11 as written. Motion passed by a unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Article 12: To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate ten percent (10%) up to the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) to be placed in the School Equipment Expendable Trust Fund, with said funds to come from the June 30, 2023, unassigned fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2023. The School Board recommends this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

Tamra Ham made a motion, seconded by Jay Duguay to approve Article 12 as written.

Discussion: None.

The Moderator called for a voice vote to approve Article 12 as written. Motion passed by a unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Article 13: To see if the District will adopt the revisions to RSA 198:4-b, II enacted in 2020, which allows the District to retain up to 5% of the District's net assessment in any year, allows the expenditure of any amount retained after the School Board first holds a public hearing, and further requires the School Board to include a report on the retained fund balance in its annual report to the District? (Majority vote required)

Tamra Ham made a motion, seconded by Jay Duguay to approve Article 13 as written.

Discussion: The Moderator recognized School Board Chair, Jay Duguay: Jay Duguay noted Article 13 is a housekeeping Article to bring the District in-line with current statute. In 2013 the District voted in the then current statute allowing 2.5% retention. The statute now allows for 5% retention of the District's net assessment and allows for the use of funds after a public hearing such as is currently done for Trust fund expenditures. In comparison to the 5% retention now allowed for School Districts, the State encourages Towns to retain 8-18%.

The Moderator recognized Community Member, Brian Gallagher. Brian Gallagher asked what the value of the 5% might look like in terms of retention?

The Moderator recognized District Financial Manager, Debbie O'Connor. Debbie O'Connor answered the retention whether 2.5% or 5% is based on the net assessment which is the budget less any other revenues received such as the funds received through grants. This year at the 2.5% retention rate, the District retained \$150,000 next year, with the allowance of 5% retention there would be about \$300,000 retained. This can only be retained if there is a fund balance available. If the retained funds are not used in a given year, they are rolled over into the unassigned fund balance the following year, the retained funds do not accumulate.

The Moderator recognized Community Member, Brian Gallagher. Brian Gallagher asked for a clarification if the 5% calculation of the retention of funds occurred before or after the unassigned fund balance monies are added to the trust funds?

The Moderator recognized District Financial Manager, Debbie O'Connor. Debbie O'Connor answered the retention of funds calculation occurs after the trust funds appropriations.

The Moderator called for a voice vote to approve Article 12 as written. Motion passed by a unanimous affirmative voice vote.

Article 14: To transact any other business that may legally come before said meeting.

The Moderator recognized School Board and Funding Formula Committee Member, Kevin Bell: Kevin Bell discussed the School District Funding Formula noting a content webpage relating to the Funding Formula has been added to the School District's website. This webpage includes the history of the Funding Formula as well as committee meeting minutes. The Funding Formula has changed three times since the District was established in 1962. The most current change took place in 2014 resulting in the current Funding Formula which is a 65% (Lincoln)/35% (Woodstock) split. The Formula is generally reviewed every 5 years by Committee and a recommendation to keep or change the Funding Formula is made to the Board. The Board then makes the decision to bring any recommended changes to the District voters at the Annual Meeting. Last August the Committee began meetings to review the Funding Formula. The Committee was comprised of two Board members (one from each town), two Town Selectmen (one from each town), two community members (one from each town), and a member from outside of the community. The committee voted

to change the Funding Formula to a 70% (Lincoln)/30% (Woodstock) split. The Board discussed this at two meetings and, as there was not a significant public presence or public comment, determined to not move the recommendation forward to the District voters at that time. The Board plans to continue reviewing the Funding Formula and wanted to bring this to the public's attention and gain public input. Thank you to the other Funding Formula Committee members, Charyl Reardon, Tamra Ham, Jasmine Weeden, Paul Beaudin, Jay Polimeno, Jasmine Weeden, and Rick Baker.

The Moderator recognized School Board Member, Tamra Ham: Tamra Ham clarified the Funding Formula can be discussed yearly but cannot be changed more often than every five years.

The Moderator recognized School Board Member, Tamra Ham: **Tamra Ham made a motion, seconded by Jay Duguay to restrict reconsideration on all articles previously voted on during the meeting.**

Discussion: Moderator, Robert Wetherell explained a motion to restrict reconsideration means, if passed, the articles cannot be reconsidered at this meeting.

The Moderator called for a voice vote to restrict reconsideration on all articles previously voted on during the meeting. Motion passed by a unanimous affirmative voice vote.

The Moderator recognized School Board Chair, Jay Duguay. Jay Duguay recognized Brian Angelone and thanked him for his dedicated service as a School Board member for the past six years as well as the valuable work he has done as a member of the Facilities Committee.

The Moderator recognized community member, John Kimball: John Kimball expressed concerns regarding the progress of the District's performance relating to test scores included in the Superintendent's report in the Annual Report. What is being done to change this going forward and what can parents/grandparents do? What is being done to remediate for the success of current high school students?

The Moderator recognized District Superintendent, Dr. Judith McGann. Dr. McGann mentioned the Administration has looked at the test scores and continues to work on programs and best practices a few years at a time. A new math program began in the Elementary School a few years ago and is now being brought forward into the Middle and High Schools. A new reading program for the Elementary School is in progress. The test scores included in the Superintendent's report are from the NH SAS. Students are not all required to take the NH SAS and the class sizes in general are small. The scoring for the NH SAS has four levels (1-4). The Superintendent's report in the Annual Report includes students that scored a 3 or 4 on the NH SAS. These are students that are independently proficient or above proficient at grade level. More information on the scores reported has been provided on a presentation board available to view at the meeting. The additional information includes not only students scoring 3 or 4, but also those students that received a 2. A 2 indicates the student performs at grade level with assistance or is approaching independent proficiency. The District also utilizes other local testing to determine an individual student's growth more accurately.

The Moderator recognized School Board Member, Tamra Ham: Tamra Ham mentioned the School is not perfect and there is always room for improvement but the School produces great, smart, and responsible kids including kids that have gone on to attend Harvard and Yale.

The Moderator recognized community member, John Kimball: John Kimball mentioned the 5.6% increase in the salaries relating to the Collective Bargaining Agreement noting the teachers at the top make more and the teachers at the bottom make more but the gap between the two gets larger. \$1000 more per year should be added for teachers.

The Moderator recessed the meeting at 7:59 PM noting that the poles would remain open for voting on Article 3 until at least 8:13 PM.

Voting on Article 3 closed at 8:14 PM.

The Moderator reconvened the meeting, calling the meeting back to order at 8:20 PM.

The Moderator announced the results of the secret ballot vote on Article 3 relating to the renovation and replacement of the Middle/High School HVAC systems.

Number of secret ballots cast: 76.

YES: 74, NO: 2. Article 3 passed by greater than a 3/5 majority secret ballot vote.

Tamra Ham made a motion, seconded by Jay Duguay to dissolve the meeting.

Discussion: Moderator, Robert Wetherell explained a motion to dissolve indicates the meeting has clearly ended and no further business will be conducted.

The Moderator called for a voice vote. Motion passed by a unanimous affirmative voice vote and the meeting dissolved at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sharon Holt
School District Clerk