

2024 ANNUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING DELIBERATIVE SESSION MINUTES

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PITTSFIELD DELIBERATIVE SESSION February 8, 2024

School District Moderator Gerard LeDuc called the First Session of the 2024 School District Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Pittsfield Middle High School Library Media Center Thursday, February 8, 2024. After explaining the rules of procedure, School District Moderator LeDuc asked School Board Chairman Adam Gauthier to lead the *Pledge of Allegiance*. Other School District officials in attendance included School Board members Adam Cote, Sandra Adams, Molly Goggin and Helen Schiff; School District Superintendent Bryan Lane and School District Attorney Barbara Loughman. School District Moderator LeDuc then read the introduction to the warrant:

To the inhabitants of the School District in the Town of Pittsfield in the County of Merrimack in the State of New Hampshire qualified to vote in District affairs are hereby notified of the:

Session One, Deliberative Session, will be held as follows:

Thursday, February 8, 2024 - Snow date Friday, February 9, 2024 (same time and place)
7:00 p.m., Pittsfield Middle High School Media Center, 23 Oneida Street

Session Two, Official Voting, will be held as follows:

Tuesday, March 12, 2024 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Pittsfield Middle High School
Gymnasium 23 Oneida Street

ARTICLE 01:

To choose by ballot the following officers:

- two School Board members for a three (3) year term
- one School District Moderator for a three (3) year term

ARTICLE 02 Operating Budget

To see if the Pittsfield School District will vote to raise and appropriate an operating budget, not including provisions on special warrant articles, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote in the first session, for the purposes set for therein, totaling \$10,947,127.49.

Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$10,874,045.49, which is the same as the last year with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Pittsfield School District or by law, or the government 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. (Majority vote required)

2023 ANNUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING DELIBERATIVE SESSION MINUTES

Estimated Tax Impact \$1.56 per thousand dollars of assessed value

(Recommended by the School Board: 5-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 11-0)

Article 02 was read by School District Moderator LeDuc.

School District Moderator LeDuc opened the floor for discussion.

Accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation, School District Board Chairperson Gauthier explained that the proposed budget is a 5.46% increase over the 2023 budget. However, the School District is expected to receive an additional \$79,770.00 from Federal and State adequacy grants, which would result in an overall increase from last year of \$1.56 per thousand. A property with a value of \$200,000 would have an estimated increase of \$312 annually. The three main reasons for the increase in the budget are a 18.6% in health insurance costs; the requirement to hire six additional para educators to meet federal education mandates; and previously approved salary increases as part of the collective bargaining agreement with the Education Association of Pittsfield. The default budget is \$10,818,721.05 which is \$128,406.44 less than the proposed operating budget. This is \$438,803 more than the current operating budget. Items taken out of the proposed budget to create the default budget include salary and benefit increases for non-union staff along with reductions in requests for supplies, new books and field trip expenses.

Dan Schroth stated he came to the meeting to advocate for the teachers and students. He asked if anyone knows when the State Representatives will fulfill their constitutional duty as mandated by the court to adequately fund education. He stated he sees State Representative Clayton Wood in the audience and asked if he had any answers.

There being no further discussion, Article 02 shall appear on the ballot as written.

ARTICLE 03 FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

To see if the Pittsfield School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$330,000 for the support of the School Lunch Program. This appropriation will be funded by a like amount of revenue from the sales of food and State and Federal sources. (Majority vote required)

Estimated Tax Impact is \$0.00 per thousand dollars of assessed value

(Recommended by the School Board: 5-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 11-0)

Article 03 was read by School District Moderator LeDuc.

2024 ANNUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING DELIBERATIVE SESSION MINUTES

School District Moderator LeDuc opened the floor for discussion.

Accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation, School Board member Adams explained that supporting this warrant article allows the School District to accept federal funds to support the Food Service program with no effect on the tax rate. Failure to support this warrant article would require the School District to raise the \$330,000.

There being no further discussion, Article 03 shall appear on the ballot as written.

ARTICLE 04 RECOVER AND EXPEND GRANT FUNDS

To see if the Pittsfield School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$850,000 for the support of Federal and private foundation grant-funded educational programs of the Pittsfield School District. This appropriation is contingent upon receiving revenue from Federal grants and private foundations and will be expended in accordance with Federal and State requirements upon approval by the NH Department of Education or private foundation requirements. *(Majority Vote Required)

Estimated Tax Impact \$0.00 per thousand dollars of assessed value.

(Recommended by the School Board: 5-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 11-0)

Article 04 was read by School District Moderator LeDuc.

School District Moderator LeDuc opened the floor for discussion.

Accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation, School Board member Schiff explained this warrant article asks the voters to give the School District permission to accept federal funds to support the positions of Title I teachers, Title I para educators, Special Education para educators, Family Services Coordinator, School Psychologist, professional development for staff as well as other supports for students. There is no tax impact should this warrant article pass.

There being no further discussion, Article 04 shall appear on the ballot as written.

ARTICLE 05 DUMPSTER REPLACEMENT CAPITAL RESERVE FUND

To see if the school district will vote to discontinue the Dumpster Replacement Capital Reserve Fund created at school meeting warrant article 6 on March 12, 2019. Said funds, which were \$1.51 on December 31, 2023, with any accumulated interest to date of withdrawal, are to be transferred to the school district's general fund. (Majority vote required)

Estimated Tax Impact \$0.00 per thousand dollars of assessed value

2023 ANNUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING DELIBERATIVE SESSION MINUTES

(Recommended by the School Board: 5-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 11-0)

Article 05 was read by School District Moderator LeDuc.

School District Moderator LeDuc opened the floor for discussion.

Accompanied by the PowerPoint presentation, School Board member Goggin explained this capital reserve fund was established to create a funding source for a dumpster for each school. The dumpsters have been purchased and are in use. This warrant article seeks to close out the account which as of December 31, 2023 had \$1.51 remaining. Supporting this warrant article would allow the Trustees of the Trust Fund to close this account permanently.

There being no further discussion, Article 05 shall appear on the ballot as written.

School District Moderator LeDuc asked if there was any other business to be brought before the Body.

Dan Schroth stated he was now speaking on behalf of the students. He asked when State Representatives will take climate change seriously. He asked State Representative Clayton Wood if he had any response.

There being no further discussion or business, School District Moderator LeDuc adjourned the meeting at 7:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Erica Anthony
School District Clerk