

Surry School District  
Annual Meeting Minutes  
March 14, 2024

Members in Attendance

Timothy Peloquin, Chair, John Davis, Caroll Lothrop, Frank Buffum, Melinda Garland, Rebecca Russo - Treasurer, Jessica Howard, Moderator

Call to Order - 7:00pm

Pledge

Voting Results from 03/12/2024 -

School Board Member

Frank Buffum (122 votes)

Blank (11 votes)

School District Clerk

Blank (124 votes)

Write-ins (10):

Rebecca Russo (2 votes)

John Davis (1 vote)

Caroll Lothrop (1 vote)

Christina Hammond (1 vote)

Sandra Maclean (1 vote)

Melinda Garland (1 vote)

Becky Smith (1 vote)

Article 1 - Report of the District Officers

To hear the reports of the District Officers. Motion - Bruce Smith; Second - Jay Croteau. No discussion. Motion passed.

Article 2 - Main Operating Budget

To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of 2,600,779 for the support of schools, for the payment of salaries for the School District Officers and Agents, and for the payment of the Statutory Obligations of the District for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year.

Tim Peloquin explained the reason for the budget number, outlining the town's obligation to pay a fixed tuition rate for each student enrolled in the Keene School District. There is no room for debate with the Keene School District over the rate, and Federal Law requires the provision of a public education for all children of the town.

Motion - John Berglund; Second - Bill Russell

Steve Goldsmith made the comment that the town has a limited tax base and the state seems to pay less and less. Tim Peloquin acknowledged his comment and said the board is aware of it.

Caroll Lothrop responded, providing figures that outline what the state pays. Susan Farrell voiced her vexation with the state funding of education. Wayne Brown commented on how to push the state for a different funding strategy. Bruce Smith commented on the difference between what the board proposes to raise and what the board actually spends. He also suggested that the town consider not having its own district. Tim Peloquin responded by saying that Surry has both its own SAU and district. The town was denied entry into SAU 29, so it had to form its own SAU. If the town was in SAU 29, it would save around \$50,000/year. He stated that, financially, it does not make sense to pursue reopening a town elementary school. Fall Mtn is not attractive to the town, and the only choice is tuitioning to Keene School District. Bill Russell asked to keep the meeting moving because there is nothing else the town can do. No further discussion. Motion passed.

Article 3 - AREA Agreement Shall the Surry School District participate in the AREA planning committee for the purpose of reviewing, revising, and renewing the AREA agreement with the Keene School District in accordance with RSA 195-A:14, and further, to authorize the Surry School Board to select three Board members to participate in the planning committee.

Tim Peloquin explained the purpose of the AREA agreement. He would like to see discussions with Keene School District about a tiered special ed rate based on services used, as opposed to one rate for special ed for all coded students. Bruce Smith asked about strategies to lessen the fluctuations from one year to the next on the tax rate. Caroll Lothrop reiterated that the tax rate is based on the tuition rate from the Keene School District and the number of students enrolled from the town.

Motion - Joshua Brooks; Second - Wayne Brown  
No further discussion. Motion passed.

Article 4 - Terms To transact any other business which may legally come before the meeting.

Motion to adjourn the meeting - Bruce Smith; Second - Wayne Brown

Meeting adjourned 7:29pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Melinda Garland