

Town of Stockbridge School District Annual Meeting Minutes - Draft

March 7, 2017

Kent Butterfield, Moderator, brought the meeting to order at 6:10 PM. He reminded everyone that the meeting was for registered voters only. Cathy Brown, Town Clerk, read the official warning.

Article 1: To elect a Moderator for the ensuing year. Carl Groppe took over to accept nominations for Moderator. Kathie Burns nominated Kent Butterfield. Seconded. Nominations closed and the Town Clerk was instructed to cast 1 ballot for Kent.

Article 2: To hear the reports and budget proposal of the Stockbridge Town School District officers. Janie Feinberg reviewed the accomplishments at the school over the past year. She pointed out that we are now part of the White River Valley Supervisory Union. There is now a full day of kindergarten and the Pre-K program has been expanded to include 3 year olds. She reviewed some of the grants received which included a wellness grant, Fresh fruit and vegetable grant and a comprehensive school climate survey. It was noted that the PTO received an Honorable Mention Certificate for the 2016 parent group of the year. Dr. Woods reviewed the curriculum and assessment reporting. Carl Groppe noted that due to the merger of supervisory unions Janis Boulbol was required to resign as School Director. Janie Feinberg was appointed to fill her position.

Betsy Shands reviewed the renovations and upgrades to the school building including reconfiguring the front office, front door lock and monitor systems installation, grease trap/drain work, rewiring for the computer system, kitchen upgrade and renovation and magnetic door closure system. They will be purchasing a new range before the end of the school year. Upcoming projects include roof repair – replacement, boiler replacement and repairs to the secondary heating system. The generator purchase and installation will have to wait. Betsy thanked Jim Shands and Brian Austin for their assistance on the Strategic Planning Committee.

Carl Groppe reviewed the education budget and associated costs. He pointed out that if we were to close the school at this time and tuition all students it would cost an additional \$28,063. He pointed out that currently there are a total of 86 students. Although the numbers have dropped the Board anticipates steady numbers going forward. The proposed budget returns \$79,200 of the surplus to the voters. Education spending is down \$53,899. The anticipated homestead tax rate is \$1.6106, a slight increase over last year's rate of \$1.604. The income cap for the education property tax is 2.6%.

Carl gave a status update of Act 46. The Supervisory Union has brought 3 plans forward to the SBOE. However, Stockbridge, is not part of any plan. The consolidation votes are scheduled for April 11th. If Rochester voters vote down the proposal the Board is prepared to study merging districts with them. He noted that Act 46 cannot take away school chose and no changes will occur for the 2017-2018 school year. The State could mandate consolidation of Stockbridge and Sharon. Stockbridge will perform a self-study and submit a stand- alone plan by November 1, 2017. Carl did note that Montpelier is currently considering many changes to Act 46. Joanne Mills asked about the Pre-K program and residency requirements. Carl stated that students do not have to live in the town for us to pay tuition.

Article 3: To see if the Town School District will vote to pay taxes in equal installments due August 15, 2017; the second due November 15, 2017. Craig moved to approve the article. Seconded and approved.

Article 4: Shall the voters of the school district approve the school board to expend \$1,736,707, which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year? It is estimated that this proposed budget, if approved, will result in education spending of \$16,398.07 per equalized pupil. This projected spending per equalized pupil is 7.23% higher than spending for the current year. Craig Cota moved to approve the article. Seconded and approved.

Article 5: Shall the voters allocate \$55,819 from the FY16 general fund balance to be added to the building reserve fund for purposes such as, but not limited to, energy efficiency upgrades, roof replacement and playground updates? Craig Cota moved to approve the article. Seconded and approved.

Article 6: To elect a School Director to a 3 year term, ending in 2020. Suzanne Butterfield nominated Janie Feinberg. Seconded. Donna Gallant nominated Brian Austin. Seconded. Nominations were closed. Janie introduced herself. She was a teacher and now owns a school improvement company. Brian is a lifetime Vermonter. He works for the Forest Service and has 2 children in the school. A paper ballot was requested. 40 Ballots Cast. Feinberg 22 Austin 18.

Article 7: Shall the voters authorize the School Board to borrow by issuance of bonds, or notes, not in excess of anticipated revenue for the current school year and the upcoming school year. Craig Cota moved to approve. Seconded and approved.

Article 8: To do any other proper and necessary business. Suzanne Butterfield asked that the minutes reflect the town's appreciation of Greg Crawford's artwork on the cover of the annual town report. Charity Colton pointed out that the numbers on the projected enrollment form don't include 2 students that attend Rutland. The Board stated that the budget was not based on those numbers. Kathie Burns requested that the School reports be submitted to the Auditors earlier next year. Donna Gallant wondered if there was a conflict of interest with the new board member and her business and pointed out that this was the first time that no board members have children in the elementary school. Betsy encouraged participation at their meetings. Dori Trudeau wondered if the Board could be increased from 3 to 5 members. Carl will investigate. Karen Ruben requested that test scores and projected enrollment numbers be included in the report next year. Suzanne Butterfield acknowledged Deb Matthews for attending the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM

Cathy Brown, Town Clerk