

**LINCOLN-WOODSTOCK
COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
Annual School District Meeting Minutes
March 18, 2025**

The Annual Meeting of the Lincoln-Woodstock Cooperative School District was held Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at Lin-Wood Public School in the Middle/High School multipurpose 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
- Denise Raiche-Casinghino

For the Town of Woodstock:

- Cheryl Bourassa
- Sherry Hoover

The Supervisors of the Checklist were:

For the Town of Lincoln:

- Susan Chenard
- Nancy Cunning
- Patti Jo Ouellete

For the Town of Woodstock:

- Stanley (Lee) Freeman
- Kathryn Cordeiro
- 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 7:00 p.m.

Approximately 60 people were in attendance.

Moderator, Robert Wetherell welcomed attendees: “Good evening, I call the annual meeting to order at 7:00 PM. This is not a public meeting. It is a meeting of the registered voters of Lincoln and Woodstock. I am glad you appreciate the importance of this meeting. You are decision makers. I encourage you to ask questions and make comments. Thank you, 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 statues do govern legal procedures not listed here.”

The Moderator announced the following results of the afternoon voting:
Number of ballots cast: **105**

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

Robert Wetherell 102 Elected

Article 02: To choose, by non-partisan ballot, two members of the School Board for a three-year term ending in 2028.

Kevin Bell	90	Elected
Joe Bossie	99	Elected
Paul H. Schirduan	12	
Darlena Clark-Write-In	1	

Article 03: By Petition, by non-partisan ballot, Are you in favor of changing the term of the moderator from one year to two years, beginning with the term of the moderator to be elected at next year’s regular school district meeting?

Yes 92 Passes
No 6

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 the reports in Article 4 as written.

Discussion: None.

The Moderator called for a voice vote to approve reports in Article 4 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 Moderator at \$200 per meeting, the School District Clerk at \$250 per meeting, the Ballot Clerks at \$160 per meeting, the Supervisors of the Checklist at \$180 per meeting, and the School District Treasurer at \$4,725 per year. The money for this article is included in Article 6.

Tamra Ham made a motion, seconded by Jay Duguay 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 nine million six hundred thirty-six thousand two hundred forty dollars (\$9,636,240) 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)

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

Discussion:

The Moderator recognized Jay Duguay, School Board Chairperson.

Jay Duguay expressed his appreciation to the meeting attendees and expressed his gratitude for their support of the School District. Mr. Duguay noted the nine million six hundred thirty-six thousand two hundred forty dollars (\$9,636,240) budget represented in Article 6 for the 2025-2026 school year is 1.8% over the current year's budget with level-funding for approximately the same student body size. Some savings was seen in debt service as the High School science room is paid off. Budget considerations include 9.5% increase in health insurance costs as well as the second year of the support staff contract. The Administration and School Board worked on budget savings and approximately one hundred thirty-one thousand dollars (\$131,000) was removed from the budget in favor of utilizing trust fund monies for these mostly one-time expenses. The budget supports approximately 243 student including 58 on Individual Education Plans (IEP), regular education services, special education services, nursing, counseling, enrichment, expanded education opportunities, and more. Expanded education opportunities including Technical Education at the north country CTE centers, expanded AP opportunities through a distance learning collaborative with the north country schools, and the ability for High School students to earn dual credits for college level classes. By the end of the year the current year's graduating class (class of 2025) will have earned a combined total of three hundred six (306) college credits. This amounts to an approximate savings for students and families of one hundred forty thousand dollars (\$140,000) at the University of New Hampshire (UNH) or Plymouth State University (PSU) or approximately sixty-six thousand dollars (\$66,000) at a community/technical college. The Administration and Board continue to try to be innovative to provide opportunities for the District's students.

The Moderator recognized Jerry Stringham, Community Member.

Jerry Stringham inquired as to changes or expectations regarding State and Federal special education funding?

The Moderator recognized Jay Duguay in response.

Jay Duguay noted in general the District is expecting a decline in State funding. The District does have a large amount of special education expenditure. Some monies are received back from the State regarding out of District special education placements which is noted in Article 10. Administration and the Board attempts to budget known special education expenses but there were a number of unknown expenses relating to students' attendance in other public charter schools. By statute, the District of residence is required to pay the cost for special education services for students at public charter schools. The District's Special Ed Capital Reserve Fund may be used for these unexpected costs. The Special Education Capital Reserve Fund is reviewed to try to make sure there is an appropriate amount of monies available in the fund.

The Moderator recognized Paul Schirduan, Community Member.

Paul Schirduan addressed the cost per student and suggested the Board look at other options for the District such as sending grades 7-12 to Profile School in Bethlehem also noted he believes that income caps are being

lifted for the State Education Freedom accountants which may cause change. Mr. Schirduan expressed concern over Lin-Wood's science test scores and suggested that Profile has a better academic record than Lin-Wood.

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

Article 07: To see if the 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:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>ESTIMATED INCREASE</u>
2025-2026	\$206,281
2026-2027	\$191,016

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of two hundred six thousand two hundred eighty-one dollars (\$206,281) for the 2025-2026 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 Jay Duguay to approve Article 7.

Discussion:

The Moderator recognized Jasmine Weeden, Board Member.

Jasmine Weeden expressed her appreciation to those in attendance. Mrs. Weeden mentioned the negotiation process was positive and collaborative. The agreement with the Lin-Wood Education Association is for two years. Wages and extracurricular stipends for coaches, etc. are increased to remain competitive. Year one of the agreement, the starting wage for a level one teacher with a bachelor's degree will increase by two thousand dollars (\$2,000) to forty-two thousand seven hundred fifty dollars (\$42,750). Year two of the agreement, this wage increases by two thousand, one hundred dollars (\$2100) to forty-four thousand eight hundred fifty dollar (\$44,850). The health insurance share will shift by 1% each year resulting in an 80/20 split by 2026-2027.

The Moderator called for a voice vote to table Article 7. Motion passed by voice vote with opposition.

Tamra Ham made a motion, seconded by Jay Duguay to restrict reconsideration on Articles 4 through 7.

Discussion:

The Moderator explained restrict reconsideration means if somebody wanted to reconsider any of these articles later this evening a meeting would be scheduled in seven (7) days. Should this meeting end before reconsidering the articles would no longer be on the table.

The Moderator called for a voice vote to restrict reconsideration on Articles 4 through 7. 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)

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

Discussion:

The Moderator explained to indefinitely postpone Article 8 means that the Article will not be voted on at all because Article 7 passed and Article 8 is no longer needed.

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

Article 9: To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of two hundred nine thousand four dollars (\$209,004) for the flooring replacement project, including the Lin-Wood High School Humanities/Math wing classrooms, Band Room, Middle High School Library, and the Family Consumer Science Room, as part of a multi-year phased project. This is a special warrant article per RSA 32:3 VI (d) and RSA 32:7 V. 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 Joe Bossie, Board Member.

Joe Bossie expressed his appreciation to those in attendance for coming out to the meeting as well as voting earlier in the day. Mr. Bossie noted the amount requested this year for the Middle/High School flooring project is a higher amount than in previous years as the scheduled final two years of the project are being combined into one year. The flooring product comes from Europe and the costs for the product are increasing. Currently there is enough of the flooring product in the States to complete the project.

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 the sum of sixty-thousand dollars (\$60,000) to be added to the Special Education Capital Reserve Fund (created in 1998, amended in 2021). 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 10 as written.

Discussion:

The Moderator recognized Jay Duguay, School Board Chairperson.

Jay Duguay noted Articles 10 through 13 relate to the Capital Reserve and Trust Funds. Article 10 relates to moving the special education monies received from the State to the Special Education Capital Reserve Funds. The remainder of the Trust Funds are funded through the unassigned fund balance available at the end of the year. The funding amounts to be placed in the Technology and Facilities funds have been increased this year over past years. This is due to the creation of a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the District which was a long-term goal of the Board. The CIP will allow the District to be proactive in saving for future big-ticket projects such as the maintenance garage and paving and will hopefully limit the need for the District to bond projects and pay the associated interest. Mr. Duguay expressed his appreciation to Tamra Ham for her work on the CIP.

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 sixty-three percent (63%), up to the amount of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), of the June 30, 2025 unassigned fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2025, and place that amount in the School District Facilities Expendable Trust Fund (created in 1999). 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 thirty-one percent (31%), up to the amount of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000), of the June 30, 2025 unassigned fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2025, and place that amount in the School District Technology Expendable Trust Fund (created in 1999). 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 vote to raise and appropriate six percent (6%), up to the amount of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), of the June 30, 2025 unassigned fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2025, and place that amount in the School District Equipment Expendable Trust Fund (created in 1999). The School Board recommends this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

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

Discussion: None.

The Moderator called for a voice vote to approve Article 13 as written. Motion passed by a unanimous affirmative voice vote.

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

Discussion:

The Moderator recognized Jay Duguay, School Board Chairperson.

Jay Duguay expressed congratulations on behalf of the District to Debbie O'Connor for being awarded the state-wide Business Administrator of the Year award noting that Mrs. O'Connor is an unbelievable asset to the District.

Jay Duguay mentioned Julie Rand and Paula King will be retiring at the end of the current school year and thanked them for their years of work and dedication to the District.

The Moderator recognized Judy Boyle, Community Member.

Judy Boyle noted the budget indicates over four hundred seventy-three thousand dollars (\$473,000+) expected revenues from the Federal government. Mrs. Boyle asked if these revenues were guaranteed and if these revenues do not come through, are contingencies in place?

The Moderator recognized Dr. Mary Steady, Superintendent, in response.

Dr. Steady noted she has been assured by the State that Federal IDEA and Title I funding will not be affected. Some smaller funding may be affected and Administration and the Board have thought of contingency plans.

The Moderator recognized Jay Duguay, School Board Chairperson.

Jay Duguay mentioned Bobbi Donahue will also be retiring at the end of the current school year and thanked her too for her years of work and dedication to the District.

Tamra Ham made a motion, seconded by Joe Bossie 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 7:31 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Holt
School District Clerk