

To: Dr. Daniel Moulis, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Gretchen Whiting, School Board Chairman
Ms. Maureen Dionne, School Board Vice-Chairman
From: Diane Cannava, School District Clerk

RE: School District Deliberative Minutes

Attached is a hard copy of the transcribed Minutes of the Hudson School District Deliberative Session held on February 10, 2024.
For ease of public access and distribution, an electronic version has been delivered to your respective SAU81 addresses.



Date signed: March 13, 2024

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MAR 14 2024

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

**Minutes of the School District Deliberative Session of February 10, 2024
Community Center, Lyons Avenue
Hudson, New Hampshire**

1. OPENING

The Honorable Paul Inderbitzen, School Moderator, called the meeting to order at 9:00am.
Presentation of the flags by Alvirne High School JrROTC Honor Guard
Pledge of Allegiance sung by Alvirne High School's B-Naturals
National Anthem to the Flag led by: School Board Chair Gretchen Whiting

2. REMARKS BY THE MODERATOR

Ladies and Gentlemen this is the Deliberative Session of the Hudson School District. You will act as a legislative body to determine the final form of the Warrant Articles that will be voted on at the March 12th Election. All Articles, by law, MUST be placed on the ballot. The rules we will follow are the Moderator's Rules which are in the handout you received as you checked in. If you have any questions about the rules, please feel free to ask for clarification at anytime by raising a "Point of Order". This body may also vote to establish rules that you deem necessary. You may also vote to overrule the decision of the Moderator. If you are new to the Deliberative Session, please review these rules. As a Legislature, we will be discussing the Warrant Articles before us. These discussions will be respectful of everyone's opinion. Please be respectful of all comments and opinions as you would want yours to be respected. Keeping personalities out of the debate, please use terms such as "the previous speaker", "the School Board member", or "the Budget Committee member". All questions and comments are to be directed through the Moderator. There is no requirement that anyone must yield to answer a question posed to them from the voter. If you are a registered voter of Hudson, you were issued a YELLOW VOTER CARD. We will use this card for any votes that were taken at the meeting. Do not lose the VOTER CARD. You won't get another one. After the meeting, you can recycle the voter card in a box at the back of the room where you picked up your packet. Only registered voters of Hudson are allowed to participate in the discussion of the warrant. There are, however, some non-voters, staff members of the school district and some others who will be allowed to speak and to answer questions to assist us with this meeting. Please turn off your cell phones and pages off or to silent mode so as not to interrupt the discussions. We will be taking a few breaks as needed. Refreshments are for sale by the Hudson Women's Club. Also, **this meeting is being televised live on Hudson cable and it will be available for viewing or streaming after today on HCTV.** We appreciate the Hudson Cable Committee and the staff for HCTV or all they do in keeping the citizens of Hudson informed. Just a note, at the end of this meeting, the Budget Committee and the School Board will hold separate meetings to consider their recommendations on the Warrant Articles.

3. NONVOTER

Nonvoter staff will be allowed to speak to assist with the meeting.
Dr. Daniel Moulas, Superintendent
Kimberly Organek, Assistant Superintendent
Rachael Borge, Director of Special Services
Jennifer Burk, Business Administrator
Diane Gorrow, Attorney for the School District

**4. INTRODUCTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD BY CHAIRMAN
GRETCHEN WHITING [refer to page 3]**

**5. INTRODUCTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE BY CHAIRMAN
NORMAN MARTIN [refer to page 2]**

6. **RETURN OF THE WARRANT TO THE DISTRICT CLERK [refer to page 43]**

Moderator Inderbitzen confirming that the School District Clerk, Diane Cannava, was in possession of the Warrant.

7. **READING OF THE WARRANT ARTICLES AND ACTIONS OF THE MEETING**

Moderator Paul Inderbitzen: To the inhabitants of the Hudson School District, Hudson, New Hampshire, qualified to vote in district affairs:

FIRST SESSION OF THE ANNUAL MEETING (DELIBERATIVE SESSION)

You are hereby notified to meet in the Hudson Community Center in said District on Saturday, on the 10th day of February, 2024, at 9:00 am for the first session of the annual school district meeting, for explanation, discussion, and debate of the Warrant Articles 1- 9. Warrant Articles may be amended subject to the following limitations: (a) warrant articles whose wording is prescribed by law shall not be amended, (b) warrant articles that are amended shall be placed on the official ballot for a final vote on the main motion, as amended, and (c) no warrant article shall be amended to eliminate the subject matter of the article.

SECOND SESSION OF THE ANNUAL MEETING (OFFICIAL BALLOT VOTING)

You are hereby notified to meet again at the Hudson Community Center or the Alvirne High School Cafeteria in said district on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, beginning at 7:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm for the second session of the annual school district meeting to vote by official ballot upon the following subjects:

ELECTION OF OFFICERS (Separate Ballot vote)

*. To choose one (1) member of the School Board for the ensuing three (3) years

Moderator: (continuing) And to vote on these Articles **[Moderator reading Warrant Article 1]**

WARRANT ARTICLE 1

Operating Budget

Shall the Hudson School District vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant article and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant article or as amended by vote at the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$67,009,020? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$67,596,534, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Hudson School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting under RSA 40:13-X and XVI to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.

Estimated tax rate impact: \$.01

Not Recommended by the Hudson School Board 5-0

Default tax rate impact: \$.13

Recommended by the Budget Committee 6-3

Moderator: (continuing) **I will recognize the Chairman of the Budget Committee, Mr. Martin, to present Warrant Article #1.**

Chairman Norman Martin: Thank you, Mr.Moderator. Before I begin that **I'd like to introduce the Budget Committee members** that worked with me as a committee his year to present this Budge for you. I will begin to my left, Vice Chairman Bill Cole, committee member Shawn Jasper, committee member James Lawrence, committee member Kathy Leary, committee

member Patrick Quinlan, committee member Shawn Murray, and committee member Kevin Walsh, and our selectman liaison, Selectman (Dave) Morin.

Moderator: (interjecting) Mr. Martin, could you hold for just a moment....I would like the School Board Chairman, Ms. Whiting, to introduce the School Board side of the room, please.

Chair Gretchen Whiting: Good Morning, everyone. Before I do a quick introductions, I want to make sure that everyone is aware that our Annual Report will be available to everyone during voting at the back table. This year we have made a double dedication. The first is to Lisa Weaver who is a former para who passed away on June 2nd. In addition to Lieutenant Colonel Cheetham who is the New Hampshire Teacher of the Year. **So for the introductions, I have my Vice- Chair Maureen Dionne, Mike Campbell and Gary Gasdia. Ethan Beals is not available as he is at a prior engagement.** I would also like to introduce to you our Superintendent, Dr. Dan Moulis, Director of Administration, Jen Burke, In the audience with us we have to answer any questions as necessary, our Assistant Superintendent, Kim Organek, our Director of Special Services, Rachael Borge. We also have our Director of Technology (Kevin Peterson),our Director of Facilities (John Pratte), and our Principals from our various schools. Thank you.

Moderator:(adding) We also have our District's Attorney, Ms. Gorrow. Thank you. Mr. Martin, Article 1.

Chair Martin: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. So the Budget Committee received from the School District a budget request for \$68,363,461. [SLIDE: *Budget Committee Recommendations*] Through a series of meetings that the Budget Committee put on, we reduced the budget by \$1,354,441 leaving us with a recommended expense budget of \$67,009,020. And the Town appropriation will be \$47,487,734. There's agency grants for \$16,193,307. Federal Funds are \$1,527,243. Food Service Funds \$1,454,150. Trustees \$50,000.CTE Farm Fund \$296,586 which brings you to your \$67,009,020. [SLIDE: *New Positions Removed from the Budget*] What the Budget Committee did is removed all full time positions in the budget [correction] additional, thank you. So we were presented with 15 part time para-professional positions going from part time to full time and we reduced that back down. We kept the positions in the budget at part time which made a reduction of \$830,100. We converted the part time Administrative Assistant to Special Education Coordinator, Early Learning Center. They wanted that to go full time, we kept that at part time for \$44,675. New counselor at Dr. H.O. Smith, we reduced \$102,025. New preschool teacher at Nottingham West, we reduced that by \$115,632. New Applied Behavior Analysis Coordinator at the District Office from \$137,468 and a full time Student/Family Early Interventionist at Memorial School for \$124,541.Which is the \$1,354,441 that we reduced. [SLIDE: *New Positions Remaining in the Budget*] The positions that are remaining in the budget was to shift 1.5 full time SEL Coaches from Grant Funded to Operating Budget (for \$176,317). Six new Part Time Paras at LLS for \$104,976. Two Humanities at AHS to improve academic support (\$66,078.) LPN to RN at AHS (\$33,539). A Part Time ESOL Tutor at AHS (\$33,039). Computer Science Teachers at CTE (\$32,028). HR Recruiters at District Office (\$53,825). Finance Bookkeeper at District Office (\$32,295). And those positions in the budget at \$532,097. [SLIDE: *Property Tax Comparison*] That slide up there represents Hudson(\$15.68), Derry(\$20.68), Londonderry(\$15.65), Salem(\$16.96), Windham(\$21.40), Pelham(\$18.19), Merrimack(\$19.45), Hollis(\$16.66), Mildred(\$22.17), Litchfield.(\$20.94). Budget Chairman Martin concluded that and if you look at the tax rate for each town Hudson is just above Londonderry at \$15.68 per thousand for your tax rate. All the other towns are much higher, a few pennies, a few dollars. So you are getting I believe you're getting a good education for your students with the amount of money this town spends for their school program because there's the school's

tax rate is actually the lowest if you look it's \$8.79 and it's lower than every other community and you're still getting a good education. And we haven't really haven't moved anytime, touched anything as far as academic support for any student, it's just the positions, the funding and bringing part time to full time. In a time where I feel the economy is still be not well and there are people that are, your pay is not catching up to the spendings that towns wanted. And that's why reduced the budget in the manner in where we did. Thank you.

Moderator: (continuing) Thank you. **I will now recognize Chairman Whiting for the School Board's perspective.**

Chair Whiting: Good morning. [SLIDE: *WARRANT ARTICLE 1 Operating Budget*] This slide shows the summary of the operating budget vs. the default with the difference between the two. Along with the primary estimate of the tax rate impact. The preliminary estimated tax rate factors and any changes in revenue expected to be received from state and local sources, as well as the fund balance to offset the tax rate. The budget process begins with a lot of effort and consideration from all levels of personnel, teachers, department heads, directors, principals, SAU administration and the superintendent. Members then contact to obtain updated information for prices for the next fiscal year, when budgeting for supplies, furniture and services. Administration looks at the availability of funding at the federal and the state levels. Takes into account all these requirements around the services for students which need to be factored into the budget. The administration and the School Board believe that the Board's budget as presented the needs of students met through a fiscally responsible Ever since the 20-21 school year we have experienced significant changes in recruitment for our open positions, including teachers, paraprofessionals, educators, food service staff and other positions, and finding sufficient numbers to cover regular absences, such as taking personal days. Our staff has been working extremely hard to and we appreciate the efforts of everyone. [SLIDE: *WARRANT ARTICLE 1 operating budget*] The initial budget proposed by the superintendent of schools was \$69,767, 506. The School Board made a numbers of changes to this budget that \$68,363,461 which was higher than the default budget by \$67,596, 534. The default budget is calculated based on the current year's operating budget plus any contractual obligations we have, such as the increase for the second year of the contracts approved last year, such as the teachers' and custodians' contract approved in 2023, expenses related to transportation and budgeted tuition costs. Minus any one-time expenditures. The default budget calculation found on page 14 of the Thus, the budget development continued with the School Board's budget being forwarded to the Budget Committee for consideration. The Budget Committee held their budget meetings from early December to early January. Ultimately it is the Budget Committee's to use bottomline budget as it appears on the warrant for the deliberative session. Based on the work of the Budget Committee The budget has been set at \$67,009,020. [SLIDE: *BUDGET OVERVIEW(ALL FUNDS)*] The overall proposed budget including all funds reflects on an increase of \$569,185 or a 0.86% over the current year's operating budget. The top line in this summary General Fund reflects the increase of \$1,805,094 or 2.92%. We also see a significant decrease in the Federal Funds as the remaining ESSER Grant and drop off. Changes to raise the the tax rate impact. As all of under the categories of Federal Funds and Food Service. The Alvirne CTE and Trustees are offset by revenue and changes in those categories do not impact the tax rate. [SLIDE: *GENERAL FUND SUMMARY*] This slide provides more of what was on the prior slide. Overall the has increased by \$1,805,094. established by the Budget Committee. The main contributing factors to this increase are the second year of the teachers' contract that was approved by the voters in March, 2023 and the second year of the teamsters' contract, custodians and maintenance contract, which was also approved March, 2023. Plus increases to Special Education and Transportation costs. [SLIDE: *COMMUNITY SCHOOL TAX RATES*

2024] This slide shows the education tax rate for Hudson and other districts. Hudson's tax rate is second from the bottom of the list at \$10.08. [SLIDE: *COST PER PUPIL FY23*] The state average cost per pupil is for FY23. The state average for fiscal year 2022 was \$19,400. The cost per pupil in Hudson \$17,375. It was \$17,154 in 2022. This is significantly under the average and lower in comparison to a number of the surrounding communities. [SLIDE: *FUND BALANCE HISTORY*] This slides shows recent years of fund balances of the school district. Traditionally the fund balance is made up of and benefit savings as the district potentially paid money as we experienced an up turnover. As long as employed or retire from the district or move on in their careers, the district maybe able to hire experienced staff members who come in lower than budget salary levels. In some cases a member with a family level health insurance plan may leave and a new staff member may only take a single level. There may also be a savings as results of a warmer winter with lower energy costs or we may be able to get additional discount as we go out to bid on supplies and services. It is healthy for a school district to have around a 2-3% of a budget remaining as a fund balance at the end of the year. And any fund balance that is left over is used to offset the tax rate for the next fiscal year by lowering the total amount that needs to be raised. A positive fund balance demonstrates prudent fiscal management and distributions toward an excellent rating score when applying for bonds and And it means the district does not end up with a deficit appropriation, spending more money than was approved by the voters. In the last three fiscal years however we have had more of a fund balance than usually than what we preferred due to our not being able to fill a number of staff positions. This has been a common occurrence felt by many school districts across the state and the U.S. So Hudson is not unique in that regard. [SLIDE: *SUMMARY OF WARRANT ARTICLES - ESTIMATED TAX RATE*] This final slide shows, just provides a summary of the warrant articles being reviewed today and the preliminary estimated tax rate impact of these warrant articles as currently written. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. **We will now open Warrant Article #1 the operating budget to questions, comments, amendments.** Yes, ma'am.

Patty Langlais, 22 Stonewood Lane: I rise to make an amendment to the operating budget. I would like to add in \$500,000. And if I can get a second and we vote I will speak to it.

Moderator: Motion made by Mrs. Langlais, Is there a second. Mrs. Putnam in the back. Motion to amend is to add \$500,000 to the operating budget making it \$67,509,020. To speak to the amendment, Mrs. Langlais.

[Amendment to Article 1]

MOTION: TO ADD \$500,000 TO THE OPERATING BUDGET.

MADE BY: PATTY LANGLAIS; SECONDED BY: DEBRA PUTNAM

Langlais: So I was going to get up here and I was going to do 900 and I said well and I gave it some thought and listened to the presentations. So my reasoning behind this is first, the paras. For many years when I first got on the School Board long, long time ago we had almost all full time paras and since then we have cut these paras down to part time paras. As you can see over time it's such a poor idea and I was always against it. But if you go by any schools in the past couple of years you will see on their boards there is paras needed, paras needed. Currently there is about 32 positions for paras that is empty. That's huge. I'm not going to speak what that does to the staff cause there's many principals over here and staff that should get up and speak to what I'm talking about and what it means to your day when we're short all

those paras. It is very disrespectful to a para who is an educator to be told sorry you're not entitled to benefits because you're short half an hour out of a week's time. That's just sort of a slap in the face. These people work so hard. They are educators. We need them. I also want to include the special ed preschool teacher in this. If that's what they choose to do. As people everyone needs to be a little smart in this. We can get our preschoolers to where that can be in special ed because it means later on they might degrade and not need our special ed services anymore. We need to start them young. Cause in the long run it helps these kids tremendously. So those are my reasons and like I said please I invite you to come up and explain what your day is like when you're missing paras. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. We will now address the amendment which is to add the 500,000. Mr. Jasper.

Jasper: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. I rise in opposition to the amendment. While I appreciate what the maker of the motion has to say, one of the considerations and a very important one that the Budget Committee took into place to the next article, Article 2, that will be on. This article includes what we are told is a very substantial raise that is for the paras. And I don't know if there is any disagreement that the paras as not being paid at an inappropriate rate. The School Board told us that they expect that this will solve some of the problems. That if you look here you can see that over the two years this is just about 1.1million. Now it isn't just paras. There are other positions. There are currently 108 part time paras in the district and I think 24 are full time. So this would add a substantial amount of money with benefits. It's over \$50,000 per position to add from part time to full time. We've been going through this problems with part time paras for a while. I'm not saying it's good but the School Board negotiated a good faith contract and for that kind of money the Budget Committee felt that we should see what the impact was. There are also teacher positions that are vacant. There are vacancies all over the place. This is a substantial amount . They had a plan in place here and while sure you could say well let's just move forward with both. That's a lot of money. I know you look at the tax rate and that, oh well the tax rate is only going up a penny, it's because the budget the School Board is projected that they are going to have left over for the end of the year is not a real impact in terms of you just look at what the budget it will be is because of that. Now if you look the motion 500,000 that 500,000 is just about ten cents on the tax rate. With what the Budget Committee recommended and the warrant articles are, that's twenty cents. This brings that twenty cents to thirty cents. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on the amendment to add \$500,000. Yes, ma'am.

Peggy Huard, 22 David Drive: I also rise in opposition to the amendment. As you can see from the list of fund balances even without adding that back there is a significant amount of fund balance left. In some cases they actually do fill those positions. In any good governance or fiscal management you would not keep budgeting and relaxing the tax payers for something that has a very small likelihood of being filled. I find that the penny tax impact don't be deceived, the penny just represents the increase. And as Mr. Jasper, the previous speaker explained that is only the increase. What you don't see if you look at the detail. When I looked at the revenue coming from the tax payers looked to be about a ten -million dollar increase from 2023 actuals to 2024 budget. I'm not sure wha changed during the budget proceedings but if you look at the original revenue document there was an increase to the tax payers of ten-million dollars. I don't know about the rest of you but I did not like my tax bill increase this year. I'm at a point in y life where I'm retired, paying tuition proudly out of pocket without going into debt. And if you can actually control your spending I ask you and I'm prepared to done specifics later you need to be more fiscally conservative. You claim that you're being prudent

because you have a fund balance left. Well I find that to be wasteful and deceptive and an abuse to the tax payers. You can do better, Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on the amendment to add 500,000 to the budget. Yes, Sir.

Mike Lee, 22 Glasgow Circle: I speak in support of the amendment. As an educator in this district for over 30 years I've seen the devastating effects of cutting paras from full time to part time. And it's even more devastating to me because of the needs of today's students. We have more students that have 504's and IEP's than ever before when I first started my career. And therefore teachers need and the students need more support than ever before. It's not like the old days when I first started teaching. It's much different. And the turnover of both paras and classroom teachers has impacted by cutting the paras' to part time. Having those full time paras is a huge difference in terms to what they have contributed to the students and teachers. So the students that need. The teachers are not burnt out in a short period of time to meet the needs of the students today. Picture teaching in a block and in the middle of your block the para who is supporting your class has to walk out because they're part time, they're done. And then you have to spend time updating the para on what they missed and for the next day. I think today should not be cutting these paras when we need every bit of an advantage we can get to keep and retain the part time paras and full time teachers who are doing . As an earlier speaker mentioned we are getting a lot of bag for our buck. Absolutely but we need every competitive advantage we can get. So I do support the amendment. As a matter of fact I think the amendment could be more. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion. Mr. Jasper for a second time. Do we have someone who wishes to speak for a first time. Yes, go ahead.

Darcy Orellana, 12 Robin Drive: I stand in support of this amendment. When we talk about we funded academics but we don't include the people that provide and deliver the academics we are missing the big picture of what education is about. These staff who work in schools and I can speak from a very personal perspective now because I do work in a school. I'm a current tutor and retired educator of thirty years. I worked in Hudson and when I see what the para do and how they engage with students and families, with the administrators, with the teachers it is remarkable. The level of flexibility that those educators have to know all the differences in all the different classrooms is amazing. So to simply add back \$500,000 to support that part of academics to me is a no-brainer. I fully support this and hope this room does too. Thank you.

Moderator: Yes, ma'am, to speak a first time. Your name and address, please.

Karen Emerson, 3 Sousa Boulevard: I rise in support. I have to say I am someone who works in a school and I do see every day how this impacts students, teachers, the environment, the culture of the school. I also see how we discuss this effects the culture of the school and how we need to be very respectful of the people we want to keep in the district. If we have these conversations and we don't recognize that effort it doesn't matter. I go to that school to do my job, to help a kid. I have a face in mind when I come in. I want them to be learning. I want them to be .But we are in the middle of sickness. People are sick everywhere. I can't get into a lot of the details because of what I'd love to say because of privacy and FERPA. But we are already dealing with people having the flu, RSV, COVID. We are already reduced in staff. Children are sick. Adults are sick. We are barely getting what we need. So to have to fight so hard. When someone asks you for something and they say about these needs. IT's not responsible. That's all I have to say.

Moderator: Thank you.. Further discussion on warrant article1. [inquiry made by S.Jasper, Budget Committee member to Moderator} Let's have the people who have not spoken a first time. Yes, sir.

Bob Wherry, 37 James Way: Just a quick question about the proposed amendment. Is was generally to be \$500,000 without specifics to allocations for the paras or other things. Is that the correct understanding of the proposal. So it would just be given without the direction and without any specificity towards the positions that people are begging for. Is that correct.

Moderator: That's correct. The 500,000 would be added to the bottomline. It would be up to the School Board to apply it. Although the intent from the maker of the motion was to apply it to those areas, but here is no guarantee it would go to those areas. I'm sure the Board would considerate that. Ms. Roy.

Kara Roy, 46 March Road: So I stand in support of this. I think as the previous speaker said you can't divide education support with paralegals [paraprofessionals]. They are one and the same. They have to support each other. The other thing I have is a question. I'm curious about how much we gave for, how much of our budget was taken out for school vouchers. If anyone can answer that question.

Moderator: Question of the School Board. The finance. Do we know how much money the budget was reduced for the school vouchers. Do we even get that information. Ms. Burk. We don't get that information.

Roy: Okay. I find that a little horrifying.

Moderator: Yes, sir.

Craig Powers, 31 Cedar Street: My inclination is to vote against this 500K not because I think it is too much, could be too little. Background, I spent the last two years volunteering full time in another school district as a kindergarten teacher, full time, unpaid. And I've seen what paras go through. Everyday the teacher I worked with didn't know if they would have a para. You would put your game plan together. Again this is focussed on kindergarten. There was a very good argument made by a previous speakers that spoke to if we can get the kids a good foundation now that maybe it reduces cost ten years from now. I kinda buy into that theory. But my experience in another school district which sounds very much like this school district is that paras were like little pons and they were part time paras and they would be moved around at the whim of, not the whim, but based on the tyranny of circumstances that morning. We need paras over here, we need paras over there. So for a teacher to be able to actually plan an activities especially for the youngens, for the kindergarteners, where you need that hands on, that need of need with the children. I think paras at whit large is a problem. I just don't know if throwing 500K as a process is the best we can do. And that is my inclination. But the question, Mr. Moderator, assuming this gets defeated and we are back to the budget warrant article which is not recommended five to nothing by the Board. What are the top three risks to not going to get done and do we have the risk, substantive risk, based on risk of expenses or actually blow the budget or will the risk and/or will the risk be on the intangible side. Instead of a kindergartener knowing 250 words by the time they leave kindergarten, which is where we

had our kids by having extra sources viruses with a full time person that they couldn't move around. Or would we have, or would we have children in kindergarten at 20 words. Meaning there are risks financially and there are risks on the intangibles. And that's the question, Mr.

Moderator, what are those top three risks related to the warrant article that the School Board thinks we would experience.

Moderator: Thank you. [request to speak by Budget Committee member] Well, it was a question of the Board. If the Board let's the Budget Committee respond. If the Board wants to respond. Mr. Gasdia will yield.

Gary Gasdia: Good morning. I think that is actually a great question because the interesting thing about it is, I think one of our previous speakers mentioned it, is it about the people and the support that has. And so if you look at this to say will they know 20 words, 40 words or 50 words, I don't think there's an answer for that. I think what we do know as a school is we don't have the supports in place that we need. And so if it's the paras we need for those positions that were put in the budget because the professionals that do this for a living felt that this would allow us to have a better experience for the students which in turn will give them better education. So I think our last speaker that his particular experience the paras have to be used as pons and the reason for that, there aren't enough. And so the thought process behind moving the paras to full time, what we have heard through all our is you're not getting I can go across the river and get my benefits. If we came in front of this body and the Town and said the solution is to make all our paras full time, that's going to give us enough to give us the support we need. I guarantee that would be voted down because that's an extremely high number. So there is work that is done in the para contrast that we will account for in Article 2. This was a little bit more support that would be given so that the teachers that are in the classroom, like what was said, know with a little bit of certainty they are going to have that para. So they'll be able to do that. Or maybe some of these other positions again because I want to be clear part of this will be who can we actually hire. But the idea behind all this is that if you have these supports whether it's the para in the classroom or whether it's the school counselor or the family interventionist that can deal with some of the intangibles. As one of our previous speakers aid it's not the good old days. There's a lot of things coming into the classroom. If that is in place then kids can learn and if kids can learn the trickle effect will be they will do better. whether that's on test scores, whether that's in being better humans. But that's the idea behind this, We need support. We need a lot of support whether that's in the classroom or in our counseling departments, whatever it is we need support. And when we lack that our teachers are scrambling and they're going back and forth. And so can I give you a number of what's missing. No. I will tell you though I agree with the previous speaker that we get a really good bang for our buck. We do, but is that good enough. And I guess that's to me the ultimate question. If you really say what I want more than anything for the kids in this town is to get a good value for my dollar. Would it be worse if we only spend ten cents. No. What we want is better. Right. Throwing unlimited amounts of money is not the answer. But in this particular case if we can get more support, you will see an impact. Now whether that slows the downward spiral or helps us go up, I don't know. I can't give you a number but I can tell you that if we leave things as status quo all you have to do is look at the trends. I can tell you where things are going and we need help and this would help.

Moderator: Mr. Jasper from the Budget Committee will yield to that question as well.

Jasper: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. And it is a good question. And the answer is something that I think the Budget Committee looked at and you heard the Chair of the School Board tell you

that for the last three years we have left more money on the table than we have wanted to. So the answer to the question is that this budget provides more money than we have spent in the previous year. The School Board has within this Warrant Article we are talking about the ability to transfer that money around to purposes that exists. They couldn't 't create a new purpose. But paras are a purpose. The School Board's telling you and that's why I told you the tax rate is only looking to go up a penny because they're looking to bring so much money in. Today the School Board could convert as many of those part time paras to full time as they want to within the appropriation. They have chosen not to do so for whatever reason but they can do that because we don't have a restriction on converting part time to full time. They work within that appropriation. So if you look at that fact giving millions back, they could next year already convert these vacancies. And we have a lot of vacancies full time and part time within the school system. So there is not a need for an additional appropriation because we're not spending to our potential now. They don't need the Budget Committee's approval to change these to full time positions. That's why we looked at the contract coming in. We looked at the vacancies which are substantial. And they can do exactly what they've asked. They would be spending more money spent this year in this budget provides them with more in total than they spent and more than they actually have. This is an increase in the budget in total. There is no reason to do this except for the emotions that run with this and the feeling that we need to do more. The money and the resources are there. They need to take advantage of them. They don't need this five-hundred thousand. Would it get the to utopia, no. But would it get up far above where we are today, yes. Again, that is the answer to the question. We can do more and this, the cut that the Budget Committee did does not harm education because there is more money available that isn't being spent proven by the money that is being returned from the budget. Thank you, Mr. Moderator.

Moderator: Further discussion on the amendment of adding back 500,000. Yes, sir.

James Crowley, 4 Fairway Drive: I support this 500,000. I'm retired and wages don't go up very much either, but I think education is one of the most important things we can do in this town. We get a full Board here that's worked tirelessly on this. Now they wanted sixty-eight million, three-hundred thousand and some change. That was cut by down to sixty-seven million by the Budget Committee. When I look at Article 2 you're adding back a million. This five-hundred thousand gets us up to where they did all their work, back up to around sixty-eight million. I don't think it's a very proud thing to be that we're next to the bottom tax rate for education and it's definitely the most important thing this town can provide. Education helped me all my life and the better education you have to start with is para, I forget what you call them, para a real benefit to have that. So I'm suppose this five-hundred thousand. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on the amendment.

Kimberly Allan, 3 Daniel Webster Drive: I work in a neighboring school district and I need some clarification. The previous speaker who said he wanted to put the 500,000 into the budget eluded to the fact that paraeducators who come for a couple hours a day and then leave our students stranded. What is the part time hours that a paraeducator works. I know in other neighboring school districts they are from 7:30 in the morning to 2:30 in the afternoon and that's considered part time. But the entire day is covered.

Moderator: Question of the Board. Chairman Whiting will yield.

Whiting: A part time paraprofessional works 5.5 hours in a day. Which is does not equal a full school day. Does that answer your question.

Allan: It does but how much are the kids, during that school day is used getting kids off the bus into the school and then back on the bus at the end of the day. Are there hours during the day where these kids have absolutely no support where it is crucial. Thank you.

Whiting: Possibly.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion. Yes, ma'am.

[Next person in line] I would like permission to speak. I'm not a resident. I'm the principal at Library Street in Hudson.

Moderator: I'm going to ask the voters to speak first and then, unless there is no objection to the principal speaking. I don't hear any objections. Go ahead, your name please.

Nancy Maguire, Principal at Library Street: - which is just Kindergarten. And I actually want to answer the question by the previous speaker about what is the risk if we don't have these paraprofessionals. And I just want to say a few things. If that's okay.

Moderator: Go ahead.

Maguire: Okay. It's an interesting question and that are they going to learn 20 words in kindergarten instead of 250 words. The kids, and also a previous speaker talked about the kids being different than they used to be. The kids that we are bringing in now have lots of times have no previous experience in a structured environment. They haven't had a playdate between COVID and everything else since then. A lot of these kids have not, they have been sat down with electronics which I'm guilty of myself as a mom, I would do myself as a mom. But they come into kindergarten for the first time. They don't know how to sit down. They don't know how to listen. Don't know how to follow directions. These are the things we are dealing with at the beginning of kindergarten and still now into February. If we don't have a paraprofessional in the room, which we currently don't, to answer the last speaker's question is we don't have support during different times of the day. Sometimes not at all during the day. Then a kindergarten teacher needs to be dealing with all those things in the room from, again we have 18, 19 about to have a class of 20 kids. The kindergarten teacher is constantly dealing with all those things. It is almost impossible to teach in an environment like that. What are the risks. The risks are, yes, they are not going to learn the same amount of words. And when they go to first grade they are not going to be as prepared as they would had they learn, had the teacher been able to teach more. The risks are going to increase exponentially every year right up through high school and it is not going to stop. Through the year we have had classrooms we have had to evacuate. The behaviors of the children could be helped if we had a paraprofessional, if we had someone in the room at the time. We are just...I invite all of you to come and see. We are dealing with a lot of different issues than as short as recently ten years ago. And it is impossible to do it without paras. So I'd like to make that point. Thank you for letting me speak.

Moderator: Thank you. Any further discussion on the amendment. Yes, ma'am.

Mary Joy Gasdia, 4 McCann Road: In regards to the amendment I am a hundred percent in support of paras. I know everything that they do. I don't think I even have to speak to it because everyone knows what they do. It's such an under appreciated position. Everyone knows about it, we talk about it every year. I just have a question. It was concerning to me as I was sitting there and I'm listening to every speaker speak and I just wanted to ask if the School

Board could please comment and provide an answer to the question that Mr. Jasper, excuse me one of the committee members, previous speaker from the Budget Committee, brought up a very important thing about the school district has the money and they are not spending it. If that's true, if that's true, I want to support the amendment and say hey let's give this money to paras. But if you're hiding money, because I'm sitting and listening to people that say that they sit at night hiding the money. I live with a School Board member I know you're who not doing that. He sits at night and takes care of our family and has more important things to do. But I am definitely, I am definitely interested in an answer to the question, is the money currently available in the budget and you're not using it or is it not available. Can you please give me a clear answer because I want to support it if you are in need of the money. If you are not using the money and you have it, can you clarify where the Budget Committee is getting that information.

Moderator: Chairman Whiting will yield.

Whiting: The money that is budgeted is based on positions that are needed. The money that is in the fund Balance is in access of those positions that are needed and are not able to be filled. This is not a Hudson issue this is a statewide issue. When the positions are not filled that money sits there. If we were to take the money that's budgeted for a teacher at the high school, move that so paras can be full time, we now no longer have the money if we were to fill that position as a teacher at the high school as an example.

MJ Gasdia: I understand that. I feel the Budget Committee's smart because the people who go to do the budget I trust them. I trust you. I know your answers aren't always the same. Why would they as people who are going line by line say wait a minute the money is there and they're not spending it. Where is this, I just want to understand it so when I vote, is the money actually there. And can you, can the Budget Committee respond and tell me where that is because it seems to me that there is a question of this hidden thing and I just want to know what it is.

Moderator: Question of the Budget Committee.

MJ Gasdia: No, I want the previous speaker to answer because -

Moderator: Budget Committee. Mr. Jasper will yield.

MJ Gasdia: I don't want to steer a problem. I want to fully understand and help some of the other people that are questioning it. Sorry, I don't want to put you up against anyone. I want

Jasper: Thank you. I think that's a very good question. My point is there are dozens, I think it was somewhere in the vicinity of 40 part time paras positions that were vacant at the time we discussed the budget.

Whiting: (commenting to Jasper off mic)

Jasper: mid thirties. So the point is that those are positions that need to be filled. And I agree with the previous speaker that we shouldn't be taking money from teaching positions and putting that into paras. That creates a problem. If we can't fill the part time para positions that money is available and other funds that aren't spent during the year that could also be put into that. So yes, not touching teachers, there I don't know how many there are but we could have enough to hire. But the problem is full or part time there probably aren't enough out there. But if there were five more positions at that time -

MJ Gasdia: (clarifying) They could take that part time money and put it into a full time position is what you're saying.

Jasper: That is correct.

MJ Gasdia: So what you're saying is it's the decision of them to do that in that way. You're not talking about just extra money and fund balance from something else. You were speaking of money specifically earmarked for other para positions.

Jasper: And what I'm saying is that's part of it. There maybe other funds that weren't spent, something that wasn't non-personnel, that wouldn't be necessary the rest of the year. Could have created that and then come in with a budget that was funding those positions going forward for various things.

MJ Gasdia: That's helpful. The reason I'm asking the question and again as a voter and a lot of people might be too that are at home, just want to clarify. Nothing against either Board I just want to understand. And another thing I noticed just listening to everyone speak today, I that the School Board hears this it that the paras are obviously a very important position. I would do everything in your power to try and maximize whatever you have left available in your budget to maybe take and put it towards that if it's such an important issue. And think about what that does and again the Boards work together to come to accord so we can have the best for our kids. I'd appreciate your time answering it. Thank you very much.

Moderator: To further answer the question, Ms. Whiting.

Jasper: (interjecting) Just one more point I that needs to be made, from the difference between a part time and a full time para is one hour a day.

Moderator: Ms. Whiting to further answer the question.

Whiting: I do want to make it clear that we did reallocate some funds this year, unfilled part time to convert twelve to full time. But again there are needs to have those positions by making and allocating money from part time to full time reduces the number of part time. Again if you're taking five positions and you allocate to make two full time you're now reducing it to because of the money that is there. So again there is a need for all of the time that those paras are there but we have to make sure we do it within the proper position category within the budget.

Moderator: Ms. Leary to speak for a first time.

Kathy Leary, 8 Par Lane: For the record obviously I'm on the Budget Committee. I am also a part time para at Alvirne so I will not speak or make any comments, pro con, about the paras. Back when the motion was made during our Budget Committee initially to cut those part time paras to full time I did not participate in the discussion nor did I vote on it. So I am making no comment on. The only comment I wanted to make is today with regard to a prior speaker about money being available in the budget. And yes a lot of it unfortunately is available because of vacancies. Some of it is also available because eof unspent money. But I felt I would be remised if in my duties as an elected official by not saying the fact that currently money does get moved around. And as a specific example of that we up at Alvirne we do have two

English tutors that are being proposed currently working at the school. So they found the money to bring those part time tutors which believe me are needed. I'm not saying they're not

needed. And granted they were not there the whole year. Money is not being spent. And as I'm aware the H.R. Recruiter, correct me if i.m wrong, has also been hired. So those were positions that were being proposed which to my knowledge to the facts of the tutors. The recruiter I can stand to be corrected on have already been hired. So that is a specific example of how money can be moved around in the budget. And that's the only comment I will make. I'm not making any judgment calls on how the money was spent, who made the decision or in regard to paras. I just want to make that clear. Thank you.

Moderator: Mr. Murray for a first time. On the amendment.

Budget Committee Member Shawn Murray : I motion to move the question.

Huard: **Point of Order**. I have been standing here. Letting everyone come forward. I don't think you can move the question until you let me speak. I've already been standing here and you've put him [Murray] in front of me regardless of -

Moderator: For a first time,

Huard: I don't care. You've -

Moderator: Ms. Huard, For a first time. He [Murray] was in order. You have people behind you. I'm waiting for people behind you to speak for a first time. I did tell him I would recognize him in line.

Huard: ...to move the question I think it is highly unethical for you to... all those people before me to stop me from speaking a second time.

Moderator: Mr. Murray moves to move the question. Was there a second. Mr. Jasper seconds. The purpose of moving the question is to cut off debate on the amendment. We still have the Warrant Article number 1 before us to see if it is amended or not. Use your yellow cards. If you are in favor of cutting off debate at this time please raise your card. Thank you. Those opposed to cutting off debate. I do not believe that's a two-thirds. I believe it Fails. Two-thirds is required for moving the question. Looked pretty even to me so it fails. We are on the amendment.

MOTION TO MOVE THE QUESTION.

MADE BY SHAWN MURRAY; SECONDED BY SHAWN JASPER.

MOTION FAILS [did not meet a required two-thirds vote to pass]

Moderator: (continuing) Moving on to the amendment. We had somebody up who wanted to speak a first time. Yes, ma'am.

Katie Brochiolo (spelling) 3 Lund Drive: So I'm ot going to pretend I know all the budget stuff. But as one of the School Board members had mentioned before you don't want to go into a deficit. So to me this money we haven't spent would be like a savings account so we would have that there. I have three children in three different schools and being involved in the tree different schools I know that we have lost really good teachers to, some veteran teacher to higher paying districts, I can only assume that is part of the reason why for not getting in new teachers as well. I know that some of the schools the staff is running themselves ragged and burning the candle at both ends filling in for classes that quite frankly they don't necessarily have the knowledge, background to be teaching. But they are doing it because there are open classes with nobody to teach them. Having a child also with an IEP I know that they are struggling and they are behind their grade level and their paras or para more so is doing the best they can to provide my child with the education they need but you know they're working

with what they have. And our students deserve much better and I just wanted to you know give some food for thought.

Moderator: Thank you. Mr. Trost, then Mr. Campbell, then Mrs. Huard for a second.

Ted Trost, 63 Rangers Drive: Some of the discussions earlier made it sound like we needed to keep all these empty, unfilled paraprofessional positions available in case they got filled. As if this is kind of new issue having come up because having these new positions open. I was on the Budget Committee for about eight years and I can tell you that my observation is that there have been 30, 35, 40 open para positions for as long as I have been on the Budget Committee to my recollection. I don't personally think that there is any hope of filling these anytime soon especially if everyone is willing to join as a full time. The only way to get those positions filled is to might make them full time. And that can be done as discussed earlier by combining some of these positions to full time without impacting in a negative any of the other work that is being done by the schools.

Moderator: Thank you. Mr. Campbell.

Mike Campbell, Baltursol Drive: Previous speakers talked about moving th money and paras that are budgeted. I just wanted to say that during the budget season the School Board reduces paras. We reduced 18 of the para positions to a dollar just so we can save that money because we're not sure we can fill them as previous speakers have said. We're not sure if we can hire them but can move the money if we can hire them but we don't wan to try to make an impact. So the money isn't always put into the position it is budgeted for a dollar so it's less than an impact. I just wanted to make that clear.

Moderator: Thank you. Mrs. Huard for a second time. On the amendment.

Huard: I'd like to clarify the comment money being asked for, available isn't being spent. There are numerous line items I keep seeing. I'm going to throw one out and see if the business administrator can speak to this. Every single year in the districtwide budget you budget, it's a small amount, but you have to remember that it has a ton of line items of small amounts that are being budgeted. You budgeted, I don't know the exact amount, for the Renaissance Intervention Fee Every single year it's in the districtwide budget and yet it's never spent. You have not been using that. That's why ... because you're probably not even using that. Okay. In the districtwide budget it's like 1500, it's under 2,000 but there's numerous line items. If they can provide an explanation or someone. Why do they keep putting such a line item in if they know there not going to spend it. And throughout the budget there are numerous line items like this. That's the only one I can come up with off the top of my head. So once again you have heard very emotional pleads. I've heard some financial pleas. Bottomline is, I know the Budget Committee can attest to this, there's ever an amount of extra money in here, a significant amount. Let's sit here and detail it. But the people that come up here emotionally have been brainwashed for years as I have as a parent. We don't have money for textbooks. Look at your budget, parents. Look at your own budget, teachers. And you will find that you have the budget for things that you're asking for and being denied. I've heard stories that the budget has been held back only to have a surplus at the end of the year. I don't know what the answer is but we can not keep having deceptive, overstated budgets coming forward to us. And having emotional pleads from people who haven't even bothered to look at the budget. Don't even understand numbers or the budget. So bottomline is it doesn't really matter it's only \$500,000. Bottomline is this is not going to change the number of words your kindergartener knows. It's not going to make a huge difference because there is a significant amount of surplus. If you looked at the surplus budget slide when it was presented you could see how

much it's moved up from half a million dollars to two- three-million dollars. So five-hundred thousand dollars from two- three-million dollars still leaves an excess of a million plus in the surplus budget. So stop being fooled and brainwashed by the emotional pleas. Thank you.
Moderator: Further discussion on the amendment. Yes, sir.

Ed Jonson, 16 Hawkview: What I'd like to know I heard that there were 30, 40 positions looking to be filled. We need them so ... I heard one school we like to have... So in the numbers game how many would make a difference and what would that cost.

Moderator: Would someone yield to the question. I'm not sure what that question was, Mr. Jonson. You wanted to know-

Jonson: You're talking about adding paras. So the question is you know what is a critical number you should have versus what we do have. We have openings for this many. What's the critical number. You know is it two, is it five, is it ten to make a substantial difference.

Gasdia: You know I think what we're talking about here is trying to balance both the needs and the hiring environment. Right, so based on what is in the budget we need all of those paras. What we can not do as everyone has attested to hire them. You know we acknowledge that there is a significant number that we are just not going to hire and those are the ones that went to a dollar. WE've moved some during the year when we see as the year progresses we have some money we can prioritize that, turn some from part time to full time. But there's budgeting and then there's pivoting. And so we're budgeting for all positions we need. That's what we need. That means we know we're not going to fill them. If we go to full time then we need to reduce the number of other positions and that's where you can certainly move the money around but it comes down to prioritization. If we turned every one part time to full time we would either need to increase the number of paras to have coverage or we would have to reduce the position numbers. There's no magic number. I think what we know is we need more paras. There's a couple ways we can get that and one way we can get that is by converting some of them to full time. That's what this will do. It will allow us for some to go full time. And I'm not going to deny we have 60-, 70- million dollar budget. There's always money just like there's always money in your personal budget, right. If you budget money for maintenance on your car and your car doesn't break and you make it to the end of the year you think maybe I could have gone on that vacation. But making that decision a year in advance and saying I'm not going to need that money if my car doesn't make sense. And that's what we're talking about. We can pivot and that's what we've done but when you budget you have to budget for what you need and that's the number of paras in the budget so we can convert more of those from part time to full time. We believe we can that hire more. If we hired more we will get more support. So there is no magic number. It's the balance between how many we think we can hire and we need them all. We think going to full time for some will give us the ability to put more of them into the schools.

Moderator: Further questions, comments on the amendment which is to add \$500,000 to the budget. Yes, sir, Mr. Wilkins.

James Wilkins, 112 Belnap: I would like to know what the cost differential is you convert a part time para to a full time para. Assuming that would take away the money you could use to hire another para, part time para.

Moderator: Does someone wish to yield. Ms. Whiting will yield.

Whiting: If you convert a part time position to full time making an assumption of that person moving from part time to full time takes the family plan for the benefits, it is approximately an additional \$50,000 a year for that individual moving from part time to full time with benefits. Does that answer your question.

Wilkins: Partly. So how is, how does that relate to the current cost of having a part time versus a full time para. In other words, if you do that to one para, how many slots do you lose.

Whiting: 500,000 at 50,000 that's, what, ten. [Gasdia:(off mic) three to one] Oh, is that what you're asking. Three to one. Sorry, I didn't understand the question. Yes, you can get three part time for one full time. If that's what you're questioning. I did not understand the question. I apologize.

Wilkins: Yes, you answered it properly. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Are we ready for the amendment yet. Mr. Quinn.

Patrick Quinlan, 12 Sunshine Drive: I would like to point out first that there are six paras for the Library Street are staying. They are not going anyway. I'm also a parent with two children currently in the school system. One of them that utilizes some of the special education things and so I'm speaking from experience. In sitting on the Budget Committee, we're talking about one hour. That's the difference. You want to add \$50,000 to a position for someone to be at the school one more hour than they currently are. Is that one hour really going to be the difference of how many people work or does it really make an outcome of how the education of the student is. I don't think so and I think that we really need to focus on is accountability and money does not produce accountability. So we're at roughly 38 percentile in proficiency for mathematics in the district and about 50 percentile for reading and writing. And through my personal experience, my daughter being a senior and my son's about to graduate from eighth grade this year and move into the high school. Accountability in my personal opinion is a large factor in the education of our children. We can hire all the teachers in the world. If their quality of work is not being held accountable to then we're not going to get anything for our money. So we can hire all the people in the world. We can throw all the money at it you want. If you don't have accountability then you don't have quality education. Is anything we're doing raising the percentile for proficiency. I haven't see it personally, maybe I'm wrong but I haven't seen it. And again remember \$50,000 per person as taxpayer look at the common denominator. Look at the people in the room that these tax rates will largely have a trickle effect. So I personally feel if you're not willing to maybe give up your own home, take food off your own table, for the position that you are taking then you should for your position. So I guess I'll leave it at that. \$50,000 for that one extra hour in school, it that going to bring in that many more people and is that really going to raise the quality of the education of our children. How is, what is the positive impact on further proficiencies on reading, writing and arithmetic. Because it feels as a parent with kids in the school that there's a lot of focus on the emotional aspect of things and it seems that the more attention to how is the fid feeling than to can he read, can he write and what's his quality of mathematics. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Are we ready for the question yet. The amendment. We are speaking on the amendment of adding \$500,000. We have some people speaking. Ms. Maguire why don't you wait until there's a question and it comes up and you can answer. There's someone behind you.

Maguire: I want to make two quick points if that's okay.

Moderator: No, why don't you sit down, Mrs. Maguire. Yes, ma'am. On the amendment.

Heather Smalley, 18 Farmington Drive: I'd just like to point out it is not just one hour, it is benefits that these potential employees are missing out on. So I would just ask that if we made these positions full time are they more attractive and more likely to be filled. If you can answer that, it would be great.

Moderator: Ms. Whiting yields.

Whiting: My answer to that is yes, it would be more attractive. When we do have paraeducators that have left and gone to other districts and we do an exit interview with them, or the district does an exit interview with them, most of the reason for that is they aren't full time, are hired at higher pay and that they can get benefits. That's at the district they are going to.

Moderator: Thank you, Ms. Whiting. To speak on the amendment. Yes, Mr. Brownrigg.

Randy Brownrigg, 2 Little Hills Lane: I want to cut off debate.

Moderator: Mr. Brownrigg moves the question. Mr. Murray will second. To cut off debate on the amendment. And then we will move back to Warrant Article #1. If you are in favor of cutting off debate to Warrant Article #1 please raise your cards. Thank you. Those who oppose. That's quite a difference from the last time. The motion passes.

**MOTION TO CUT OFF DEBATE ON THE AMENDMENT
MADE BY RANDY BROWNRIGG; SECONDED BY SHAWN MURRAY
MOTION PASSES**

Moderator: We are now going to vote on the amendment. If you are in favor of amending the budget at 500,000, please raise your voter card. Thank you. Those opposed.

THE AYES HAVE IT. WE ARE NOW ON ARTICLE ONE AS AMENDED \$67,509,020.

[Warrant Article #1 - Operating Budget]

Shall the Hudson School District vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant article and other appropriations voted separately, the amount set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote at the first session, for the purpose set forth therein, totaling \$67,509,020? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$67,596,534 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Hudson School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting under RSA 40:13-X and XVI to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.

Moderator: (continuing) To speak on the operating budget. Mrs. Huard.

Huard: It's tempting to reduce that budget right now, ahh. I rise in opposition to the process and this is why your taxes are so high. As you can see if you look around the room most here today are from the school district and we've heard arguments for and against why we need this overstate the budget. But if you notice their operating budget is lower than the default budget. So I don't want to say I oppose the operating budget because I'm actually for it because we can get \$90,000 less if you vote against it. So the process itself needs to be improved. The

administration most importantly those at the Kimball-Webster building are taking advantage of the system. I do not have my answer to the question about the Renaissance software integration. That is just one example and I want that before I leave today. The school district's vision is Hudson exemplifies excellence in education and that should go forward to your budgeting, financial process. And I don't see that. Because as we talked about before there is a lot of excessive budget surplus in this budget, past and current. We can see that by the growing amount of surplus that is being quote-unquote turned back because we never really really see that one-hundred percent. New Hampshire RSA 32-7 requires for the appropriations are for the expenditures for one fiscal year. How is this one fiscal year if you keep having two to three million dollars left and then use it on a fund balance, use it on a warrant article to take it from a fund balance. Currently this year we have \$340,000 of warrant articles that want to take from a fund balance for fiscal year 2024. Shows you right there that there is \$340,000 that they know is in there that they aren't going to use. They knew that in September of 2023 before the 2024 budget went to the ... They're sitting there now knowing what without a doubt that their surplus has nothing to do with education because no matter what the Budget Committee takes out they'll find a way to add it back in. They'll use an emotional plea, a deceptive plea, flawed textbooks. My son got a quality education from the school system as it is today with less money. Granted he is gifted. But it is there. He's gifted because I used the budget to find the resources that exist for parents. You need to know what they are. It's your job to say to the school district I see this in the budget I don't ... for my child because I want to know why textbooks are budgeted as X amount. That's what parents need to go to the budget and see what it is being used for. We will continue to see the budget rise. We continue to see the budget rise in steady conflict of the school district's vision of excellence in education. Until the voters stand up and... until the parents hold the school district accountable. If you want to keep it spend it. Spend it on our students inside the regular classroom so that you can build up their strength as individuals inside a classroom instead of needing these special needs. Are here special needs classrooms yes but there are a certain amount of children inside the classroom if they have the right resources inside the regular classroom they would benefit. I'm not saying you don't need special education. Don't misinterpret that. So on top of the line items I asked a question about, the software for the Renaissance Integration... I am ready for the answer to that because I have a list of other questions about specific line items I would to ask.

Moderator: The superintendent will yield.

Dr. Moulis: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. On page 19 of the districtwide budget that is used that \$1900 is used for Reading Intervention that's at the elementary school for vocabulary and reading. So again that's used for small group intervention groups to support those that need that extra reading intervention, vocabulary, reading comprehension.

Huard: With all due respect there is zero under actual for that line item for '22 and '23... Can you explain that.

Moulis: Again it is based on what students need in the elementary schools for that \$1900. So there's variants placed depending on what the need is at the elementary schools. Also they have multiple reading interventions they use that is one of them Again so if that is needed by their teacher or the reading interventionist that is used.

Huard: Then you admit it wasn't used at all in '22 and '23.

Moulas: It does look in the budget that was not spent. You're welcome.

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Huard: So there are a number of line items like that waiting if we might use that. Is there the likelihood that that would be used. If you go back for a period of years to that specific line item you will see it has never been used another line items like that. Some of the suggestions to the school administration to use the budget or maybe ...I'm not... put it towards the children in the classroom. I'm okay with that but that's not happening. Because we're spending the surplus on big ticket, surprised capital projects that come without planning or looking for best price. So better pricing. The number of conferences that the school district attends districtwide, what is the benefit in relationship to the cost. Some of the groups like New Hampshire NEA...AFBO. What are the benefits from those. Could some of those have been reduced. One of the biggest things that companies are doing is going paperless, automating accounting system, reducing the need for paper, postage and other miscellaneous supplies. That doesn't take away from the students people. That is just coming into the current century like a lot of big businesses do. I saw the school district go out to bid for a new year end audit. They did what they picked two or three companies. There are a number of small, small CPA firms that would do this audit for much less money. I used to work for one of them.

Moderator: (responding to a **Point of Order** raised by audience member) We're talking about the full budget. The full operating budget. We're talking about that.

Huard: The Food Budget should never have come out of the General Fund except there is a law that allows them to cover debt. But the food service should not be driven into debt by willful neglect. We should be managing the costs so if you know you're going to be pushing it over budget than you shouldn't be spending on say new tables or something that isn't related to the current year. (long pause)

Moderator: Are we about done, Ms. Huard.

Huard: Yes, I'm just referring to - So we talked about some of the contracts and facilities that doesn't affect the students directly. We need facilities but supplies and equipment. projects. You weren't in the bid process sufficiently enough to bring in the lowest price like another company would. You're not...so you feel entitled to just go out and get a contract without doing the best you can. And some of the specialists it seems that they're needed. We have moved the school district to a more mental health, emotional ,psychology aspect but some of the conditions that some of those students need are being created by the neglect in the general classroom, as far as I'm concerned. So what is the answer. All of these areas, these are just the two Facilities and Districtwide. I didn't even touch the School District budget. But going through the whole budget, this is a huge budget with numerous line items...seen it. If you work in the school district and you've never seen the budget you've done yourself a disservice...to look at it. This is disrespect. I have the floor and I can hear...

Moderator: Please be in order everyone.

Huard: So to my fellow taxpayers at home watching. You have people in the background saying enough. You have political pull to push this budget up. You also have Co-curricular that is fully paid for by the taxpayers. Massachusetts I believe they pay-to-play. So that is another area you can change if you want to but it is another political area. So politics, emotions is what drives the school district budget up. And I encourage you to vote no to save \$90,000.

Moderator: Thank you. On the budget, the operating budget as amended. Ms. Roy.

Kara Roy, 46 Marsh Road: I just have a question. Does the... So on the Town side the state recommends a fund balance at a certain percentage. Does the state do the same thing for the school.

Moderator: Ms. Whiting will yield.

Whiting: Yes, it's between two to three percent. That is also considered to be a healthy fund and it is unlike the Town we can't, I know the Town can't carry it all over, there is some. The Town can. The school is not able. It is either done by warrant article or it has to be turned back and that's what we do.

Roy: Thank you.

Moderator: Further discussion on the budget. Ms. Dionne.

School Board Vice-Chair Dionne: I just wanted to respond to a couple of comments. Our RFP Process is posted. So a prior speaker spoke on the district not following the process, not engaging small firms and stuff like that. Any RFP is publicly posted so that any organization or business can be able to apply in that process. Also to respond to a comment that all extra curricular in the budget they are not. Some in fact do have a fee for parents. So just to respond to a couple of comments that were made by an earlier speaker.

Moderator: Thank you. Superintendent Moulas will yield to, for clarification.

Dr. Moulis: Mr. Moderator just to respond to Ms. Huard's question about the Renaissance Learning software. That has actually been expended out of ESSER funds. The last two to three years and the reason that you see that in again this year is that the ESSER funds are sunsetting and ending. So that is why that is back in the budget. I just wanted to clarify that. It hasn't been spent but out of ESSER. Grant funds and not out of the operating budget the last two years,

Moderator: Ms. Whiting, Then Mr. Crowley.

Gretchen Whiting, 22 Glen Drive: I also wanted to make a comment on the comment by a prior speaker in regards to the NHSAA, NHSEA.... Those are organizations used by the School Board, by the superintendent and by the business operator and the administrator. They are in areas that are used for assistance in understanding laws...federal and state laws in order to create policies by the School Board. It also allows a collection for the community, the rest of the district to be able to discuss that we can introduce or assist with. I just wanted to make clear that those are well used.

Moderator: Further discussion on Warrant Article #1 the operating budget as amended. Mr. Crowley.

Crowley: I want to thank both Boards and the audience for giving me a really good education. I'll have to admit I have a deficit myself on this. I guess my question is what does it take to add a line item to the school budget. If we eliminate all these various items, next year would you have to add them back, ask for money for them or can they ride in the budget now as reserve. Just like we talked about earlier in the para. You put in one dollar for some of the paras reserving that position. You're reserving dollars in these in case you need it. I guess that's my question.

Moderator: Budget Committee member. Mr. Jasper will yield.

Jasper: No line items have been eliminated from the budget. So there are a situation where suddenly this is gone and you have to add to it. Only the amounts in line items have been reduced, no line item.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on the operating budget. Yes, ma'am.

Smalley: I would like to make a motion to move the question.

Moderator: Ms. Smalley moves the question. Mr. Murray seconds. That will be cutting off debate on Article 1 as amended and it will go to the ballot. Those in favor of cutting off debate raise your cards. Thank you. Those opposed. The ayes have it.

**MOTION TO CUT OFF DEBATE ON WARRANT ARTICLE 1
MADE BY HEATHER SMALLEY; SECONDED BY SHAWN MURRAY.
MOTION PASSES**

Moderator: (continuing) **Warrant Article 1 is closed and goes to the ballot.**

Tom Barrett, 37 Winnhaven Drive: I move to restrict reconsideration

Moderator: Mr. Barrett moves to restrict reconsideration. Is there a second. Yes, ma'am. Your name. (From audience: Deborah Howe, Wende Drive), Ms. Howe

**MOTION TO RESTRICT RECONSIDERATION OF WARRANT ARTICLE 1
MADE BY TOM BARRETT; SECONDED BY DEBORAH HOWE**

Moderator: (continuing) Motion to restrict reconsideration. That means that this budget warrant article can not be brought up again at this meeting. Will go to the ballot as amended. Ready for that question. Anybody. Okay. Restricting reconsideration means we close off everything. So if you're in favor of restricting reconsideration please raise your card. Thank you. Those opposed.

THE AYES HAVE IT. ARTICLE #1 IS RESTRICTED.

Murray: **Point of Order** requested that the Moderator restate Warrant Article1 as amended

Moderator: He just wanted me to put that out that the operating budget that we just passed to the ballot is \$67,509,020. Is that clear to everybody. **[Moderator reading Article 2]**

WARRANT ARTICLE 2

Collective Bargaining Agreement between Hudson School Board and PSRPs

Shall the Hudson School District vote to approve the cost items in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the PSRP AFT Local #6245, AFL-CIO (Hudson School District full- and part-time cafeteria personnel, part-time para-educators and part-time licensed practical nurses) and the Hudson School Board which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels over the amount paid in the prior fiscal year:

2024-25	\$751,496
2025-26	\$364,152

And to further raise and appropriate \$751,496 for the upcoming fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement that would be paid at current staffing levels.

Estimated tax impact: \$.16

Recommended by the Hudson School Board 5-0
Recommended by the Budget Committee 8-0-1

Moderator: I will ask School Board member Campbell to present Warrant Article #2.

Campbell: Good Morning everyone. Thanks for coming out. Can I have the next slide. [SLIDE: *PARAEDUCATOR SALARY SCHEDULE*] This slide provides an example of one of the challenges by our school district in recruiting and retaining paraeducators. The district competes not only with other districts in the area but other employers. The starting rate of for a paraeducator this school year on level one is \$14.90 per hour. The starting rate of pay for paraeducator level two for a para which is someone with a paraeducator certification from the state is \$15.39 per hour. The proposed contract raised those starting rates to \$17.00 per hour for a Para 1, \$17.50 per hour for a Para 2. Can I have the next slide. [SLIDE: *WARRANT ARTICLE 2 Paraeducators and Food Service Staff*] These next two slides provide a summary of the proposed changes. This is a two year agreement negotiated by the School Board in good faith which has a total cost increase of \$1,115,648 for two years. The tax rate impact in the first year would be \$0.16. This contract covers approximately 133 employees including part time paraeducators, full and part time food service workers and part time LPN's which are licensed practical nurses. The wages are being increased with the intent in making Hudson more competitive in the job market for these positions. As noted on the previous slide the current starting pay for a paraeducator is \$14.90 per hour. The new contract would bring this rate up to \$17.00 per hour in the first year and \$18.25 in the second year. Food service workers currently start at \$12.50 per hour. The new contract would put that starting rate at \$15.00 per hour and \$15.50 in the second year. All existing staff members will receive an increase of \$3.00 per hour in the 2024-2025 school year. And in the second year of the agreement all existing staff members will receive a \$1.25 per hour increase for the 2025-2026 school year. There will be one additional paid holiday for this group. Currently this staff receives pay for Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. The holiday that has been added will be New Year's Day. A new tuition reimbursement program has been added to the contract that will allow for staff to be reimbursed for up to four courses at the UNH rate. A pool of \$20,000 will be budgeted for this benefit. If an employee takes advantage of this benefit and voluntarily leaves the district the employee would be responsible for reimbursing the district any amounts paid 50% if the separation occurs within one school year or 25% if the separation occurs within two school years. The existing longevity pay amounts were increased by \$100 each year. As an example an employee who completes 19 years of service receives a of \$600 instead of the current \$500. Employees who are not covered by the health insurance who have completed one year of service and work at least 25 hours per week are eligible for a Section 125-1 Plan for medical expenses. The district's contribution to this plan will be increased from \$300 to \$500 in this new agreement. Next slide please. [SLIDE: *WARRANT ARTICLE 2 Paraeducators and Food Service Staff*] The largest change to this contract after the wage increase is the addition of a new category of full-time paraeducators under the PSRP contract. Currently there are full time paraeducators in the PSRP contract who work seven hours per day and are eligible for benefits under that contract. This new category of full-time paras covered by this PSRP contract would be working 6.5 hours per day which better matches the student day versus the current 5 1/2 hour per day. To work this new schedule will be eligible for health insurance with a district contribution of 80% towards a single-level health plan plus 50% of a single-level dental plan.

This does not impact the benefits of food service workers. The rollout of this new category of full-time paraeducator would be dependent on the needs of students but is expected to start with the paraeducator positions at Alvirne High School in the first year then Hudson Memorial School in the second year. The tentative agreement electing all these changes is available on the district website. And as we've heard from discussions earlier today and throughout the past couple of years the importance of paras in this district is well known and the Board made it an important priority to help the teachers in pay out last year and we talk the whole time how paras would be coming the next year. The number is a lot larger than you have been presented in the past but we strongly believe that it will give us a greater chance to hire. As everyone knows in this room that we have problems with that and we think we will be more competitive with the areas around us. And we hope that you will support this.

Moderator: Thank you. **We will now open Warrant Article #2 to questions, comments** - you can't amend this one. This is an RSA you can not. Yes, ma'am.

Smalley: I would like to rise in support of this primarily because, well there's a lot of reasons, but I believe the starting salary or hourly rate for the food service staff is \$12.90 and the starting for a para was \$12.90. Just to put that in perspective my fourteen year old daughter works for a local grocery store as a starting pay of \$14.00 and she's fourteen. So that is what we are trying to compete with and why we are unable to fill positions.

Moderator: Thank you. Yes, ma'am.

MJ Gasdia: Exactly what the prior speaker said. You're listening to this and it's absolutely astonishing to me. The people that are obviously taking these positions are people who are either very giving of themselves to give a lot of in life to take a wage of \$12.90 an hour you're either retired or just doing it to fill some time, you care about the kids, you care about giving back. You're absolutely not doing it to make any form of with a pay of \$12,90 an hour nor are you for 14 something. You're just a good-hearted person. These people should be paid what they're worth and to think the fact that...And like the previous speaker, I have a high school kid That makes more money than that at a fast food restaurant. I have college kids that make over \$20 an hour at part time jobs where internships for companies. It's absolutely pretty crazy to have paraeducators I think we are producing kids that can come out and briefly work and make a higher wage. It's just absolutely baffling to me. I am so grateful there are people willing to take the position for that level of a pay because they deserve so much more. The fact that it may speak volumes of their character, volumes of how they care about our education system. As voters we are the only ones who can vote and approve this and help their wage increase . This has nothing to do with the School Board or the Budget Committee, whether you're for or against. I'm just going to stick it to the school, I'm going to vote no on everything, I see everybody else... Fine I said it last week with the Public Works, everybody's just mad at the taxes went up. We're going to vote no on everything. I'm not saying don't vote no but something like this that affects a person's livelihood. Take a minute and read it and think about what you're voting for. It's a \$0.16 tax impact. This is ridiculous. People aren't going to quit because they have ...they are going to work anyway but they should absolutely be And if you're a para in this district you should be so grateful that they're working for your kids because those are the adults we want in there working with your students. The ones that would probably do it for nothing that would probably volunteer their time. Let's compensate them for what they're worth.

Moderator: Further discussion on Warrant Article #2. Yes, sir.

Powers: I support the warrant article. But I do have a question. I'm a firm believer and think with the end in mind. We've had a lot of discussion on paras and I'm trying to visualize down the road if we're successful with warrant article one, warrant article two, the pivoting that Gary talked about what the end looks like. What success looks like. And toward that end, Mr. Moderator, I have a question that perhaps get an answer to. Within New Hampshire who's doing it right, paras, who's doing it the best from a benchmarking perspective. Is there a community out there that, I don't know maybe they woke up a few years before the rest of the local area and they either made the investment, they checked the accountability, they somehow figured it out. And so do we have a benchmark that gosh they're doing it great and this is the path we need to take. Won't happen in one year but this is the path we're going to be on. Thank you.

Moderator: Question. Mr. Gasdia will yield.

Gasdia: So I think there were two questions in there and one is what is the future going to look like and I think you know nothing is certain but the end results. We have in our district something called the Portrait of a Graduate which talks about what we want our students to be when they graduate out of Alvirne, right. And we need to do everything we can to get there. The hope is that everything that's in the budget and what the teachers do and what the paras do will get us there. So in the end we want more students that are going to meet that definition and be great citizens in the world and be great representatives of the Hudson School District. But when we talk about what again if you think about Bedford, a lot of folks move to Bedford and why because they are known to have a really good school system. And when you look at their school system what you'll notice is if you look at the teacher ratio, the number of teachers to the number of students, it looks very similar. But when you start looking at staff to students that's where your paras and folks like that come in. That's where they're starting to really make a difference. The same thing goes on like in Oyster River and that's where we start to see the difference and again I'm not going to pretend to tell you that's the reason they're better than us. I don't know there could probably be a million. But we see what they did and we see the results they're having and so if they're doing really well and that's a big difference then that's a noticeable difference in part we want to try to emulate some of that because it appears to be working. And you know those aren't the only two districts. I mean there are others around us that do some things, Windham does some things. And you want to look and try and take a bit of the best from all and hope that it works. And there are things that folks are doing and the bigger thing is start looking into the numbers as other have more support staff, whether that's paras or you know folks in the counseling or various areas that we do not have. And so that's the hope.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on Warrant Article #2. Yes, Ma'am.

Grace Kennedy, 30 Glen Drive: I've been a paraprofessional for decades in seven different states. I've lived in Hudson for 23 years. Couple of things, what kind of training do you give your paraprofessionals and your substitutes. I have one son who is out-of-district placement all but one semester for like 20 years. They gave him a paraprofessional who did not know about severely autistic children. He lasted less than a month. So if you give the paraprofessionals the right amount of training you keep them longer. The other thing is when I worked for the Nashua School District they told me I was a one-on-one para. They gave me three different kids, wanted me to sign time cards that said I was a one-on-one para for three different kids. But the Medicare came in and said you sign that guess what you can be taken to court, not the school district, you as a paraprofessional.... So we have 30 positions not filled, are people actually doing two, three and four kids when supposedly only contracted to do one. You're putting yourself up for this. That's one thing I'd like you to know. I have a lot of experience in this area

and I've seen good and I've seen bad. And I have two children who graduated from Alvirne High School and one is a chemical engineer and the other is getting a PH.D. in math. But I have a severely autistic son who is barely 31 and always has to have, can not even live at home anymore because when he was no longer in out-of-district placement his behavior went off the rails and he could not live at home anymore. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on Warrant Article 2 the collective bargaining agreement PSRP's. Yes.

Huard: I just have a question. For a pay increase for these paras. I'm not sure if this is exactly right, but a presenter from the School Board said this comes to 133 staff member if remember correctly. What I'd like to know out of those 133 positions are those vacancies. Did you include those vacancies in this article.

Moderator: Question of the Board. Mr. Campbell of the School Board will yield.

Campbell: Yes, it includes that because we have to budget what the difference would be.

Moderator: So it does include the vacancies. Mr. Murray,

Shawn Murray, 55 Canon Road: As the School Board member was going over this article, if you look at it as he stated this particular article is going to be about 1.1 million dollars. And if you look down at Article 3 for some of the administrations you're talking 400, 000 over two years of the contract. But can someone tell me what the clause was negotiated in this contract. I heard you mention paraprofessionals part time to full time. Can someone tell me about that particular piece.

Moderator: Question of the Board. The paraprofessional part.

Murray: On the slide you mentioned that something about part time paras being able to go full time and I would like to know what that language is within that contract.

Moderator: You going to look at that. Dr. Moulas will yield in a minute. While he'd looking that up, Mr. Brownrigg do you have a statement on Warrant Article # 2.

Brownrigg: Yes, I do in regard to a couple of speakers came up here hourly wage being \$14, \$17. I understand that's a pretty low wage but think people need to understand the numbers that goes behind it. One of those things you have to look at is with that when you become a teacher in this town you're working towards a retirement program where at the end, 20 years, 30 years when you decide you're going to get a pension who is a really good pension. So part of the number of 12, 16, 17 dollars an hour is part of a pension. The thing that is also added in there all of your taxes, your union dues whatever is in there, is taken all out> So when someone says they're making \$14 an hour. If you have a kid out in town who's making \$15 an hour then all of their taxes are coming out and end of with 12, 11 dollars an hour. So and that's because of taxes. Here that 14 or 17 dollars an hour but here's other stuff in there...Their medical, vacation pay, union dues...all taken out so when it's all done if it's \$17 that's what they're getting after all the other is taken out. Thank you.

Moderator: The superintendent will answer the question of Mr. Murray.

Dr. Moulis: Can we go to the slide, the previous one, that one. okay. Alright so hopefully I'm answering Mr. Murray's question correctly. So on page 13 of the agreement so paraeducators were in 5.5 hour positions. Those part time positions shall be provided the preference to fill a

6.5 hour position in the first instance unless determined by administration based on student needs where paraprofessionals with specific skills are required in a program or assignment will be given preference accordingly. So that is the what is referenced on page 13 of the tentative agreement.

Murray: So id that theoretically meant that the district in a contract with the paras that will switch them from part time into the full time. Because you're adding at 5.5 to 6.5 which we heard was the difference between part time and full time.

Dr. Moulis: So if I'm answering your question correctly it provides them preference to have that opportunity to go for that 6.5 hour position in the first instance. It gives them, the word in here is preference, if I'm answering correctly. I may not be.

Murray: Yes in a way. Then to me again if you look at the cost of the warrant article and stuff in my opinion what's happening here is they're contractually obligated and the district is giving them the opportunity to offer part time to full time there as well as looking for those full tie positions in the budget too. But I may be wrong.

Moderator: Thank you. Chairman Whiting could yield to that question as well.

Whiting: So part of the discussion evolved around finding paraeducators and where they sit currently, Full time paraeducators fall within the teacher contract and no the para contract. So we opened up a discussion to allow wordage, verbiage, in that contract to allow for full time paras to be filled. And that was when a full time position is made that is the language that they would be given preference unless other circumstances prevailed.

Moderator: Thank you. Mr. Gasdia to yield to the question of Mr. Brownrigg.

Gasdia: Yes I just wanted to clarify something about the idea of the salary you see there, the hourly rate then benefits and things like that. Part time paras do not have a retirement so there is no retirement. That is true of for teachers on other contracts. Not rue for the paras. Now if we were to pass this contract and we were to have full time paras if they were to stay in the district a certain amount of time then they would be eligible for New Hampshire State. As it is now none of them are....that is their pay. The other piece is when you think about benefits... you get paid X amount of dollars an hour but when you pay your medical then that comes out. So that's not a net number, right. That's not what you have in your paycheck when all is left over, that's where they're starting then they have to pay for whatever expenses they have that come out of their pay whether it's the union dues or anything like that. Then they have a net number, We're not showing you the net number because that's going to vary by person by person. That's the top line number. That's the number you would see on a billboard this is what we can pay. Again if they had the retirement, it's a totally different conversation. I would agree with you there. But they don't. That's the number.

Brownrigg: Thank you.

Moderator: Further discussion Warrant Article 2.

MJ Gasdia: Listening to the prior speaker you can see where it's very easy for somebody I the public to not understand what's going on. Right, so they're making an assumption hey they get pension and benefits and all that. Then they come up here and speak now somebody turns on the video at home and watches for seconds, sees this guy saying he's speaking they're getting tis this and this plus \$17 dollars an hour. So again they're not getting that, they're getting

\$12.90 was on the slide, blew my mind. Cafeteria, they serve your kids food everyday. They're treated like crap by the majority of students. I'm going to tell you, I've been in there, they're treated like the gum on your shoe, they are not treated nice by a lot of your kids, okay. And for \$12.90 you're lucky they're there or they wouldn't be having a hot lunch. Number 2, \$14.90 an hour, pathetic. Paraeducators in these classrooms, you heard the need. So they're not getting anything extra, no great benefit package or retirement. And these are people who are either working because the hours work great for them, maybe they're moms and their kids are in schools and stuff, they are people who are retired and they're giving up time. No one is working on that because it is sustaining their living. Again watching this, when you vote this is about salary and this is a very important warrant article to look at and if at the least you can support anything, support this. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion. Warrant Article #2. Yes, sir.

Gavin Tuckman Pitt, 3 Deborah Drive: So I have a question. Is there on Warrant 2 an addition to the budget like Warrant 1 or is this like part of it. -

Moderator: No, this is not part of the operating budget. This is in addition to the operating budget.

Pitt: Thank you.

Moderator: Is there anymore discussion on Warrant Article # 2.

Huard: I just have one more question. Why is the negotiation made without public input. Is that a law. Why aren't we the public involved in the negotiation. Thank you.

Moderator: The contract is between the School Board and the Union. The public does not -

Huard: (interjecting) I mean the meetings. Why aren't they publicized. That we vote on the contract. We see the contract after it is all over. But while the negotiations are being made we aren't party to that. We don't get to attend those meetings. Is that a law or is that just the way things are done. That's what I'm asking.

Moderator: The superintendent will yield.

Moulis: To answer Ms. Huard's question. That is law and under Right-to-Know. Those negotiations are done between the collective bargaining group and the district.

Moderator: Yes, ma'am....For a second time

Smalley: I would like to make a motion to move the question.

Moderator: Well, I don't know if I'm going to have to. I don't see anybody else, Rather than doing that taking a vote. Ladies and Gentlemen, if Ms. Smalley would step away. We done with discussion. If someone wants to get up I'll take a vote on it. If no one else is up, I can see no one wishes to speak. And then **I will close the discussion on Warrant Article # 2 and it goes to the ballot.**

[10 minute break]

Moderator: Thank you, **We will come back to order, Ladies and Gentlemen.**

[Moderator reading Warrant Article 3]

WARRANT ARTICLE 3

Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Hudson School Board and AFSCME

Shall the Hudson School District vote to approve the cost items in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the AFCME Local 1906 (Hudson School District building, administration, department heads, psychologists and school counselors) and the Hudson School Board which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels over the amount paid in the prior fiscal year:

2024-25 \$155,027
2025-26. \$159,290

And to further raise and appropriate \$155,027 for the upcoming fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement that would be paid at current staffing levels.

Estimated tax rate impact: \$.03

Recommended by the Hudson School District 5-0
Recommended by the Budget Committee 8-1

Moderator: (continuing) **I will recognize School Board member Gasdia to present Warrant Article 3.**

Gasdia: [SLIDE: *WARRANT ARTICLE 3 AFSCME*] So you know this is, we talked a lot about the paras but this is also a very important contract. This is a two year agreement negotiated by the School Board in good faith. The total cost increase is \$314,317 over two years with a \$0.03 impact on the tax rate. You know when you think about this contract covers 54 employees. They in many ways are the people you know. Your principals, assistant principals, directors, department heads, psychologists and school counselors. They do an absolute ton of work. You know being on the negotiating team, it was a great negotiation, It's clear these people care a lot about the reputation of the Hudson School District. They care a lot about the kids, they care a lot about everything. It is so important that we support them. And I think one other thing that is reflective over the years is this contract has become very simplified. And so I think it is easy to understand. And when you look here in each year of the agreement it's a 2.75% wage increase. And in this environment we could be running 7, 8, 9 percent. You know that's a modest increase. That's it, there's really nothing else hidden in this contract. It's 2.75% in the first year and it's 2.75 % in the next year. The only other change that was made was there was a slight difference in the language in their contract versus the Hudson teachers. For the sake of consistency we made it the same and that was around bereavement. But really again it's very simple and I thank again the team for a very fair and good negotiations. I thank the School Board and I thank the the Budget Committee for supporting this and I thank everyone that is in this contract for all they do everyday. They are vitally important to the success of this district. I hope everyone supports it.

Moderator: Thank you. **We will open Warrant Article # 3 to questions and comments.** Anyone wishes to discuss Warrant Article 3 collective bargaining agreement. I'll go through it again, the school district building administration, department heads, psychologists, school counselors. Seeing none. **I will close the discussion on Article 3 and it goes to the ballot.**

[Moderator reading Warrant Article #4]

WARRANT ARTICLE 4

Roof Replacement at H. O. Smith Elementary School

Shall the Hudson School District vote to raise and appropriate a sum of \$250,000 to replace a section of the roof at the H. O. Smith Elementary School, and authorize the withdrawal of \$250,000 from the Schools Renovations capital reserve fund established in March of 1999 and created for that purpose, and further to name the school board as agents to expend this fund?

Estimated tax rate impact: \$.00

Recommended by the Hudson School Board 5-0
Recommended by the Budget Committee 9-0

Moderator: (continuing) **And I'll recognize School Board member Dionne to present Warrant Article # 4.**

Dionne: [SLIDE: *WARRANT ARTICLE 4 Dr. H.O. Smith Roof Replacement*] Good morning. Can we go ahead to the next slide please. So here you see the portion of the roof that is estimated to be replaced in the shaded red. It is to be a membrane roof that runs over a portion of the building covering approximately 15,000 feet in total. The roof replaced includes the area over the addition that was to Dr. H.O. Smith in 1989 also the main office and the main entrance areas. The roof shows extensive signs of wear and tear that is beyond its serviceable life. It frequently leaks and requires maintenance with temporary patches being over time as needed. The warranty for that roof is scheduled to expired in 2015. [SLIDE: *WARRANT ARTICLE 4 Dr. H.O. Smith Roof Replacement*] Next slide please. This warrant article is for a white, fully-adhered membrane roof with a 20-year labor and material warranty. The insulation will also be included and will be replace, repaired as needed as part of the warrant.

Moderator: **We will now open Warrant Article #4 the roof replacement for Dr.H.O. Smith School.** Anyone wish to discuss, comment or amend Warrant Article #4. Yes, Sir.

Mike Frazzle, 25 Woodcrest Drive : Can you tell what the materials are to be used. Is it going to be just shingles or whatever. What's the expected life for that matter.

Moderator: Question fro the Board on the roof. We have our Director of Facilities, Mr. Pratt.

Director Pratt: The roofing materials it's not shingles. It's actually DB, Firestone or Carlyle rubberized roof fully adhered to it.

Frazzle: What's the expected life for that.

Pratt: All our roofs are for twenty years. It's a 20-year warranty for materials.

Frazzle: It just seems every year we replace a roof. I vote for, obviously we need to maintain. Is there any consideration for a metal roof which last much longer....

Pratt: This is a flat roof. Metal roofs aren't made for flat roofs. This particular school does have metal roof. I think if you look at the slide it was to the left of it. That area is actually a metal roof under a different warranty. The same as Hills Garrison.

Moderator: Further discussion. Warrant Article #4. Mr. Wilkins.

Wilkins: Is this roof structurally suited for -coated nails. I know that replacing the membrane isn't going to make it any difference on that, but....

Moderator: Mr. Pratt.

Pratt: We have not looked into the integrity for solar panels. When the Capital Committee meets we have been talking about solar panels indifferent areas. Id we were to get into that we would have brought in the materials investigation for us as far as the structure can hold down the solar panel.

Wilkins: Is there a possibility that they could be added to this roof.

Pratt: It's quite possible depending on their recommendations whether or not it's a feasible to install a panel given the location of the school itself and the if the sun would actually cast.

Wilkins: Alright, Thank you.

Moderator: Further discussion. Warrant Article #4. Mrs. Leary.

Leary: I just wanted to make a comment. One of the previous speakers said I'm always voting for a roof. Just to clarify the school does have a schedule of how to repair roofs or parts of the roofs. It seems like every year there is a roof being replaced or repaired. There is a schedule of all roofs, some are a partial replacement. It is my understanding that this is the last one in that schedule. So now as the roofs continue to age they may have to adopt a new schedule but for people whom might be thinking, oh it seems I'm always voting on a roof, there is a plan and a place to do it in a regular scheduled way to make sure they are obviously keeping up with the maintenance.

Moderator: Further discussion. Yes, sir.

John Knowles, 51 Quail Run: It's a quick question. I think of what is the current balance in the Capital Reserve Fund. Actually there's going to be a second question. If there is are we going to have to start adding again like next year.

Moderator: Ms. Burk.

Jen Burk, Business Administrator: We do have about \$550,000 in that account. So it maybe that the School Board maybe entertaining a warrant article to put some additional funds into that for that nature.

Knowles: Thank you.

Moderator: Ms. Whiting to yield.

Whiting: I also want to make it clear that this article is not coming from the Capital Reserve Fund. This article is coming from the fund balance. No, I'm sorry, Wrong article.

Moderator: Mr. Quinlan

Quinlan: We do have a schedule for roofs. Correct. I was just wondering, we also have an emergency fund also. Maybe someone can tell us what the emergency fund is and what are the stipulations, what are the qualifications foe using money in an emergency fund like for the roofs of the school.

Moderator: Ms. Burk will yield.

Burk: So we do have 1.1 million dollars in the emergency fund and the requirements around that is to have an emergency that had both the School Board's approval and the Budget Committee's approval and then get approved by the state. So we can only use it for purposes. One is something catastrophic happens. Or to return to offset the tax rate. Something catastrophic I would say probably something like damage to a building that wasn't covered by insurance, some piece of equipment that breaks that wouldn't be covered by insurance, basically something that wouldn't be covered by insurance that would be significant enough to warrant having some sort of emergency repair we weren't able to cover within the scope of the budget.

Moderator: He's asking for documentation.

Quinlan: I was just wondering if there's anything we can go into as citizens to see what would not be covered by insurance. Is there anything... You're saying you think it, kinda whisky washy. Is there anything to solidify exactly what is considered catastrophic, exactly what we can use the emergency for is it up to discretion(inaudible)

Darcy Orellana: **Point of Order**

Moderator: We are getting a little bit off. I'll allow this last one and then back to the roof on H.O. Smith,

Burk: The law doesn't specify any particular conditions. So there isn't something concrete that specifies what exactly would be covered.

Moderator: Thank you. Article 4. Any further discussion on Article 4 on the replacement of the roof at Dr. H.O. Smith School. Seeing none, **We will close the discussion on Article 4 and it goes to the ballot.**

[Moderator reading Warrant Article 5]

WARRANT ARTICLE 5

Science Labs at Hudson Memorial School

Shall the Hudson School District vote to raise and appropriate a sum of up to \$200,000 to upgrade two Science Classrooms at Hudson Memorial School? This sum is to come from the June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1 with no amount to be raised by additional taxation. This is a special warrant article.

Estimated tax rate impact: \$.00

Recommended by the Hudson School Board 5-0
Recommended by the Budget Committee 9-0

Moderator: (continuing) And **I'll recognize Board member Dionne to present Warrant Article #5.**

Dionne: So if you saw last year there were a very similar warrant article. Can you go to the next slide please.[SLIDE: *WARRANT ARTICLE 5 Science Labs at Hudson Memorial School*] There are eight total science labs at Hudson Memorial School. The short-term plan is to renovate two of those per year little over four years. So those were renovated after 2023 after voters approved again a similar one in March of 2023. Some of those labs date back to the original building in the 1960's while they are still part of an update from the 1980's. The Board has

looked at this and the reason to update over a four year period is to insure that the work can be completed the bulk of it over the summer in a timely manner and being fiscally prudent. Well there were a few delays last year due to some supply chain issues the two that were approved in March of 2023 were completed by early fall. There are a number of updates associated with this renovation including the removal of the old gas lines, making it ADA compliant by updating the learning spaces, adding and improving storage for equipment and supplies, increasing the learning space over all in the classroom and adding whiteboard space to enhance the learning experience for everyone. Next slide please. [SLIDE: *WARRANT ARTICLE 5 Science Labs at Hudson Memorial School*] So this slide shows a renovated science lab completed in 2023. This has been one of six which was completed last summer. On the left hand side of this picture shows the old lab that included multi that couldn't be easily moved. Teacher's desk was fixed, again so that could not be moved about the classroom. While the pictures on the right hand side of this slide show the updates that have been completed. The are now mobile and can be moved about depending on the needs of the lessons and they can also be raised and lowered. There's also a mobile teacher's desk to allow for easy configuration of the classroom and it also shows the improved storage for better organization. Next slide please. [SLIDE: *WARRANT ARTICLE 5 Science Labs at Hudson Memorial School*] The next two slides, first shows room 202. Again these are two of the labs in the next slides that would be up for this next renovation if the warrant article is approved. Room 202 shows the current lab space including the old counter tops, the plumbing fixtures, delaminating cabinets for storage, a standard fixed teacher desk that does not come out for reconfiguration and a demonstration table. This layout provides limited whiteboard space, lack of a projection screen. Next slide please. [SLIDE: *WARRANT ARTICLE 5 Science Labs at Hudson Memorial School*] And then room 203 would be the other lab that would be updated if approved. Again this shows the various types of seating, the outdated plumbing fixtures, again standard fixed teach desk, fixed demonstration table. Again limited whiteboard space and a basic projector for the whiteboard. Both of these classrooms will benefit because of these updates in a variety of ways. Updating storage, reconfiguring that layout to allow for moveable desks and lab stations, learning spaces and demonstration table, as well as the whiteboard instructional space. And also making the space ADA compliant.

Moderator: Thank you. **We will now open Article 5 for questions, comments, amendments.** Anyone wishes to address Warrant Article 5 Science labs at Hudson Memorial School. **Seeing none will will close the discussion on Warrant Article #5 and it goes to the ballot.**

Moderator: (continuing): Mr. Gasdia moves to restrict reconsideration of Warrant Articles 2 through 5. Is there a second. Mr. Campbell seconds. Motion has been made and seconded to restrict reconsideration of Warrant Articles 2 through 5. Means it can't be brought up again at this meeting. If you are in favor of restricting reconsideration of Warrant Articles 2 through 5 raise your cards. Thank you. Those who oppose. The ayes have it. Articles 2 through 5 are restricted.

**MOTION TO RESTRICT RECONSIDERATION OF WARRANT ARTICLES 2 THROUGH 5.
MADE BY GARY GASDIA; SECONDED BY MICHAEL CAMPBELL.
MOTION PASSES**

[Moderator reading Warrant Article 6]

WARRANT ARTICLE 6
Renovate the Checkers Kitchen at Alvirne

Shall the Hudson School District vote to raise and appropriate a sum of up to \$250,000 to renovate the former Checkers kitchen at Alvirne for the school's food service program? This sum is to come from the June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1 with no amount to be raised by additional taxation. This is a special warrant article.

Estimated tax rate impact: \$.00

Recommended by the Hudson School Board 5-0
Recommended by the Budget Committee 9-0

Moderator: (continuing) **I'll recognize Chairman Whiting to present Warrant Article 6.**

Whiting: First slide please. [SLIDE: *WARRANT ARTICLE 6 Renovate Checkers Kitchen at Alvirne High School*] The kitchen at Checkers at Alvirne High School is relatively small for the way it is today. The staff serves 450 students per day for lunch from this kitchen. And the students need to move through lines quickly to get their lunch and make it back to class on time. Student lunches are important component to their overall learning experience and the team in the kitchen work hard to provide the best meals possible to help fuel the student body. This first slide shows the hot food preparation area which is extremely tight and has limited equipment. You can see a staff member working in this preparation area and immediately behind her is the stove that includes a hot water station and the oven. There is also a small refrigerator tucked back in the corner against the wall. Slide. [SLIDE: *WARRANT ARTICLE 6 Renovate Checkers Kitchen at Alvirne High School*] The first being a tight space dry goods storage. This has to be stacked to the ceiling in order to fit as much as in there as possible. This makes it difficult to get some of the items from the shelves in the back. The second picture shows the storage space where items are stacked up high. And to the left we have some refrigerated items on rolling carts and fast foods to be brought out to the kitchen area. This is also the area where deliveries are received. Next slide please. [SLIDE: *WARRANT ARTICLE 6 Renovate Checkers Kitchen at Alvirne High School*] This image shows the serving windows of the kitchen, Students and staff are picking up lunch to go straight in and out but that means some access to the a' la carte items restricted in the back. There are coolers to the left that are not on there. This space despite its large space to let students through it's limited straight lines to the staff at the point of sales to their station which can result in Next slide please. [SLIDE: *WARRANT ARTICLE 6 Renovate Checkers Kitchen at Alvirne High School*] This slide has notes on the challenges everyone faces using this kitchen. There is extremely limited space for preparing meals. This generally means staff can't do any significant prep for cooking the meal. The cook has to coordinate her preparation scheduled with others including the space. Only one person can use this at a time. There isn't a lot of room for pots, pans and dishes that are dirty to collect the clean ones. So limited space for the items that have to be cleaned and dried. The pot-sink which is only a 2-bay sink has been grandfathered in as is a 2-bay sink is required by DHHS. Getting 450+ students in and out can be difficult. As students have limited time to get their meals and sit down and eat. The flow system for meal service isn't great. They have to go in and out in the same line and it can be extremely crowded and it has been described as the marsh pit. And this makes it difficult to allow students choices in grabbing a la carte items. Next slide please [SLIDE: *WARRANT ARTICLE 6 Renovate Checkers Kitchen at Alvirne High School*] Employees at Alvirne who want meals offered through the food service program have to go through the same line with the students. Space for this kitchen is tight. There isn't a lot of space to store ingredients, canned and other dry items and paper goods. Everything gets stacked up to the ceiling particularly when there is a new delivery. The staff have difficulty reaching for things that are on shelves tucked behind other items. There is no designated area for kitchen staff. They often try to share

the manager's space to take a break where they can sit down. Which is upsetting to the manager when he is doing a lot of the record keeping and his administrative tasks throughout the day. The cafeteria is often occupied by students not only during breakfast and lunch periods but also throughout the day. Next slide [SLIDE: WARRANT ARTICLE 6 Renovate Checkers Kitchen at Alvirne High School] This proposal will renovate and update the kitchen that previously supported the Checkers Restaurant at Alvirne which was replaced as part of the renovation CTE section of the building. The restaurant and teaching room are not at the Barnyard Cafe. Please note that the cafeteria space is where the students eat would not be changing because of this project. These next few slides show some of the places of Checkers as it looks right now.[SLIDE: WARRANT ARTICLE 6 Renovate Checkers Kitchen at Alvirne High School] These first two pictures show areas at that kitchen which should be serviceable. Everything will be thoroughly cleaned, repaired inspected to be sure it is up in working order as part of this process. [SLIDE: WARRANT ARTICLE 6 Renovate Checkers Kitchen at Alvirne High School]This slide shows part of the area that is used for hot food preparation with a larger stove, ventilation hood and oven. As I'll note shortly we need to do a lot of cleaning and updating of everything from ceiling tiles, lighting and painting, floors to be sure this kitchen is serviceable and a welcomed environment. Next slide. [SLIDE: WARRANT ARTICLE 6 Renovate Checkers Kitchen at Alvirne High School] This picture on this slide shows the washing area and other equipment plus the back wall preparation station and a 3-bay sink. Next slide. [WARRANT ARTICLE 6 Renovate Checkers Kitchen at Alvirne High School] This slide shows the dish washing stations well as the storage room that could be used for dry goods and supplies. Next Slide please. [SLIDE: WARRANT ARTICLE 6 Renovate Checkers Kitchen at Alvirne High School] This slide shows the potential layout of the kitchen space.The area you see at the bottom which was previously used for the restaurant seating will be the serving area and a station point for sales, section storage spaces, cooler and freeze. Cooking and baking area, prep and sink space, the office for the kitchen manager, more storage for dry and paper goods. Upper left hand corner Plus this space is also has bathroom and locker rooms for the staff to use. This kitchen has a delivery door that leads right into the kitchen. Doors are on the left side of the drawing. Which gives the staff and delivery personnel easy access to the freezer and storage spaces. This kitchen would greatly improve the workflow of the team, provide significantly more space to prepare nutritious meals including allowing for scratch and serving a larger population of the district. Next slide. [WARRANT ARTICLE 6 Renovate Checkers Kitchen at Alvirne High School] Some of the work being proposed as part of this budget would be to update the H-VAC system that services this kitchen, the lighting and the floor, replacing ceiling tiles and anything that is warranted. In addition existing equipment would be serviced and repaired as needed to assure everything is in proper working order. And newer equipment will be provided to additional workspace from scratch cooling to other preparations. Next slide please. [WARRANT ARTICLE 6 Renovate Checkers Kitchen at Alvirne High School] Some equipment will be moved over from existing food service kitchen. Current kitchen is anticipated to be a satellite kitchen for preparing deli options for student meals and more grab-and-go items for quick sales. There is a ot of work to do for this project if it is approved by the voters. This should make it better and much more - This should make it better for a much more experience for staff and the students. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. We will now open Article 6 the renovation of Checkers kitchen at Alvirne to questions, comments, amendments. Anyone wish to speak. Yes, sir, Mr. Wilkins.

Wilkins: I took the adult ed night class in the Barnyard Cafe kitchen and I thought it was quite nice. Id this going to be done to the same standard.

Moderator: Question of - Ms. Burk will yield.

Burk: I would say it's going to be a little bit limited in what we can do with that space just because it's enclosed and the Barnyard Cafe is designed to be at restaurant quality standards just because the preparation space is used for the service to the public. But it does have the kitchen with the teaching component as well. This is going to be more in line with your traditional food service kitchen space. We're hoping to make it look nice and hope it is more efficient and effective in preparing the meals for the students.

Moderator: Further discussion on Warrant Article 6. Yes, ma'am.

Orellana: I think this is great. I do have a question though. How is the placement of this kitchen factor into imaginary future of Alvirne long after I'm gone.

Moderator: Question of the Board.

Orellana: Are we committed to that location. Are we to every - you know where I'm going with this.

Moderator: Principal Beals will yield to the question.

Principal Beals: Good afternoon. This actually kitchen renovation was for those of us who remember the architectural drawings where we intended to move the cafeteria kitchen. So the vision if the vision ever becomes a future reality doesn't really impact anything. I thought the presentation by the School Board Chair was spot on. Our food service need better space so they can better meet the needs of and our staff is a clear component of that. But I'm think the vision of what the community came together and designed but noe implemented still has every option to move forward with this prudent renovation of the kitchen space. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Superintendent Moulis.

Superintendent Moulis: Just one additional component is you could go to the slide that has the diagram. So where the serving location will be and where the kitchen will be as School Board Chairman, Ms. Whiting, said. Where it currently lies in the cafeteria it will move there. So now you're increasing square footage for, in the main cafeteria, for students to eat. Part of that long-term plan you have that extra square footage there. And then you've created a serving area for sales and students picking up food. That is more appropriate for the volume instead of what we have there. So that is part of your planning.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on Warrant Article #6. Ms. Leary.

Leary: As I said before I am a paraeducator up at Alvirne who works in the Life Skills Program. And we do have our Life Skills students actually stocking chips and things and what-not as part of the Life Skills Program. And I can personally attest to the tightness of the space that the cafeteria staff has to work with and how things are stocked and how if you're in the middle of trying to do anything and there's a delivery and the door's wide open everyone is walking around with winter coats on. So in just the tightness of the space and the way they have the storage area I can attest to everything Ms. Whiting said at Alvirne is correct.

Moderator: Thank you. Anyone else to discuss Warrant Article #6 to renovate Checkers kitchen at Alvirne. Seeing none **we will close the discussion on Article 6 and it moves to the ballot.**
[Moderator reading Warrant Article 7]

WARRANT ARTICLE 7

Replace the Hallway Flooring at Hudson Memorial School

Shall the Hudson School District vote to raise and appropriate a sum of up to \$94,000 to replace the hallway flooring in the Hudson Memorial School? This sum is to come from the June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1 with no amount to be raised by additional taxation. This is a special warrant article.

Estimated tax rate impact: \$.00

Recommended by the Hudson School Board 5-0
Recommended by the Budget Committee 9-0

Moderator: (continuing)#I'll reconize Mr. Gasdia of the School Board to present Warrant Article #7.

Gasdia: Thank you. To HCTV, you can present the next two slides as I'm talking. [SLIDES: WARRANT ARTICLE 7 Replace Hallway Flooring at Hudson Memorial School] For anyone that's been to Hudson Memorial there is nothing left for me to say. But for those of you haven't been in Hudson Memorial for many many years we've been patching and fixing these tiles that break. And they continue to break and it's an old floor. And you know these present a hazard. So at some point as you repair things are not level. It makes it more difficult from a custodial staff. Things don't match. Things age over time and I believe at the end of the day it's a safety issue. You have to at some point make a decision. Do you just keep repairing something or do you replace it. [SLIDE: WARRANT ARTICLE 7 Replace Hallway Flooring at Hudson Memorial School] And I think we are at the point that we need to replace it. And so this warrant article would completely replace all of the existing hallway flooring on both floors with low maintenance vinyl planking which would install a resistant vinyl flooring and that would also help reduce maintenance cost. Because with the old tile floors every summer our custodians staff has to go in the was that's on off, refinish them, you would have to do that with the new flooring. Again I thank the School Board and the Budget Committee for supporting this. I think it's probably a warrant article that is long overdue and I hope everyone supports it.

Moderator: Thank you. Anyone wants to discuss, question or amend replacing the hallway flooring at Memorial. Yes.

Smalley: So I was recently at a basketball game and the ref came out into the hallway between the gymnasium and the offices and said ooo it's like a funhouse in here. Because for anyone who has not been in there that hallway is slanted and also a fun ride if you are on a scooter. So my question is will that be leveled as well.

Moderator: Mr. Gasdia will yield.

Gasdia: So the funhouse experience will continue. That is actually the result of the of the school many many years ago. There is a difference in slope and when you see that tilting of floor. That will not be. I am not against trying to fix it but I'm, Mr. Pratt keep me honest, but I don't think that's a \$94,000 fix to level the school. So if you want to experience without a charge just go wonder on the floor outside the gymnasium.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on Warrant Article #7 replace the hallway flooring at Memorial. Seeing none Sorry, I didn't see you.

Putnam: I didn't think of it until you described the funhouse flooring. Again t understand you said that a new vinyl laminate type plank floor. There are versions of that type of flooring that are non-skid. You know what I mean. So is it feasible to, in fact it may be advisable to, for the school to have the non-skid version of that for safety concerns and for the concerns in the leveling of the floor. So the concern, I know my son has that vinyl plank flooring and he is disabled and so there is non-skid versions of that available on a commercial level.

Moderator: Mr. Pratt will yield.

Pratt: The initial quotes that we got for this budget I believe were the non-skid versions. It's a milled vinyl, waterproof planking. It's not like. I know there are residential products that you're talking about. This is the commercial version of that but I do believe it is skid resistant.

Putnam: Yes, I would as a person concerned about that, I would hope that the contract would stipulate. Not just have the understanding but be in writing.

Pratt: Well what we would do after the vote on the 12th we would start our process, our RFP process, and we would send that out as a public bid and it would stipulate in that bid that we would want skid-resistant. Yes, product.

Putnam: Then we would have less funhouse experiences. Thank you.

Pratt: The funhouse will remain.

Moderator: Further discussion on Warrant Article #7. If not, **close the discussion. It moves to the ballot.**

[Moderator reading Warrant Article #8]

WARRANT ARTICLE 8

Establish a Capital Reserve Account for the Alvirne Farm

Shall the Hudson School District vote to establish an Alvirne Farm Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of repairing, improving and maintaining the farm's buildings and grounds to raise and appropriate the sum of \$150,000 from the June 30 year end undesignated fund balance available for transfer on July 1 to be placed in this fund, and to name the Hudson School Board as agents to expend from this fund?

Estimated tax rate impact: \$.00

Recommended by the Hudson School Board 5-0
Recommended by the Budget Committee 6-3

Moderator: (continuing) **I'll recognize Mr. Campbell to present Warrant Article #8.**

Campbell: A recommendation was made by the Alvirne Trustees to the School Board to set up a Capital Reserve Fund for maintenance and improvements to the Alvirne Farm buildings and grounds. The Trustees have generously supported various farm projects over the years and the school system also has funds budgeted annually for basic maintenance of the farm. Establishing this fund would provide a resource to support the future needs of the farm. I've been lucky enough to be part of the Alvirne Trustees for these last few years and I've seen their generosity. I feel this is a perfect thing to do to support the farm. The farm is open on numerous occasions. If the anyone in the community hasn't been there I highly suggest you go see it. At various events, recently the cows were out at Hills Garrison. As you walked in all the

kids were super excited to see it. We have an agreement with Cabot which is a very rare and incredible opportunity. So I hope the community will support this. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. I will open Article 8 the establishment of a Capital Reserve account for the Alvirne Farm to questions, comments, amendments. Yes, ma'am.

Langlais: Trust me, I'm not going to do a fire storm right now cause I want to go home too. So I came to the School Board to press this. I'm an Alvirne Trustee. As Mike stated we have been giving to the farm. For the past two years we have been taking care of the health and wellness of the animals on the farm. I could list all the things but I'm not going to cause people wouldn't understand what I'm talking about. Right now, we need to replace the structure that houses all of the equipment that the farm uses because it is pretty much falling to the ground. As well as the heifer barn that is in the back but right now the next project would be to replace the equipment facility which really doesn't exist. The cost to replace that equipment facility is over \$200,000. The Trustees are more than happy to help to pay for some of the cost which we have been doing all along but we also know that it's part of the School District and that the School District should also be able to contribute some of this money because we're talking big money now. Please look at the farm. I've been told it's the last remaining dairy farm in the country at a high school. So it's amazing and the people that work there work super hard and they need to have things, housing maintenance so we don't have to keep replacing it so often. I thank you for your support.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on Warrant Article 8.

Phyllis Appler, 62 Glen Drive: I ride in support of this article. I am also an Alvirne Trustee. And when I taught at Alvirne I taught biology and Alvirne Farm was an important part of my curriculum. So I, and I know things that have to be fixed on a farm or replaced are very expensive and definitely think we ought to have money there so that they can do those repairs and replacements quickly when they come up. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Any further discussion Warrant Article #8. Mr. Walsh.

Kevin Walsh, 5 Stoney Lane: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. I'm in support of the Article. This is one that it is very interesting when it came before the Budget Committee. We were made to reduce the amount of money to put forward in this particular article. There is an existing Capital Reserve Fund right now for maintenance of school buildings. It's most likely that if the Trust funds were not approved moneys out of that for this particular building. This particular building actually is the oldest building in the oldest property that the School District owns. Addition to the educational opportunities that is provided over the years it is also historical and so it is of importance not only to the School District but the Town of Hudson. The current building today I believe was rebuilt around 1875 when it burned down. This is also the birthplace of the Hills, the benefactor for the town and the school. And so looking at that it would be in separating the farm from the other buildings. Instead of looking at capital reserve funds for this particular project, building and property. Those of us who have been around know that the barn burned in about 1993, so that's reasonably new according to our School District's priorities. Again it looks like putting something together for something well over 150 years old makes sense to put money aside. And I look forward to your support of this and again this is \$150,000 that's theoretically \$0.03 on the tax rate if we're looking to not put this at \$0.03 we go back theoretically to the taxpayers every year that represents about \$0.03 and that's \$15 on a \$500,000 assessment of a home. But I think you're educational and historical importance for this kind of property is well worth the investment of \$150,000. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Any further discussion on Warrant Article #8, Mr. Jasper.

Jasper: I'm in support of the Article. But I've got to correct some historical facts here. The building that was being talked about to be replaced, the machinery, is a pole barn that was built in the 1970's and the Alvirne barn itself, people will remember actually burned in the 1990's. I was at that fire. And so the under is old but I think that is at least the second barn on that site. So we're not talking about a 150 year-old building and in the barn itself, the main barn, was just reroofed. None of the buildings there are the original or that historical anymore. I think they need to be maintained and certainly the machinery shed is, as I said just a pole barn, which is essentially telephone polls stuck in the ground and then built around. It is not an historical structure. I'm sorry to disagree with you, member Walsh, but I didn't want to leave that just hanging out there. We are not talking about a historical building. So that's the actual knowledge, The oldest building that we own is Kimball-Webster School.

Moderator: Thank you. Any further discussion. Warrant Article #8. Establishment of a Capital Reserve Fund for the Alvirne Farm. Seeing none. **We will close the discussion of Article 8. It moves to the ballot.**

[Moderator reading Warrant Article 9.]

WARRANT ARTICLE 9

Voting Day - BY Petition

Shall the School District and Town of Hudson change the date of the elections from the second Tuesday in March to the second Tuesday in April in accordance with RSA 40:14, which would also change the date of the deliberative sessions to a date between the first and second Saturdays after the last Monday in February, inclusive? This warrant would only take effect if it passes on both town and school district ballots.

Submitted by petition

Not Recommended by the Hudson School Board 5-0

Moderator: (continuing) **I'll introduce Mr. Tranfaglia, the petitioner. This is by petition. To present Warrant Article #9.**

Tranfaglia: Thank you. I'll be quick. I know everyone wants to get home. So the past, this warrant article was proposed because we want to try to push this out past the weather that has postponed elections because of snow and ice in the past few years resulting in an even lower turnout on elections. Working with maybe slightly updated numbers we average between three and four-thousand voters average out of the 16,000 voters in Hudson that show up for the Town elections. And we are hopeful that the date change will bring in increasing voters. Some quick research is that voter turnout is slightly higher in warm weather. Again this was submitted both to the Town and School. It needs to pass both the Town and School ballot to take full effect. That's all. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. I forgot to say that this was not recommended by the School Board. There's no tax impact. But I did forget to say that... That was not recommended by the School Board 5-0. **I'll recognize Ms. Whiting to present, to talk on Warrant Article #9.**

Whiting: So the Board has received the feedback from the administrative team which includes though from the principals of the schools regarding the impact of Warrant Article should it passed on both sides and implemented by both Boards. This administration feels that by moving the vote by a month impacts the ability to successfully recruit and hire candidates for

particularly for positions that would be newly added to the by this budget. Hiring decisions are offered depending on the voting on the operating budget. If the District would be working with a post-offered budget or under a default budget in addition an official offer of a salary can be pending on that approval collective bargaining agreements like taking effect before the upcoming school year. New positions would have be then posted as anticipated for almost two months for any pending on a final budget to move forward. This would delay the ability for the District to make final offers to positions of employment in a timely manner. And candidates may then be lost to other districts who have budgets and salaries from a collective bargaining agreement finalized for the upcoming school year because of the March vote. The majority of school districts neighboring with Hudson can candidate who all have a March vote. The District then issues continuing contracts by mid April to the majority of our school-based members with expected compensation to those who An April voting day would delay the District of providing these contracts to staff particularly when there is a bargaining agreement on the ballot. The District and building administrators do not recommend this warrant article and the School Board voted not to recommend this article with some of the feedback from administration.

Moderator: Thank you. We will open Article 9 to questions, comments, amendments. Yes.

Putnam: My husband spoke during the Town Deliberative Session he couldn't be here today. He did work in teaching for over twenty years at the college level. The timing at which jobs are posted is associated and our pay with those postings has to be in alignment with other colleges because as our, Gretchen has noted if the information regarding a potential opening is not posted, solidly posted, so that the people newly graduating for instance getting their certification which is probably the ones who can afford to hire, I hate to say that but that's the truth. They're going to go with the towns, start assessing the towns, oh they made their decision in March, we know what they're going to offer. We're going with a town that has already made their decision. And Hudson is going to be left with the ones that could not find placement in other towns. That is not a situation we want to be in. We want to be in a position to hire the best candidates to make sure our students have the best opportunity. And I frankly have no children left in the school system so I have no skin in the game at this point but my boys went through, I think they graduated in '70 and something, I can't remember the years but it was a long time ago. But it's the quality of the other staff is the key to education and having access to the largest pool of candidates is key to putting in the best teachers to add to the staff. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion Warrant Article 9. Yes, ma'am.

MJ Gasdia: Some people may have missed the Town Deliberative last week and as Mrs. Whiting explained this has to pass on both the Town and School side in order for this to take effect. As an elected official who has worked for the past five or six years, this has a really great intent. We don't want to have a snow day and miss an election. We really only have had to move two elections in the past 25 or so years, right. We discussed this last week. This is something that happens every year. While it is a great intent to encourage more people to get out to the polls reality is my moving this date you actually have more of a chance that it is going to impact you financially at some point. Because if we can't hire teachers because they can't pit out a good faith like they just explained about the contracts and so if you are going to end up running that risk of not being able to hire people we are going to have to talk about hoe we are going to get probable money again to retain these you know... turn downturn down everything else. So this is kind of a slippery slope you're getting because you're putting the School System in a really bad situation. And the reality is voter turnout isn't to do with the snow

day. I've been at those polls and people would argue and say to me, you know one of the arguments is going to be well the elderly can't go out in the snow. I'll tell you right now that the majority of those people at those March elections that come out, 4,000 people, are our senior citizens, People that are older and value and understand the importance, how important it is to get out and vote, do not let weather effect their right to vote. They either send in an absentee ballot ahead of time or they get somebody to drive them to the polls. People who don't make it to the polls are uninformed voters who don't realize that local elections are super important or people who are too busy to get there. It's not a priority. I can tell you that using the snow is an easy excuse. You can change it to April and I'll tell you that number is not going to change. If you're going to get to people you may get 25 people if you're lucky. It's the same number every of these elections. Voting for this is not going to change voter turnout as was the intent of its intent. All it's going to do is have a negative impact on contracts we can put out, in the School District as you just heard. Me I would highly encourage you not to vote for this on either end.

Moderator: Thank you, Mr. Jasper on Article 9.

Jasper: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. I rise in opposition, As a matter of fact this actually worst than that because there is a duty to notify teachers as whether they are going to be rehired or not. This puts them after the statutory date fo notification. So the result could be even though everybody as tough there would be no intent I believe the notices would have to be out about letting them know Because if they don't have the appropriation by the deadline they wouldn't get this notice to rehire which could really put us in a much worse situation. As much as I appreciate what the petitioners are trying to do I think this would given our hiring situation, would put us in a terrible ,terrible position. Thank you, Mr. Moderator.

Moderator: Thank you, Further discussion Article 9. Yes, sir.

Len Segal, Beachwood Road: As the other speakers have said this can have a very negative impact on the town. I problem I see what I want to address is how specifically the School Board get the word out to the 15,8590 people who are going to vote who are here tonight, here last week, t hear Ms. Whiting to explain the ramifications of this. With all good intent look at it, yea it all makes sense I don't want to go to vote in the snow. You need to educate the people as to what ramifications are for the election. Those who are not watching it on cable and those who aren't here aren't educated as to possibilities of problems caused unintended by the petitioner when he put this forward. Because it looks like it makes sense. A lot of people will vote for it based on that without the knowledge of what the impact really is. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion Warrant Article 9. Yes, sir.

Tom Barrett, Winnhaven Drive: It's more of a question I think. Is that this would move the Deliberative Session to the end of February, beginning of March.

Moderator: It would be the first two weeks in March.

Barrett: Depending on the week it could be during February vacation. So it could be affect people coming to the Deliberative Session. True.

Moderator: yes, it's the last-

Barrett: (interjecting) like it's on the last Saturday of the month of February. Historically February vacation has been March vacation. Like recently, so I believe it would have some impact on people being able to attend this part of the election season.

Moderator: Right, it would move them to March. Anyone else to discuss Warrant Article #9. Mr. Campbell.

Campbell: Again, I just want to echo that previous speakers' unintended consequences that we can't predict. I mentioned at the Town Deliberative Session that a few years ago we voted for State elections having two polling locations. It ended up it had to be every single election and though I would love to have see the National election turnout to be the Town election turnout it's not the case. So we have schools being a [Professional] Development Day and we move the schedule back. I love the idea of this of getting more people but to be realistic it's the people who are in this room who are going to knock on doors and bother your neighbors. I'm a broken record to tell them to come out and vote and how important it is. We've seen the population in this room. I see a bunch of passionate people but we just have to be that broken record that annoys our neighbors that you do as me because you know I'm crazy Voter-Mike trying to get everyone out to vote. It is so important and I hope that you share the videos of HCTV. If we can clip some of the stuff people are passionate about. So I appreciate what the idea of this warrant article is but I oppose it. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Anyone else like to speak on Warrant Article #9. If not **we will close the discussion on Warrant Article #9 and it will move to the ballot.**

Moderator: (continuing) Couple of things, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you all for staying and persevering. I want to remind you that the GFWC Hudson Women's Club will be hosting there Candidates Night on Tuesday the 20th at 6:30 at the Community Center. It gives you an opportunity to hear from your candidates office both Town and School. Remember all, March 12th, Voting Day for the Town of Hudson and the School District. It is going to be a long ballot. Have a lot of Articles on the Town side.

Moderator: (continuing) **Yes, the Warrant was returned to the Clerk**, I did forget that at the very beginning. It's an official process that has to occur. **[Diane Cannava, School District Clerk, gesturing that she is in receipt of the Warrant]**

8. ADJOURNMENT

Moderator: (announcing) Thank you very much and I'll entertain a motion to adjourn. Mr. Martin moves. Second, Mr. Quinlan. A reminder the Budget Committee is going to meet immediately after this to look at their recommendations on the Warrant Articles, as will the School Board, to look at their recommendations on the Articles. So if while you're leading could you be a little bit quiet as they get set up to do that. Remember you can turn in your cards at the back.

MOTION: TO ADJOURN

**MADE BY NORMAN MARTIN; SECONDED BY PATRICK QUINLAN
PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

All those in favor of adjournment please say aye. I do a voice vote on that one. We are adjourned at 12:21[pm] (striking gavel).

Transcribed by:

Diane Cannava, School District Clerk

