

**AUBURN SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING MINUTES  
AUBURN, NH  
FEBRUARY 6, 2017**

Moderator, James Tillery, called the 2016 Auburn School District meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, February 6, 2017. Mr. Tillery began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Alan Villeneuve, Chairman, Keith LeClair, Vice-Chairman, Maureen Murgio and Samantha Belcourt, Members, Mark Comeau, Clerk and Denise Royce, School District Clerk.

Also Present: Dr. Charles P. Littlefield, Superintendent; Mrs. Margaret Polak, Assistant Superintendent; Mrs. Karen Lessard, Business Administrator; Ms. Lori Collins, Principal, Ms. Michel O'Rourke, Assistant Principal, Mrs. Anne McSweeney, Director of Student Services; Peter Bronstein, Esquire. James Headd, Chairman of the Selectmen.

Mr. Tillery explained the procedures for tonight's meeting by saying that if anyone had something to say to please state your name and address and if they wanted to make a motion on one of the articles to write it down so that they could all read it and understand what it is they want to move. Mr. Tillery informed everyone that he would not address anyone on the floor unless they were standing at the mic unless it has to do with the point of order.

Mr. Tillery read each article and opened the floor for discussion.

- (2) Shall the Auburn School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$24,828,611 for the addition/renovation to the Auburn Village School, and authorize the issuance of not more than \$24,828,611 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act, (RSA 33:1, et. seq., as amended;) to authorize the Auburn School Board to apply for, obtain and accept federal, state or other aid, if any, which may be available for said project and to comply with all laws applicable to said project; to authorize the Auburn School Board to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; and to authorize the Auburn School Board to take any other action or to pass any other vote relative thereto; and further to raise and appropriate an additional sum of \$620,716 for the first year's interest payment on the bond? (3/5 ballot vote required) (Recommended by the School Board) (Recommended by the Budget Committee)

Mr. Tillery asked if there was any discussion on Article 2. Mr. Vieira of Pond View Drive began by asking why we are spending \$24, 828,611 and the fact that we are only

getting three (3) more classrooms and the fact that Raymond built a school for \$9,000,000 and they got 12 classrooms out of it. Mr. LeClair answered by saying that there was somewhere around 35,000 square feet of new space which is a lot more than three (3) additional classrooms and the old part of the building will be torn down and those classrooms would be completely replaced along with the portables. Mr. LeClair went on to say that it would include 6 classrooms plus the three (3) modular plus the existing wing from 1940. Mr. LeClair indicated that there would be four (4) additional classrooms. Mr. Vieira asked why everyone told that there would only be three (3) additional classrooms and that the construction would remain the same and that it was not going to be staffed and didn't believe it made any sense. Mr. Vieira further believed that it could be done for half the money. Ms. Murgó added that it was not just classroom space and that the portables alone are a big concern. Ms. Murgó pointed out that they needed space for the teachers to gather as well as the nurse's office which currently only has one bed for 600 plus students and is not handicap accessible. Ms. Murgó also stated that the locker rooms are not functional and that the bathrooms are disgusting and the children cannot wash their hands in the bathrooms and nor do they have a mirror and that the faculty bathroom is not up to date. They are looking at classroom space, nurse's office, gym, cafeteria, the bathrooms and administrative offices. Ms. Murgó indicated that there has not been a renovation in 30 years and because of that they are looking at a very complex solution to a very complex cause.

Mr. Tillery asked if everyone heard the answer okay. Everyone said yes.

Mrs. Jenkins of Spruce Lane asked what the tax impact would be because it was a 30 year bond and being the Tax Collector it would be important for her to have that information. Mr. LeClair indicated that the first year would be less and would be about .95 cents for the interest only portion and then the remaining years would be between \$1.80 and \$2.25 but until they go and buy a bond they would not know but there would be a range. Mrs. Jenkins had one more question with regard to the Raymond School where they got rid of their portables and obtained a new gym and that there have been articles in the newspaper as well and that their total was approximately \$9,000,000. Mrs. Jenkins asked the Board members if they looked into that company that Raymond obtained. Mr. LeClair commented that he was not fully aware of what the Raymond plan was but that they did look at Hampton and other sites as well. They have worked closely with a construction manager of a design firm and that all their costs are in line with previous projects in the past years. Mr. LeClair stated that they were impacting a lot of space as well as the entire site was getting reworked as well.

Mr. Vecchione of Bunker Hill Road stated that last year when they wanted to build they had some nice plans asking for \$35,000,000 and asked if they had any plans that

anyone could look at now. Mr. Vecchione also indicated that they were talking about tearing down the older section of this building and stated that his house was older than this building and that he has done maintenance on it all along. Mr. Vecchione believed that the Board's goal should be with regard to the safety of the children and to get rid of the outdoor portables and putting an addition at the end of this building because there were two (2) floors at the end of this building. Mr. Vecchione talked about adding bathrooms and making one of the rooms available for the nurse and just adding on to the existing building. Mr. Vecchione believed that by doing this would push all the seniors out of town and believed they needed to do their planning better. Ms. Murgio informed everyone that the written plans are available on the website at [AVS.com](http://AVS.com) and on the website they would find the reports from the Turner Group along with a presentation and all of the data.

Mr. Tillery asked if there was any other discussion. Further discussion ensued with regard to the school and the \$24 million dollar bond. Mr. Vieira asked if it was a union job. Mr. Villeneuve answered by saying that it was not a union job. Mr. Vieira asked if the project was put out to bid. Mr. LeClair stated that it was put out to bid but not on a final bid process but more so for the purposes of them creating a budget. Assuming it passes then they would negotiate the project. Mr. Vieira believed they needed to go back to the drawing board and find a better solution. With that in mind, Mr. Vieira asked the Moderator if he could make a motion. Mr. Tillery said yes.

Mr. Vieira made a motion to zero this out. Mr. Kelly believed it was inconsistent with the SB2 rules to zero out an amendment in a deliberative session. Mr. Tillery believed they could zero out this line item but could not zero out a line item on the budget and turned it over to the Board's attorney. At this time, Attorney Bronstein indicated that they could zero the number out as long as the subject matter did not change. The motion was seconded by a resident. Discussion continued.

Mr. Kelly of Westford Drive commented that he did listen to the presentation last year and believes that they should not make the same mistake that was made last year.

Ms. Christine Carlson of Raymond Road explained that she did tour the school because of the sticker shock for the cost proposed and saw that the school does need a facelift and did not believe it needed a huge \$23,000,000 upgrade. Ms. Carlson did not see anything wrong with the bathrooms but did notice that a few tiles were missing above the sink of which could be repaired. Ms. Carlson talked about the septic needing to be replaced which was not a big issue and should be replaced and agreed that some additional work needed to be done and could be done at a lesser expense to the town.

Mr. Mark Jordan of Noll's Farm Road wanted to know why did we let it get so bad in the first place where repairs should have been done along the way and agreed with Mr. Vecchione regarding the fact that when our own homes need repairs that we do it along the way and don't wait until it's too late and ask for a big increase. Mr. Jordan commented that he was here back in October 2016 when they did the presentation and the construction company was there and they said at the end of the meeting that they were going to go back and sharpen their pencils. Mr. Jordan further added that he came back in January and the cost went up \$1.7 million and the construction company wasn't even there to tell everybody why the increase was so much and asked about the line items that were supposed to decrease the cost and would like some answers on that because the construction company was not present tonight to answer those questions. Mr. Villeneuve commented that it was certainly their mistake by not having the construction company present tonight to answer questions and explained that they had eliminated approximately \$1,000,000 but that the bond numbers went up. Mr. Villeneuve explained that they did sharpen their pencils and took off everything they could take off but essentially it was the bond numbers that went up.

Mr. Tom Gonyea of Spofford Road asked what the bond rate was last year at the last election. Mr. LeClair stated that he would have to look it up but it was hovering in the high threes. Mr. Gonyea wanted to clarify what Mr. Villeneuve had stated previously by asking if the \$1.7 million dollar increase was solely because the bond rate increased two (2%) percent. Mr. Villeneuve said yes but also included a seven (7%) percent increase in construction cost.

Mrs. Kathleen Porter of Coleman Road began by saying that several years ago, this community voted to go SB2 that is why we are having a deliberative session and that many folks in this room tonight were proponents of that. Mrs. Porter further added that she believed we were doing a disservice to our community by zeroing this article out and believed that folks should have the opportunity to vote on this in March.

Mr. Steve Carroll of Heather Circle also believed that people should have the opportunity to vote on this article and that it should not be zeroed out.

Further discussion ensued with regard to square footage being increased by 35,000 square feet. Mr. Vecchione asked what the four (4) goals were. Mr. LeClair indicated that it had to do with the portables and modular, traffic flow around the building, safety and security and instructional space. Mr. LeClair indicated that a lot of the items could not be addressed without major renovations. Mr. LeClair reiterated that the entire presentation can be found online and that he would be happy to do it again at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday.

Mr. Vieira commented that, when it failed last year that the prudent thing to do would be to go back to the drawing board and come back with something a little more cost effective and believed that the fact that, that did not happen was a bit arrogant to him. Mr. Vieira talked about the schools in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Ms. Murgu noted that there was a difference between Massachusetts schools and New Hampshire schools. Ms. Murgu believed it was a good plan because it only lost by 7 votes. After discussions, Mr. Vieira stated that his motion still stands.

Ms. Jennifer Hodgdon of Bunker Hill Road talked about the Auburn Village School and how it's the teachers and staff and not the building and believed that the voters should be able to vote on this article.

Mr. Tillery indicated that there was a motion and a second and wanted to clarify the article for everyone present that they wanted the \$24,828,611 that they wanted it to be zero in all cases and that there was a \$620,716 value for the first year's interest rate to be zero as well. Mr. Tillery asked if anyone was unclear on the amendment. No comments were made at this time. Mr. Tillery read the first section aloud. At this time, Mr. Tillery asked for a vote. Mr. Tillery stated that the nays have it and that Article 2 will remain as written.

Mr. Tillery stated that he would entertain a motion to move the Article to the ballot. A motion was made and seconded and a vote was taken, and the Moderator declared that Article 2 will appear on the ballot as written.

Mr. Tillery moved on to Article 3:

- (3) Shall the Auburn School District vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Auburn School Board and the Auburn Education Association, which calls for the following increase in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels over the amount paid in the prior fiscal year:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Estimated Increase</u>
2017-2018	\$27,585
2018-2019	\$64,537
2019-2020	\$77,212

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$27,585 for the 2017 - 2018 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels? (Recommended by the School Board) (Recommended by the Budget Committee)

Mr. Tillery asked if there was any discussion on Article 3. Mrs. Barbara Coapland of Raymond Road asked why the Year 2017-2018, Year 2018-2019 and Year 2019-2020 is so large. Mr. Villeneuve commented that in the first year they receive a large reduction because they are changing their healthcare plan so there would be a significant savings during that first year. Discussion ensued with regard to the decrease from the first year to the following years.

At this time, Mr. Tillery stated that he would entertain a motion. A vote was taken, and the Moderator declared that Article 3 will appear on the ballot as written.

Mr. Tillery moved on to Article 4.

- (4) Shall the Auburn School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$13,724,982? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$13,616,316, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Auburn School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. (Recommended by the School Board) (Recommended by the Budget Committee) (Recommended by the Budget Committee)

Mr. Tillery asked if there was any discussion on Article 4. There were no questions at this time.

At this time, Mr. Tillery stated that he would entertain a motion for this article. A vote was taken, and the Moderator declared that Article 4 will appear on the ballot as written.

Mr. Tillery moved on to Article 5.

- (5) Shall the Auburn School District accept the recommendation of the School Administrative Unit Planning Committee not to recommend the organization, re-organization or withdrawal from SAU #15 in accordance with RSA 194-C:2, I (c)

Mr. Tillery asked if there was any discussion on Article 5. There were no questions at this time.

Mr. Tillery stated that he would entertain a motion for this article. A vote was taken, and the Moderator declared that Article 5 will appear on the ballot as written.

Mr. Tillery asked if there were any other business to discuss legally before us. None were noted.

Mr. Tillery stated that he would entertain a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn was made and seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Royce  
School District Clerk