

Received: Tuesday, March 16 11:19 PM

Good Evening Members of the Board,

I was able to listen to some of your meeting tonight and have listened to the budget committee meetings. I am writing to let you know that I am in full support of the School Board's budget as presented. I support the roofing and HVAC projects. I urge you to make necessary amendments so all warrant articles put forth are those that the School Board supports. The only cutting at this time should be the Budget Committee-hence my support of rescinding the committee.

Thank you for your work to support our school community.

Jessie M. Graham
Woodstock

Received: Wednesday, March 17 4:47 PM

To whom it may concern,

As a parent of two children in the Lin-Wood School District, I would like to state that I am in favor of the school board's budget for the 2021-22 school year. I am also in support of all of the warrant articles as presented.

Thank you,

Rebecca Manning

Received: Wednesday, March 17, 6:53 PM

We would like to add our names to the list of those who support the school board's budget.

Sincerely,

Steve and Carol Smith
PO Box 445
104 Pollard Road
Lincoln NH 03251

Received: Wednesday, March 17, 8:05 PM

March 16, 2021 Lin-Wood Cooperative School District Annual Report and Meeting Comments respectfully submitted by:

John Kimball
9 White Birch Lane
Lincoln, NH 03251

1. I apologize for joining the meeting late. I repeatedly tried to join the meeting via my cell phone by calling (646) 876-9923, Meeting ID: 971 8495 5098, Passcode: 485938 as instructed in the March 8, 2021 Lincoln-Woodstock Cooperative School District letter.
 - I was able to reach the Zoom directory every time, but the stated passcode was consistently rejected as invalid.
 - It took several minutes to download and install the Zoom program because of the age of my computer. I was able to successfully join the meeting around the Article 15 discussion.

- I appreciate everyone's patience and willingness to regurgitate the discussion about the preceding Articles for my benefit upon concluding the discussion on Article 20.
2. I recommend removing *as an emergency turnaround* text from Article 18. The people involved with drafting Article 18 obviously knew exactly what the legacy issue was and how this Article would resolve this condition.
- However, I was a fresh set of eyes that read it for the first time. My initial reaction was that the community protocols had become so anal that an easement was going to be necessary for an emergency vehicle to turn around on School District property at the end of Pleasant Street. That is why I asked if an easement was also going to be required if an ambulance or fire truck entered Lin-Wood Drive and wanted to turn around in the parking lot.
 - I'm reasonably confident that some other voters may read this text for the first time while in the voting booth, and like my initial reaction, may conclude that this response must be NO.
 - Also, Ms. Heredeem later mentioned that the use of "emergency turnaround" was probably misleading based on her conversations with Town officials.
 - Bottom line – passage of Article 18 is important to the Town, the School District, and Ms. Heredeem. Removing the above text clarifies the actual intent of Article 18 and may also improve the odds for approving Article 19, which is also important to Ms. Heredeem.
3. The group discussion on Article 20 intrigued me for many reasons.
- I learned a long time ago to not criticize others until I took the time to look and try to understand issues from their perspective and maybe even walk in their shoes for a while.
 - Until last night, my lifetime experiential learning was deficient because I did not know that Budget Committee and School Board budget disagreements had to be tied to a specific budget item.
 - Obviously, several teachers felt betrayed by the Budget Committee recommending removal of an additional \$116,458.00 from the School Board recommended budget. The brunt of the \$116, 458.00 was tied to Guidance funding. Their emotional reaction appears to be the stimulus for the petition warrant Article 20.
 - I don't agree with the decision to limit Guidance expenditures, but I commend the Budget Committee for doing their job and challenging each School Board line item. Their courageous actions provided us voters with options that enable us to make rational and better informed choices. By law, the lower budget has to be included in the Warrant Article, but that doesn't mean we voters can't amend and accept the higher or some other budget amount during the Annual Meeting if we conclude that is the appropriate action to take. This is the beauty of the Democratic process; voters can focus on doing what is right rather than debating who is right.
 - Honestly, I did not fully understand why the Guidance position was targeted as much until I learned that some line item had to be identified whenever there was disagreement between the two proposed budgets. This was as easy as any thing else, but easy is not always the best choice as this choice hit a negative chord that resonated throughout the meeting.
 - a. In reality the School Board, Superintendent, and Principal are going to distribute the approved funds where the need is the greatest within established framework constraints.
 - b. The United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics website conveniently catalogs data for all major occupations, salary ranges, current and projected job demand, etc., and this information is publically available to every student, parent, as well as the guidance councilors.
 - c. Realistically, not every student will or should attend college based on the dismal Math and Reading/ELA scores stated within the Report of the Superintendent on page 14 of the Annual Report.
 1. Yes, this is academic blasphemy; I realize that COVID-19 may have contributed to the low scores; but the decreasing proficiency range as the grades progress from 3 through 8 is alarming and should be a wake-up call for action.
 2. Perhaps these score trends are a result of implementation of the Eureka Math and English Language-Arts programs discussed in the Report of the Principal on page 16 of the Annual Report.
 3. Perhaps too much focus is on teaching to the current State Standard rather than ensuring topic mastery and proficiency.
 - Personally, if I were a Budget Committee member, I would have probably targeted items like 8% Executive Administration costs, 5% School Administration Services costs, and 1.5% energy costs from

the pie charts on pages 21 and 22 and the status of high speed internet access discussed in the Report of the Technology Director on page 18 of the Annual Report.

- a. Has the School District performed a self-assessment to look for ways to consolidate, reduce, and eliminate administrative overhead, potential duplicated services, and incorporate labor saving technology?
 - b. Have electrical equipment/components been upgraded to smart controls, power strips, LED lights, etc.?
 - c. Has a facility assessment been performed to identify, reduce, or eliminate watt wastage?
 - d. Is there a campus program to encourage faculty and students to conserve power?
 - e. What is the plan and status of ensuring access to high speed Internet throughout the Lin-Wood Cooperative School District community?
- Statements were made that unlike the School Board members, the Budget Committee members were not in touch with school needs, modern teaching realities, and the importance of Guidance teachers in today's COVID-19 pandemic, etc.
 - I further scrutinized the differences between the proposed School Board and Budget Committee budgets based on comments made during the meeting. I found little objective evidence to substantiate the negative claims. In fact, just the opposite was true.
 - I believe the primary function of the School Board committees are to work with the wants and needs of the Superintendent, Principal, teachers, parents, students, etc. to ensure the local community, State, and Federal academic requirements are appropriately addressed. Their primary focus is Academia satisfaction.
 - I believe the primary function of the Budget Committee is to independently ensure the academic needs identified by the School Board committees and their stakeholders are justified and adequately funded based on the ability and willingness of community to pay for these services. Their primary focus is Taxpayer satisfaction.
 - I know of no real world CEO, Director, Manager, or Superintendent that would not feel ecstatic upon receiving 98-99% approval of their requested annual operating budget request. Most of us have household or work budgets that we have to live with that are no way near this value. Hopefully, we all realize that the budget is just a best guess framework to work with, and additional contingency funds have been purposely included in the proposed budget to address immediate, planned, and emergent issues.
 - Superintendent McGann eloquently stated that *The most important resource is the children of these communities* on page 15 of the Annual Report. I don't believe I could find anyone in our community that would disagree with this statement.
 - The challenge lies in arriving at a consensus of what this means to each individual voter and what they are capable and/or willing to fund.
 - News Flash – Not all residents of the Lincoln and Woodstock community support either proposed school budget as some meeting attendees asserted.
 - a. Statistically, some have no children, some struggle through the pandemic to maintain food on the table and a roof over their head, and some seniors have to make the hard choice between eating, heating, and their paying for their medications. Academic funding is not high on their priority list.
 - b. Prior to the pandemic, I occasionally heard negative comments about taxes being too high because we employ too many educators, teacher unions have become too powerful, similar schools have a higher student to classroom teacher to reduce costs, teachers are overpaid because they only work half the year, etc. Fortunately, these are minority opinions.
 - c. I'd also like to believe that these attitudes and perceptions have changed drastically over the past year. However, rescinding the Budget Committee could result in a community backlash if these unfounded beliefs are simply ignored. The School Board alone will have to face the onslaught of allegations, hostilities, and innuendos if Article 20 is approved. The Budget Committee members didn't deserve the criticism, and it is unlikely the School Board members will fare any better unless the community learns to become more tolerant of opinions different from their own.
 - d. Maintaining independent objectivity is paramount for sustained success. Simply flooding both the School Board and Budget Committee with special interest members, or eliminating the

independent Budget Committee could have negative consequences later on if the taxpayer support and trust is ever compromised.

- I am disappointed to see the “my way or the highway cancel culture attitude” so prominently displayed by some leading members within our community. Is this really the behavior we want to teach our kids, or do we want them to develop and grow up using their listening and problem solving skills, powers of persuasion, ability to compromise, and demonstrate mutual respect for opinions that may differ from our own? Whatever happened to simply being able to agree or disagree with one another rather than petitioning abolishment of an established process that has effectively performed for years just because of a few hurt feelings? Rather than be derided and ridiculed for their decisions, the Budget Committee should be congratulated for their doing their job!
- Personally, I believe approving Article 20 to disband the Budget Committee based solely on the comments I heard at last night’s meeting would be a major community blunder. I have witnessed and experienced strong community support and interaction throughout the entire Lincoln-Woodstock Cooperative School District. I believe the existing administrative check and balance process helps foster trust between all parties. It would be potentially devastating to the community if this balance and trust were ever disrupted.
- The School Budget Committee appears to be a job that few wanted in the past, and it’s encouraging to see new volunteers for the open positions if Article 20 is rejected. However, I caution that electing or appointing only people that share common goals and interests can lead to a *Group Think* situation where dissenting opinions are either not readily accepted or people are unfairly ostracized for group perceptions that they are not being a *team player*.
 - *Group Think* was identified as the root cause of the 1986 Challenger spacecraft explosion that killed social studies teacher Christa McAuliffe and set the space travel back at least 35 years. There was so much focus on preventing further launch delays and capitalizing on the positive publicity created by the first civilian teacher traveling into space that people who knew about the rocket’s fuel system O-ring issues failed to escalate the conversation to a level that may have prevented the catastrophe.
 - Highly effective committees have learned from NASA’s mistake and usually assign a member with the specific task of dissenting with the group consensus during meetings to ensure that a thorough topic discussion is completed before decisions are made to minimize *Group Think* pitfalls.

Received: Thursday, March 18, 7:11 AM

It is my hope that someone will read this aloud to everyone, as I am unable to attend Zoom meetings.

To all concerned;

First, I want all to remember, that a large portion of the lack of or damage to “our children’s” social and emotional piece, is due to the extended remote-learning, that was governed by the school and staff. That was NOT the parents’ or taxpayers’ doing.

It is very clear to me, after watching Tuesday night’s meeting, explaining the warrants, why the townspeople have stopped attending/voting at the Annual School Meeting.

The only people who spoke, with the exception of two, were spouses or siblings of teachers, or were teachers themselves.

It was also quite clear, that “our children” are being held for ransom (the desired budget) in a questionable game of emotional blackmail. It was implied, several times, that anyone that does not approve of any of the warrants, well, they just don’t seem to care about “our children”, or we don’t want what’s best for them. Those same people either passed around or signed a petition, to rescind the Budget Committee. I am beginning to understand how “our children” have learned how to bully. I have taught, at one time or another, the majority of the students that are attending Lin-wood Public School. So many of them have a piece of my heart. I think it is quite shameful to think it is okay to “shame” people into going along with what is asked for, or just shut up.

Maybe it is time to consider a two-part budget, which would consist of a base-line budget that covers all basic expenditures (things that are used by the whole-school population. This would be charged to the two towns through taxation. The second part, would be for anything used by a limited/select population, which

would be any and all extra-curricular items/activities. This part would be charged only to parents of current students.

It is certainly time to show some consideration and respect for the taxpayers. Remember, they are the ones that pay the salaries and expenses of such. There are many things that I would like, but if I can't afford them, that does not mean that I should be shamed for it. It is the same for a school budget. We are not a limitless wallet, even if it for "our children".

Thank you.

Always,

Sherry Hoover

North Woodstock, NH 03262

Received: Thursday, March 18 8:54 AM

Good Evening:

My name is Paul Beaudin I have been a taxpayer in Lincoln as has many of my family members for generations. I have served in the past on the School Board and am currently on the Town of Lincoln's budget committee. Article 20 flies in the face of our democracy it goes against everything that we as Americans have fought for, for generations. We will not always agree and we may not like what our neighbor does or says but in America we still have the freedom to express ourselves unlike many other countries across the globe. This budget is not the School Boards or the Budget committees, it is the people's budget the taxpayers of Lincoln and Woodstock. It is the School Boards and the Budget committees responsibility to present their facts that will support their decisions and recommendations and let the taxpayers of both communities choose and vote what they want. By Removing the budget committee process our taxpayers will only be getting a one sided approach and recommendation. This is contrary to what our fore fathers fought for and what we have been accustomed to having for generations. It also teaches our children that we support the process of just eliminating something or someone if we do not like what they represent. Instead we should be supporting getting involved, being part of a solution to a problem not part of the problem to our future generations. Imagine if our children came home from school one day and said "all of the kids in our class voted to get rid of our teacher because we did not like what they were teaching us". It would be a bad day in America if that happened, We should lead by example and show that we will not always agree with everything that is put before us all the time but we will listen and make sound decisions based on the facts and information that is presented before us. The budget committee process allows for different viewpoints to be expressed and bring into the open opportunities for debate and dialog prior to a final vote. Without this there is the possibility that decisions will be made the night of a School district meeting and there will not have been any warning about other options or opinions and a negative vote could jeopardize the operations of the Lin-wood school district. Instead we should foster participation on both committees to get the best random sampling of taxpayers we can get so that all viewpoints are represented and continue to give the taxpayers of Lincoln and Woodstock recommendations and facts to support their final decision and vote. Having participated in this process for many years I can not recommend the passage of article 20, removal of the budget committee is the wrong thing to do and sends the wrong message to our children. There is enough hate and bullying in our society lets set the example and show our future generations that it is ok to disagree but in the end we still have our god given right to vote our conscience after having listened to all our options.

Paul J. Beaudin II
Lincoln Taxpayer

Received: Thursday, March 18 3:50 PM

I would like to say that I'm in full support of the School Board's budget, and also in support of rescinding the budget committee.

Barbara Burhoe

Received: Thursday, March 18 4:10 PM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Sarah Beaudin and am a taxpayer in North Woodstock. I currently have a son in 2nd grade at Lin-Wood and my daughter will be in Kindergarten this upcoming fall.

I am in full support of the School Boards 2021-2022 school year budget as well as the warrant articles as they are presented.

Sarah Beaudin

Received: Thursday, March 18 4:42 PM

Please consider this as our support for the school board's version of the 2021 budget proposal (warrant article 7). Thank you all for all you do for our community!

Tara & Steve Tower
Voters in Woodstock