

JACKSON SCHOOL BOARD
Meeting Minutes
February 2, 2017

**A meeting of the Jackson School Board was held on February 2, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.
at the Whitney Community Center.**

Board Members Present: Chairperson Jerry Dougherty, Genn Anzaldi, Keith Bradley, Jessica Della Valla, Dan Mahood. Superintendent Kevin Richard, Jackson Principal Gayle Dembowski, and Budget and Finance Director Becky Jefferson were also in attendance.

1. Mr. Dougherty called the meeting to order at: 5:34 p.m.
2. Approve Minutes:
Motion: by Ms. Della Valla, seconded by Ms. Anzaldi. **4-0-1 (Mahood) abstained.**
3. Citizen Comments: none.
4. Presentation of School Programs/FYI ITEMS: none.
5. Old Business
 - A. Whitney Facility Usage
 1. Review Whitney Community Center Request for Use Form:
Ms. Dembowski: there is a base fee now which is waived in the event of having a keyholder. **Ms. Della Valla:** she tried to make it so the fees reflected the type of usage. **Ms. Dembowski:** we are now billing every event. **Ms. Della Valla:** they said they would rather pay for those and get use of the facility. It furthers their mission. **Mr. Dougherty:** the contract part of the annual revenue from the Whitney Foundation was supposed to cover programming. That was one way the programming end could get channeled to the school. **Mr. Bradley:** really thinks if people are profiting from the event they are holding there, then they should be charged more. This is still a step in the right direction, but it seems unfair to him that someone profiting from an event can rent the space for that cheap. Also pointed out a typo on the form. **Mr. Dougherty:** Maybe we could make it so that non-Jackson residents have to pay \$2 more. He is ok with this because the Whitney Center and the school have the right of refusal. We're not openly marketing it as a space for for-profit events. If it wasn't for the good of the community, he would agree with him, but these groups are using it at a subsidized rate. **Mr. Bradley:** if he knew they were all Jackson residents attending the function, then that is fine. He is not against any particular group using the facility. **Mr. Dougherty:** the more accessible to the community, the better, really. **Mr. Bradley:** won't vote against it, but those are his thoughts. **Ms. Della Valla:** they

are very open to continuing the conversation, so if we see a trend one way or another, we can talk to them to change the plan. We at least now have a framework. But she does see Keith's point.

Motion: by Ms. Anzaldi, seconded by Mr. Mahood. **5-0-0.**

Ms. Della Valla: thanks Sarah Kimball for all her work on this.

B. **Preschool – Next Steps**

Mr. Dougherty: do we want to continue to pursue preschool for the 2018/2019 year? **Mr. Bradley:** is there anything going on with the

vouchers at the state level? **Ms. Della Valla:** she is in touch with the pastor who is working with a committee on their end. There are some bills currently in process: 313, that allows for scholarships. Also, Senate bill 8FN: from last year's 1637 that allows a district that does not offer a particular grade in their towns to pay other towns or other schools to send their kids there. Was just discussed this past Tuesday. There is a large lawsuit pending and the legislature is trying to pick it up and pass a law to avoid that lawsuit to allow the vouchers to be used for public schools. **Mr.**

Dougherty: vouchers are a whole separate discussion, to him. The committee went through a process and came up with a recommendation that was taken off the table for this coming school year. As a board, where do we want to go from here? Vouchers and school choice, if that is an area to pursue, that is something to discuss separately at this point.

Mr. Bradley: more people spoke against it than for it at the last meeting.

Mr. Dougherty: he felt it was more 50/50. At the first Listening Post, we had almost as many people at that meeting, and they were almost all in favor of it. What we're hearing from the community all seems to be different. Everyone he hears from is in favor, but a lot of people are also concerned about the cost. That is something we can pursue. **Mr.**

Mahood: we can bring it up anytime. **Mr. Dougherty:** the church is in favor for doing this the 18/19 school year? **Ms. Della Valla:** we're still in a holding pattern, like last month. Perhaps we can say there is nothing to decide on today, and just wait on information from the church. **Mr.**

Dougherty: we've got time. But is there any reason to stop communications with the church at this point? **Ms. Anzaldi:** we've come this far; she'd like to see it through to see if it will work for 18/19. Just flesh out the process we started. **Mr. Mahood:** he is against this and has been from the beginning. He feels that we would be putting other businesses out. Does not agree that we need this here. But if we decide to keep the discussion open, then we keep it open. **Mr. Bradley:** wasn't thrilled with the church option. If it fit in our current building, he'd be more in favor. But being in a separate building, that doesn't sit well with him.

Ms. Della Valla: does think that the preschool is important. If there is a way to do it in our building, that is something she would like to see. **Mr.**

Bradley: at least once we get the info from the church, we'll have something more concrete. **Ms. Della Valla:** maybe there is another way to do this. Bob from the other meeting said it wasn't innovative enough.

Ms. Dembowski: we would have to impact our current programming and

configuration if we put the preschool there. Whether we're putting 3 grade levels in one class, or moving art and music again. **Mr. Bradley:** he just meant if there were room, he'd feel better about it. Let's hold another listening post once we have the information from the church. **Ms. Della Valla:** if we're going to have a bigger conversation, there are overarching issues (vouchers, etc.), so if we can buy a month or two, she would be for that. The pastor has a committee on the church side. They are looking at everything. She is happy to remain the point of contact. **Mr. Dougherty:** doesn't think we need to task the committee with everything further.

Jette Glasier (audience): she's heard a lot of interest in finding out more about programming for kids at a younger age. Would like to see what their options would be; the church isn't the only one. But the parents at the meeting were motivated to help in some way, but they don't know how. If you are looking for other people to do that work, she thinks there are people in the community that would help. **Mr. Dougherty:** if a board member wanted to pursue alternate options for spacing and bring it back to the board that would be fine. Is there anyone interested in pursuing other options for spacing? **Ms. Della Valla:** we have all the information, so she doesn't feel further work by the committee is necessary. She doesn't mind being the point of contact, but it should be a board member. **Mr. Dougherty:** but we are a divided board on this issue. When it comes to administering a preschool in another building, we don't know what the management will look like at that point in time. If Gayle would be the person administering, it takes the politics out of it because all 5 of us are divided. **Ms. Della Valla:** we still need to keep an open mind about options. She is totally fine to have Gayle take over, but we need to continue the conversation in light of the pending bills. We need to keep our minds open on the school board side. Just wanted to make sure the conversation and our options stay open. We do need to come up with a solution for preschool here in Jackson, one way or another. **Mr. Dougherty:** we need to decide whether or not we are going to pursue a public preschool. If we are, then we should task out subcommittees to do that work. We could provide a public preschool. If that's what we want to do, then we should take the steps to do it. **Ms. Della Valla:** at this time, we don't even have the information. We can come back in a month or two once we have the information from the church. **Ms. Dembowski:** and she would appreciate Jessica's support. **Ms. Della Valla:** absolutely.

PUBLIC HEARING on 2017-18 Proposed Budget (6:00 p.m.)

Mr. Dougherty called the hearing to order at 6:02 p.m.

Recommendation/Approval of Warrant Articles

Article One: Operating budget for 2017/2018 school year.

Mr. Richard: budget changes:

10.7 % increase in insurance premiums.
2% increase in retirement: \$61,866.
Special Ed down \$36,000; related to services and student need.
Tuition costs up \$137,000, more students at HS and at MS.
Cost of bond is going down and will continue to do so. \$136,000.
Making the switch to a key card system: \$11,595.
Gas and utilities: \$1.78/gal. for fuel oil.
Nursing services. A reduction in amount of time the nurse would be required to be here in Jackson.
Repairs to buses: 3-year average \$2,413
Total increases: \$167,105.

New line on page 3

Salary for ASP: \$4500. This is for stipends for teachers to provide after school activities. **Ms. Dembowski:** this will be two days a week.

Mr. Richard: Estimated Revenue:

Estimate is \$32,000. That is significantly lower than 2 years ago.

Federal grants are fairly consistent, as is revenue from local sources, such as summer school tuition.

Rental of facilities is consistent.

Trust fund, lunch sales, revenue is down a bit there.

State of NH adequacy grant: there is a change in the way the state is funding education. And Jackson no longer qualifies for this grant.

Sarah Clemons: why do we no longer qualify? **Mr. Richard:** your payment is higher than what you would receive from the state.

They are shifting the way the money is going. **Ms. Clemons:** so other towns are getting this money?

Mr. Richard: yes. It's also dependent on test scores, reading scores.

Mr. Dougherty: it basically means we're a donor town. It is a very complicated formula. Whatever the assessment is, is what they are going to get back in revenue.

The legislature has been neglecting this over the past 3 years. Jackson, Moultonborough and either Rye or North Hampton are in the same boat.

Ms. Jefferson: currently there are now donor towns that specifically contribute money to the state.

This money is based upon a state formula. The taxes exceed the amount we spend on education. The true donor system has gone away.

Mr. Dougherty: so we're not paying money out? **Ms.**

Jefferson: The stabilization grant allowed you to have that money in there. The state tax is Jackson's to keep. Bartlett lost funding as well.

Mr. Dougherty: so Jackson because used to pay into this, we used to receive revenue from the state.

Mr. Richard: State Education tax rate: that is money you folks raised that you keep.

Ms. Glasier: but it's less than it was in previous years?

Mr. Richard: There is a sum of money that has to be generated. The state determines how much every town will pay.

Free and reduced lunches, test scores, etc all go into that. \$3700 per student is the rate that the state says you have to raise. **Mr. Bradley:** but the amount we get from taxpayers is more than that, so we lose that. **Ms. Jefferson:** they give us this number, but it can change next October, after tax rates are set. Some towns will lose money later on. **Mr. Richard:** you're paying for both taxes combined, but they are separate. **Mr. Dougherty:** what does it cost, outside of the state tax to run the school? **Ms. Jefferson:** \$2.5 million. **Mr. Dougherty:** so we spend x amount of dollars to operate the grammar school and tuition our kids to Bartlett. **Mr. Richard:** when you have the revenue, that is essentially less that you have to pay. That state education tax, you're paying it out and getting it back. **Mr. Mahood:** the unencumbered balance seems to go down. Have we budgeted that it goes down? **Ms. Jefferson:** this number will change and hopefully it will be greater when we set the tax rate. **Mr. Richard:** we're budgeting now for the beginning of September. If you lose someone that has a single insurance plan, and hire on someone at a higher salary with a family plan, that is going to change.

Mr. Richard: estimated tax rate information: school tax rate (district rate plus state education): Shows a \$0.66 increase per thousand. That is before the warrant articles. Those bring it to \$0.69 per thousand.

Sarah Clemons: she is looking for information on amount of money we pay our staff. She noticed in the Bartlett school budget, they put in their school district staff salaries. It shows each portion of what each person is getting paid (insurance, retirement, etc.). If you put it in the budget this way, this would help us as town taxpayers to see what we're spending. This gives us an idea of what the individual positions are and what they are costing us. This includes our staff as it is at this time. It would help people to understand. **Mr. Dougherty:** We never include statutory benefits in the annual report. When you get into personnel issues, it gets difficult. We cannot have discussions with the community about individual staff members. It's illegal. **Ms. Clemons:** it is put in the Bartlett annual report every year. She isn't for targeting anyone, she just feels she has the right to know as a taxpayer. **Mr. Dougherty:** yes, you do have a right to know what you are paying, and you are given that information. **Ms. Jefferson:** this was a request by the Bartlett School Board, to have salary, retirement, other benefits are shown in the line item on the bottom. What they are seeing listed is salary and retirement, but health and everything else are in a total sum at the bottom. That is how Bartlett does theirs. Jackson currently shows salary only. **Mr. Dougherty:** we have the benefits in another line item. He would not be in favor of

putting those numbers in our report next to each individual employee. **Ms. Clemons:** a big thing with community and municipal workers is that everything is done together. She wants to see what it costs us per staff member per year as of right now. When she looks at the total figure of what they are being paid, she doesn't know how it breaks down. As a person that pays these taxes, she has the right to see what they are paying people. **Mr. Dougherty:** there are parts of those numbers that are difficult to have a conversation about. If someone is making the argument is that our taxes are too high, they ask the school board to reduce the budget. Our response should be to look where we can lower the budget. **Ms. Clemons:** if she pays someone \$10 and gives benefits that cost \$20, that is the burden. Are you going to bring this to a vote, or don't you feel we should have access to this information? **Mr. Dougherty:** we put salaries in the annual report. **Mr. Bradley:** everything is in there. Even the statutory benefits are in there as a whole. We don't have control over that number and there are parts that get a little personal. **Ann:** she is asking for a piece of public information. You as a board should decide on that. Not necessarily tonight, but it is something the board needs to consider. **Mr. Dougherty:** we do provide the information. **Ann:** she understands that that is how this info is reported. However, a request has been made. You can consider it perhaps at another meeting. But Sarah has asked a legitimate question. She's made good points. Maybe you can vote on this at some time in the future. **Mr. Mahood:** statutory benefits are prorated based on salary, correct? So you can pretty much figure that part out. **Mr. Dougherty:** Sarah made a legitimate request, and we should have this discussion at a later meeting.

Angus Badger: Regarding the after-school programming: his observation is that in the era of federal curriculum mandates, there has certainly been a growing demand for enrichment of a standard curriculum. He would think it would be accelerated writing or math. Arts and crafts could be on that list in a larger program, but he is surprised to see something like sewing as an enrichment activity. **Mr. Bradley:** this is an after school program. **Ms. Anzaldi:** this is to address the need brought forward in the community. **Mr. Badger:** it is disappointing that the board is spending tax money for what amounts to daycare. Having options for kids after school to extend in an area of interest is fine: robotics, engineering, etc. He is greatly disappointed to see something like sewing on that list. **Ms. Della Valla:** this has really been part of an ongoing discussion. They had a request to meet after school care needs for people. It is something she hears about frequently. It is a reality they've had to deal with as a school board, and they have debated it themselves in talking about how to present that in a way that meets

the needs of our kids. It's only two days because we could not agree on funding it five days a week. **Ms. Dembowski:** the teachers consider the relevance of the program, and try to make the programs enrichment-quality. She could provide daycare and not pay her certified staff. **Mr. Bradley:** he was against this too, until he realized they are the only town that didn't have something like this in place. The school has changed. Maybe way back when there was not a need, but there is a growing need now. **Mr. Dougherty:** regarding defining what enrichment is, that is also an ongoing topic of discussion. If we're offering a new program intended as enrichment, we should define what that is, but we can't really seem to agree. We were opposed to the increase, but Gayle and the staff came up with a creative way to do this. Angus has a legitimate point to be disappointed. But this is a hearing, where they present the budget. They do not present the budget line by line so that they have the time to talk about what is new. At the annual meeting, if there is something in the budget you don't want to see included, you can make a motion on the floor to reduce the budget by that amount. It's a modest amount of money to provide what is a definite need. This is a time to explore what we would like students to learn through these programs.

Ms. Clemons: what is the total amount for this enrichment? **Ms. Della Valla:** \$4500. **Ms. Clemons:** is there any way this can get out so that people know what this is? **Mr. Bradley:** we've talked about this for 5 meetings now. It's in the minutes. **Ms. Clemons:** it's \$4,500, but if it's just a daycare for kids after school, there are a lot of people that would object to that. We have skiing, we have soccer. So we're basically going to pick these kids up at 3 and take care of all their needs through 6th grade. They shouldn't try to sell this to the town as daycare. Frankly, that is her objection to the preschool. This is education, and they don't mind paying for education. Doesn't think they should be paying for daycare. If it is enrichment, then it should be true enrichment for things we don't have room for in the curriculum. **Mr. Bradley:** he was strongly against it at first, partly because we've got some kids that can't take part in this because they have other obligations. **Mr. Dougherty:** there will be a fee assessed for students to participate. It's more for a commitment to attend and not for revenue. But we're looking at it as a pilot program. And it is not defined as of yet, and it should be. Without defining the program, it's a gray area. Is it daycare, is it after-school activity or if it is enrichment. **Mr. Badger:** is enrichment teaching a specific skill? Isn't there an enrichment teachers' association? **Ms. Dembowski:** not in NH, but yes, they exist. We're the only school that has an enrichment teacher that works during the school day. One of the things our committee agreed upon was with taxpayer dollars, we want to offer things for

every student and not just those with particular skills. This will have a multi-age focus. It gives us flexibility. **Mr. Badger:** if you can't define what it is, he suggests you define what it isn't. **Mr. Bradley:** this program is 2 days a week, and the sessions last 6-8 weeks. Teachers will have the opportunity to expand upon what they've done in school, and we will involve interested community members as well. They are doing it on the two days where there isn't something else scheduled.

Ms. Glasier: asked about increase in maintenance. **Mr. Dougherty:** we contract out to do lawn mowing and snow removal. **Ms. Dembowski:** the town does our loop driveway and parking lot. John does the snow blowing of walkways and the Whitney walk. **Mr. Dougherty:** the contractor does not charge the market rate for the work he does for snow removal. Our own maintenance person uses his own plow truck as well. **Mr. Bradley:** a good chunk of that is the maintenance we pay for as part of the easement. **Mr. Dougherty:** there is good communication and coordination between all parties involved. We pay 50% of the cost of maintaining the parking lot from the road in.

Mr. Badger: let's say a class wants to do something, a field trip, for example. Where does the money come from? **Mr. Bradley:** it has to be budgeted if it's a big one. **Ms. Dembowski:** part of what we do is fundraise for the Ferry Beach trip so it doesn't come out of the budget. A one-day bus trip is funded by the field trip line item. **Mr. Richard:** there are a couple of different lines: Enrichment programs for example at \$1200. **Ms. Dembowski:** co-curricular is on page 3. We also get grant funding for a lot of our special events. **Mr. Richard:** \$1,200 for an artist in residence. **Ms. Jefferson:** there is also \$2,500 under transportation-field trips. **Mr. Dougherty:** we talked about putting \$5000 more money in the budget for field trips, but it didn't make it in for this budget. One of the problems we run into is how much the bus driver makes for that field trip. We compensate for that by offering the bus driver a bit more to cover the trip. **Ms. Dembowski:** the two bus drivers in our area are busy with our local routes, so we have to hire a substitute bus driver for a longer trip. So there would be a 4-hour minimum that would earn a higher rate. **Mr. Dougherty:** a lot of times, if we're getting a driver from Freedom to drive here and prepare the bus, etc.

Ann: asked why there is a salary listed for Artist in Residence and then there is a line for artist in residence under co-curricular. **Ms. Dembowski:** when we hired our art teacher, there were extra duties beyond the teaching of art that we had hoped she would do for us. The board negotiated in an additional stipend to offer her to work beyond her normal school day. For this year, we have it in

there for anyone, it's not limited to this person.

Signing of Warrants and Budget Forms

Article 2: \$10,000 for school buses. **Mr. Dougherty:** we reduced this from \$15,000. We always seem to have more money than we need after we purchase a bus. We should still be able to keep up with our planned bus purchase schedule. **Mr. Badger:** ever since we've had kids in the school, the issue of not being able transport skis on the bus is frustrating. **Mr. Bradley:** you would have to have a parent or teacher at both ends to load and unload. The bus driver can't do it. **Susan Ross-Parent:** We need a Jackson staff person to meet the bus in Bartlett and take the skis off. **Mr. Bradley:** Joe Voci said he would provide someone.

Article 3: \$3,000 for the Whitney Maintenance Trust Fund. **Mr. Dougherty:** that is 1/3 of the revenue we will receive from the Whitney fund. That money is reimbursed. We retain some of the fund money.

Article 4: Bartlett tuition agreement. The money for this is in the operating budget. Article is for contract approval. **Mr. Badger:** so what happens if they decide to establish a 6/7/8 middle school? **Mr. Bradley:** there is language in the contract that make provisions for something like that. The contract is the same as the old one, but it is more clear. The tuition formula is the same. It's based on average cost per student for the amount of the students we actually send. Bartlett has extended the offer to send our 6th graders to Bartlett, but we are not obligated. **Joyce Badger:** If the 6th grade went to Bartlett; would that provide room for the preschool. **Mr. Dougherty:** it's something we could consider moving forward.

Ms. Badger: regarding the editorial about health insurance. Is that pertinent to Jackson at all? **Mr. Dougherty:** we're not part of their group, but we use the same trust, so that letter would be relevant to what we offer in Jackson as well. He feels it was inaccurate in many ways, but it was challenging to the school board. **Mr. Richard:** this was an issue discussed at our SAU board meeting. We've been in conversations with different healthcare companies. Jackson will be part of our rating when we go and seek out competitive costs.

Public meeting closed at 7:28 p.m.

Board meeting reconvened at 7:28 p.m.

6. Instructional Issues: none.
7. Consider Personnel Actions: none.

8. Business Affairs
 - A. FYI – 2016-17 Budget Status Report
9. Administrators' Reports
 - A. Superintendent: none.
 - B. Principal: none.
10. Citizen Comments: none.
11. Board Member Issues -- Board Discussion/Committee Reports
 - A. Set Date for Next Meeting (Thursday, March 2, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. – School District Meeting at 7:00 p.m.)
 - B. Schedule April Work Session – leave on for next meeting.
12. Signing of Manifests:

Motion: by Ms. Anzaldi, seconded by Mr. Bradley to recommend articles 1-5 for the Jackson warrant. **5-0-0.**

Mr. Bradley: should we be telling them whether Bartlett is for or against? Do we at least need to let them know that Bartlett has to vote as well? **Mr. Dougherty:** yes, we can explain that at the school district meeting. We still ask for the money in the budget either way. We'll still come up with a tuition rate. **Mr. Bradley:** what if they don't vote it in? Ms. Jefferson: then you can do a one-year agreement.
13. Nonpublic Session - RSA 91-A:3 II: none.
 - A. Personnel Matters
 - B. Student Matters
14. Adjourn

Motion: by Mr. Bradley, seconded by Ms. Anzaldi.
Board adjourned meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer King
Recording Secretary