

*Unapproved Minutes*

**Report of the Annual Meeting  
of the  
BOW SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SAU #67, Bow, NH  
MARCH 14, 2008**

A duly called meeting of the voters of the Bow School District was held in the Bow High School auditorium on Friday, March 14, 2008. School Moderator, Jim Hatem, called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. Four hundred thirty three (433) registered residents were in attendance. Ethan Nappen, Senior Patrol Leader of Boys Scouts Troop 75 under the leadership of Scout Master, Andrew Richardson, called the order and Stephen Weinmann, Patrol Leader, and Joshua Filides, Assistant Patrol Leader, presented the American Flag and the State Flag. The Scouts then led the gathering in The Pledge of Allegiance.

Moderator Jim Hatem introduced the Members of the School Board, Officers, and Administrative personnel of the School District and the Town Budget Committee.

School Board Members Present: Chairman Pansy Bloomfield, Vice Chair Deborah McCann, Anne Baier, Dr. Stephen Elgert and Warren Fargo.

Budget Committee Members Present: Chairman Dan DeVasto, Vice Chair Rick Hiland, Kally Abrams, Peter Cheney, George Lagos, Cindy Martin, and Selectmen's Representative Jack Crisp.

Officers and Administrators Present: Bow School Superintendent Dr. Dean Cascadden, Business Administrator Duane Ford, Special Education Director Daniel Ferreira, Bow High School Principal John House-Myers, Bow High School Assistant Principal Gay Longnecker, Bow Memorial School Principal Kirk Spofford, Bow Memorial School Assistant Principal, Donna Girard, Bow Elementary School Principal Deborah Gibbens and Bow Elementary School Assistant Principal Jane Morrill-Winter. Also present were Louise Knee, District Clerk, with Bob Jaques handling light and sound and Roy Bailey manning the Power Point presentations.

School District Counsel, Tom Barry, Esq. of Nixon, Raiche, Vogelman, Barry, & Slawsky, Professional Association.

Moderator Jim Hatem announced:

- Why the people are gathered at this meeting – Article 28 of our Nation's Constitution;
- Referenced the Rules of Procedure for the meeting that were made available to all attendees;
- Microphone locations and the availability of a portable one;
- Speakers to give their name and address after being acknowledged;
- Any Amendments to Articles should be submitted in writing so they can be presented on the overhead projector;
- Ballot Vote – none proposed; however, petitions with the requisite five voter signatures have been received to do a ballot vote on Article 3 & 4.

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- Identified the location of the ballot box and noted that the different colored vote slips that were distributed at check-in would be used. Only votes from those people with wristbands that were applied at check-in would be received.
- For all other votes, the majority voice vote will prevail.

Mr. Hatem asked if there were any questions regarding the proposed proceedings for the meeting. Van Mosher, 99 Allen Road, questioned if the Rules of Procedure would be strictly followed and asked that if there were to be any deviations, they be announced. No other questions were received and Mr. Hatem directed everyone's attention to the Warrant Articles.

## **BOW SCHOOL DISTRICT 2008 WARRANT ARTICLES**

### **Article 1**

TO DETERMINE and appoint the salaries of the School Board and fix the compensation of any other officer or agent of the District, or take any other action.

#### **Result: APPROVED – Majority voice vote affirmed**

Article read into the record and displayed on the overhead screen. Motion to present the Article for consideration was made by Ms. McCann and seconded by Ms. Baier. Ms. McCann stated that the Article is the standard “boiler plate” type that requires sanction every year and approves the salaries of the School Board, the School Moderator, and School District Clerk. Voice vote was in the affirmative. Motion carried. **Article 1 approved.**

### **Article 2**

TO HEAR the reports of agents, auditors, committees, and officers chosen or to take any other action.

Article read into the record and displayed on the overhead screen. Mr. Hatem stated that this Article presents nothing to adopt, and reports could be considered at the end of the meeting. No reports were made.

### **Article 3**

TO SEE if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee's recommended amount of twenty-four million eight hundred thirty thousand seven hundred forty-six dollars (\$24,830,746.00) for the support of schools, for the payment of salaries for the School District officials and agents, and for the payment of the statutory obligations of the District.

The School Board recommends twenty-four million nine hundred eighty-three thousand six hundred and nine dollars (\$24,983,609.00).

This article does not include appropriations in other warrant articles.

(Majority vote required)

Amendment amount of \$24,983,609 failed [165 yes; 259 no]

Amendment amount of \$23,462,000 failed [125 yes; 270 no]

***Article 3 as presented by the Budget Committee for \$24,830,746 passed [274 yes; 104 no]***

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Article read into the record and displayed on the overhead screen. Mr. Hatem stated that a petition has been received and that there would be a ballot vote. Motion to present the Article was made by Ms. Bloomfield and seconded by Dr. Elgert. Ms. Baier made a motion to amend the Article to present the School Board budget of \$24,983,609.00. Amendment seconded by Ms. Bloomfield.

Ms. Bloomfield stated that the budget prepared by the School Board was conservative and reasonable and wanted to address some of the information circulating with regard to the “left over” money from last year, health insurance, and the “windfalls”. There was money returned to the Town, in excess of \$900,000.00, that resulted from under-expenditures and money collected in revenues and offered Driver Education as an example where it had to be secured up front and later reimbursed by those who took Driver Education. With regard to health insurance, Ms. Bloomfield stated that it is not fully funded, but that employees pay their share to keep costs down. The “windfalls” come primarily from insurance rates used to prepare the budget that are based on “guaranteed not to exceed” and their experience and resulting rate was finalized at a lower rate than what was budgeted.

Ms. Bloomfield referenced the chart that depicts Bow in relation with other New Hampshire school districts offering grades K-12 and noted that Bow, at \$9,574.00 per pupil, is below the State average of \$9,710.00 and much less than neighboring Hopkinton at \$11,422.00 per pupil per year.

Ms. Bloomfield next referenced the two (2) pie charts in the handout – the expenditures by function and the expenditures by object and noted that the functions provided constitute 53% of the budget for payment of salaries, and 23% of the budget is in associated benefits. Two objects – Supplies and Equipment -- at 2% of budget each – can be arbitrated but that affects such items as textbooks and bus fuel. Ms. Bloomfield noted that there was a deficit a few years ago and stated that there is a minimum where the budget can be reduced and not experience a deficit and that to avoid another deficit would mean to cut personnel. Ms. Bloomfield assured that the School Board is committed to provide the best education possible within the approved budget.

Mr. Hatem opened the meeting to public comment. Twelve (12) people addressed the Board and had their questions addressed by the School Board, the Budget Committee and Administration. The individuals and a synopsis of their comments were:

- (1) Dave Martin, 3 Heidi Lane, stated that the \$900,000.00 return last year came from prepaid programs, like Driver Ed and insurance, and revenues reimbursed and asked how much from each? As Mr. Ford looked up the information, Ms. Bloomfield added that under-expenditures were also included in that amount. Mr. Ford offered the following facts: Driver Education was budgeted at \$20,800.00 and only \$17,550.00 was spent; total revenue surplus for the year was \$232,495.00 representing 1.09% of the total revenue budget; revenues from insurance was offset by \$59,247.00 from co-payments; additional investment income was affected by bond proceeds from Bow Memorial School at \$94,648.00 over estimated expenditure payments for benefits were set at \$4.6 million and only \$4.2 million was expended

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- representing a 6% reduction in rates; and salaries were budgeted at \$11,926,273.00 and the actual was \$11,810,110.00. Mr. Martin stated that it is difficult to understand and that the summary/recap is that approximately \$200,000 came from prepaid items and approximately \$700,000 from undesignated funds and that he would prefer going for baseline budget and is against the proposed amendment.
- (2) Tom Keane, 8 Heidi Lane, stated that he was opposed to the amendment and that he feels the difference of nearly \$153,000.00 is significant. Mr. Keane also thanked all those who were in attendance noting that it is the largest group assembled.
  - (3) Jean Rich thanked the School Board and Budget Committee for all their hard work, questioned the line cut by the Budget Committee of nearly \$50,000.00 in Special Education, and noted that it cannot be cut there without violating the IEP [Individual Education Plan] Law. Ms. Rich stated that the school needs aides, that her son has an IEP and Aide on a 1-on-1 basis and noted the high cost of private placement. Dan DeVasto, Chairman of Budget Committee, stated that the Budget Committee did not make line cuts, that they picked a number, and that the School Board applied the line cuts. Ms. Rich stated that she would have preferred a more reasonable application of potential cuts and supported the amendment.
  - (4) Bob Barry, 8 Kelso Drive, asked what rate of return the amount of investment income received was based upon and noted that with the current financial national situation whether such a good rate of return could be expected in the coming year. Mr. Ford stated that the investment is secured with guarantee and no dollar loss; that returns were in the 5% - 5½% range, and added that any shortfall on revenue affects revenues. Mr. Barry stated that the trend in interest is going down which affects investment return and that the undesignated fund balance gives the needed cushion for unanticipated expenses.
  - (5) John Martin, Woodhill Road, stated that there are a lot of e-mails and letters floating around that this is a benign budget, which it is not, and that there is misinformation. Mr. Martin reviewed some of the line items from both the School District budget and the Budget Committee's budget and questioned the various increases and decreases over last year's budget. Mr. Martin noted the dollar differential between the two years' budgets with several examples of specific lines, the overall increase over last year's budget, and commented on the cavalier attitude toward tax money, especially in light of the recent property tax increase and voiced his opposition to the amendment. Ms. Bloomfield stated that the vote from the Budget Committee was to promote the best budget possible, that the School Board presented costs of programs that have been provided in the past, and that it is the responsibility of the voters to vote on the money to indicate their wishes. Ms. Bloomfield was interrupted.

Van Mosher called a point of order, specifically to items 10 - 12 of the Rules of Procedure. After some verbal exchange, Mr. Hatem presented Mr. Mosher's objection as a motion to not allow the option to let the School Board, Budget Committee and Administration to speak out of turn for a voice vote. Majority voice vote was in the negative. Motion not passed.

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- Dr. Cascadden stated that a percent style cut was applied to the proposed School Budget in response to the Budget's Committee flat dollar decrease, that the MS-27 Budget Form provides the format. Mr. Ford stated that a flat dollar amount cannot be made at the bottom line, that it must be applied by function code and that in preparation for a comparison, the focus was on line items discussed at the Budget Committee meetings. Mr. DeVasto restated that the Budget Committee did not specify specific line cuts.
- (6) Van Mosher, 99 Allen Road, expressed concern regarding the proposed International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP or IB) stating that he is a chemist and reviewed the chemistry textbook, noted that page 366 concerns itself with the legalization of cannabis, that a 4,000 word essay is required, that 76% of the grade comes from the "outside" and that the IB program takes away from local control. Mr. Mosher stated that the AP Programs offered at Bow High School are outstanding, that he cannot support the IB program, nor can he support this budget.
  - (7) Female resident, name and address given but not clear/audible, stated that she is surprised not to hear "in favor" of the amendment, that she did research on New Hampshire schools, and chose to move to Bow for the school system, that she has a five year old gifted son, that quality education costs a lot of money, and that "kids are our future".
  - (8) Susan Carlson, 15 One Stack Drive, questioned specifics of the budget and received answers from Mr. Ford. Questions included projections for surplus, salaries, and benefits. Ms. Bloomfield added that the tax rate is set in September/October.
  - (9) Clarence Bourassa, 8 Betty Lane, stated that the issues just presented should be discussed at the Budget meetings. Mr. Bourassa made the motion to Move the Question and was seconded by several individuals. Mr. Hatem noted the motion and stated that the three (3) individuals waiting at the microphones would get the opportunity to speak before the question is called.
  - (10) Scott Lucas, 12 Rising Wood Drive, stated that he has been in Bow for eighteen years, that there are issues that are American and affect us, like obesity, the mortgage crisis and the price of oil. That control is needed, that we just can't have it all and cautioned against marginal futility.
  - (11) Jean Rich, 11 Nesbitt Drive, apologized to the Budget Committee and asked that a budget be presented that does not show cuts on un-cuttable items
  - (12) Robert Coty, Hooksett Turnpike, stated that fiscal problems are State-wide and that on 2/26/08 the Governor announced a revenue shortage of about \$50 million.

Mr. Hatem stated that before the people is a vote on the Amendment to modify the budget to \$24,983,609.00, noted the location of the ballot boxes and the color to be used for voting, and added that the meeting will resume after all the ballots have been submitted and counted. The official count was 165 in the affirmative and 259 negatives. ***Amendment failed.***

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Mr. Hatem stated that now before the people is a vote on the original Article presented, for a budget amount of \$24,830,746.00 and invited public comment.

- (1) Dave Martin, 31 Heidi Lane, proposed an Amendment to the motion to be at last year's budget amount of \$23,462,000.00. Ray Cote, Hooksett Turnpike seconded the motion.

Mr. Hatem announced that before the people was a second amendment – to set the budget at last year's amount of \$23,462,000.00.

- (2) Susan Carlson, 15 One Stack Drive, questioned the amount just proposed as the fiscal budget last year was \$24,322,376.00.
- (3) Mark Crisman, 7 Beaver Brook Drive, asked to re-think the proposed amendment because to run the school on last year's budget would cut programs.
- (4) Leo Schwartz, 4 Deer Run Road, asked for clarification on the two numbers from last year. Mr. Ford stated that \$23,462,020.00 represents the operating budget only without Food Service. Discussion ensued regarding numbers and scenarios if no changes were made and the same programs were offered and the resulting costs.
- (5) Ray Cote, Hooksett Turnpike, asked to Move the Question
- (6) Mark Attorri, Currier Drive, stated that he understands economic pressures, that two responsible elected bodies – the School Board and the Budget Committee – presented their proposals and that the amendment proposed is not fair. Mr. Attorri stood in opposition of the proposed amendment to cut the budget to last year's figure.
- (7) Phil Vecchione, 51 Brown Hill Road, stated that a half a million dollars is a savings to the taxpayers. Mr. Fargo recognized the tough times facing everyone and noted that dramatic cuts to the budget could “destroy” a positive that Bow has to offer – namely, the school system.
- (8) Mark Blount, 1 Morgan Drive, asked to amend the amendment to a different number. Mr. Hatem stated that a vote on the amendment before the people had to occur first before proposing a different amount.

Mr. Hatem re-identified the locations of the ballot boxes and voting process, clarified that the proposed amendment being voted upon is for \$23,462,000.00 and that the meeting would reconvene once the ballots are counted. The vote results from the proposed amendment were 125 in the affirmative and 270 opposed. ***The proposed [second] amendment failed.***

George Lagos made the motion to present Article 3 as prepared by the Budget Committee in the amount of \$24,830,746.00. Motion seconded by Jack Crisp. Majority voice vote received. Mr. Hatem opened public comment to Article 3 as presented.

- (1) Denise Leahy, 8 Hollow Road, questioned the proposed cuts in the athletic program and asked how many students were affected. Dr. Cascadden stated that the determination of what exactly would be cut has not yet been made. Ms. Bloomfield noted that any money not spent does go back to the Town.

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(2) Tom Keane, Heidi Lane, encouraged the voters to vote 'no'.

Discussion ensued. Voting "no" on Article 3 would result in no budget. Tom Barry, legal counsel, stated that a budget is needed before the meeting closes.

Mr. Hatem called the voters to vote, reiterating the process. The vote results were 274 affirmatives and 104 opposed. **Motion passed.** Ms. McCann made a motion to restrict reconsideration of Article 3. Dr. Elgert seconded the motion. Majority voice vote received. Article 3 restricted from reconsideration.

**Article 4**

TO SEE if the School District will vote to approve the cost items included in the fact finding report reached between the Bow School Board and the Bow Educational Support Staff which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Estimated Increase</u>
2008-09	\$92,644
2009-10	\$97,406
2010-11	\$91,051

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of ninety two thousand six hundred forty-four dollars (\$92,644.00) for the upcoming fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels paid in the prior fiscal year.

**Recommended by the School Board  
Recommended by the Budget Committee (Vote 5-1)**

***Article 4 passed with a vote of 273 in favor and 47 opposed.***

Article read into the record and displayed on the overhead screen. Mr. Hatem stated that a petition with nine (9) signatures has been received and that there would be a ballot vote. Motion to present the Article was made by Warren Fargo and seconded by Anne Baier. Mr. Fargo noted that this Article represents the three-year contract that went into mediation and the results of the Fact Finding, and noted that the increases are all around the 2% level with an average salary of support staff being in the \$15,000.00 range.

Meeting opened to public comment. Only one person addressed the Board. Jean Rich, 11 Nesbitt Drive, spoke in favor of the Article.

Mr. Hatem called the voters to vote, reiterating the process. The vote results were 273 affirmatives and 47 opposed. **Motion passed.** Ms. McCann made a motion to restrict reconsideration of Article 3. Dr. Elgert seconded the motion. Majority voice vote received. Article 4 restricted from reconsideration

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**Article 5**

TO SEE if the School District will vote to authorize the School Board to enter into a five year lease/purchase agreement for two (2) school buses at a total cost of one hundred fifty-four thousand thirty-six dollars (\$154,036.00) and to raise and appropriate the sum of thirty-four thousand one hundred seventy dollars (\$34,170.00) for the first year's payment for that purpose. This lease/purchase agreement contains a fiscal funding "escape" clause. (Majority vote required)

**Recommended by the School Board**  
**Recommended by the Budget Committee (Vote 5-1)**  
**Majority voice vote received. *Article 5 passed.***

Article 5 read into the record and displayed on the overhead screen. Motion to accept the Article as presented was made by Deb McCann and seconded by Pansy Bloomfield. Ms. McCann stated that this is the same type of agreement made in the past regarding school buses and that two (2) are in need of replacement.

Meeting opened to public comment. Only one person addressed the Board. Marie McMillen, Allen Road, questioned the specifics regarding the buses. Buses to have a five-speed transmission, fueled by diesel, and will have chains and not snow tires. Mr. Hatem called for a vote. Majority voice received in the affirmative. Article 5 passed.

**Article 6**

TO SEE if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred fifty-six thousand dollars (\$156,000.00) for the replacement of the wooden siding at Bow Elementary School and to authorize the withdrawal of one hundred fifty-six thousand dollars (\$156,000.00) from the Bow School District Capital Reserve Fund created in 1992 for that purpose. (Majority vote required)

**Recommended by the School Board**  
**Recommended by the Budget Committee (Vote 6-0)**  
**Majority voice vote received. *Article 6 passed.***

Article 6 read into the record and displayed on the overhead screen. Motion to accept the Article as presented was made by Anne Baier and seconded by Deb McCann. Ms. Baier stated that the plan is to replace the existing T-111 wood siding with concrete-based siding with insulation. Mr. Hatem opened the meeting to public comment. None received. Mr. Hatem called for a voice vote. Majority voice vote received in the affirmative. ***Article 6 passed.***

**Article 7**

TO SEE if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of sixteen thousand dollars (\$16,000.00) for the repair and improvement of the patio area at Bow High School and authorize the withdrawal of sixteen thousand dollars (\$16,000.00) from the Capital

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Improvements and Equipment Purchase at Bow High School Capital Reserve Fund created in 2000 for that purpose. (Majority vote required)

**Recommended by the School Board**  
**Recommended by the Budget Committee (Vote 6-0)**  
**Majority voice vote received. *Article 7 passed.***

Article 7 read into the record and displayed on the overhead screen. Motion to accept the Article as presented was made by Anne Baier and seconded by Deb McCann. Ms. Baier stated that the plan is to remove the stairs and install a ramp and added that the money would come from the Capital Reserve Fund.

Mr. Hatem opened the meeting to public comment.

- (1) John Martin, Woodhill Hooksett Road, asked where the patio is located and what it is used for. Ms. Baier stated that it is located just off the cafeteria and provides an egress to the rear of the building.
- (2) Ray Helgemoe, 3 Woodland Circle, questioned the need. Ms. Baier stated that the stairs are eroding and are no longer safe. Mr. Fargo stated that the 'patio' is a reference area and that it is actually the stairs that need to be fixed. Mr. Ford stated that the original plan was to have a ramp installed but two sets of concrete stairs were constructed instead.
- (3) Mark Crisman, 7 Beaver Brook Drive, stated that water off the building goes down the stairs and erodes the earth on the side of them, that the stairway is now a hazard and that snow removal with stairs in winter time is a more maintenance than a ramp.

Being no one else at the microphones, Mr. Hatem called for a vote. Majority voice vote in the affirmative was received. *Article 7 passed.*

### Article 8

TO SEE if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of eighty thousand dollars (\$80,000.00) for the paving of approved items as part of the Bow Elementary and Memorial School Traffic and Parking Study of November 2007 and authorize the withdrawal of eighty thousand dollars (\$80,000.00) from the Paving in the Bow School District Capital Reserve Fund created in 2006 for that purpose. (Majority vote required)

**Recommended by the School Board**  
**Recommended by the Budget Committee (Vote 6-0)**  
**Majority voice vote received. *Article 8 passed.***

Article 8 read into the record and displayed on the overhead screen. Motion to accept the Article as presented was made by Warren Fargo and seconded by Deb McCann. Mr. Fargo stated that the study was conducted with regard to student safety, traffic flow and bus pick-up. Displayed on the overhead screen was the overview of the Bow Elementary School & Bow Memorial School site with the proposed improvements – Area 'A' by Bow Elementary School playground

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to become a parking lot; location 'E' shows a sidewalk connecting the two schools and another sidewalk by the field to Bow Memorial School and Area "I" shows a traffic island at the entrance, soon to be opposite the Bow Youth Center, which will allow one-way traffic in and three-way traffic out.

Mr. Hatem opened the meeting to public comment.

- (1) John Martin, Woodhill Road, asked if the money is being asked for a private enterprise. Mr. Fargo stated that it is not. Ms. Bloomfield stated that for the past several years traffic has been a concern, that a study was actually done in 2007 and that in 2006 a Capital Reserve Fund was established.
- (2) Karen Saari, 27 Jonathan Lane, asked if all needed to be done and/or if there was a priority list. Ms. Bloomfield stated that it all should be done

Being no one else at the microphones, Mr. Hatem called for a vote. Majority voice vote in the affirmative was received. *Article 8 passed.*

### **Article 9**

TO SEE if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate up to sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000.00) to be added to the Bow School District Capital Reserve Fund created in 1992, with such amount to be funded from the June 30, 2008 unreserved fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2008. (Majority vote required)

**Recommended by the School Board**  
**Recommended by the Budget Committee (Vote 4-2)**  
**Majority voice vote received. *Article 9 passed.***

Article 9 read into the record and displayed on the overhead screen. Motion to accept the Article as presented was made by Dr. Elgert and seconded by Ms. Bloomfield. Dr Elgert stated that this is a traditional Article for the purpose of taking surplus and placing it into the Reserve Fund.

Meeting opened to public comment. Only one person addressed the Board. Ray Helgemoe, 3 Woodland Circle, asked what the Fund balance was today/ Mr. Ford stated that as of 6/30/07 the balance was \$82,324.00. Mr. Hatem called for a vote. Majority voice received in the affirmative. Article 9 passed.

### **Article 10**

TO SEE if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate up to forty thousand dollars (\$40,000.00) to be added to the Paving in the Bow School District Capital Reserve Fund created in 2006, with such amount to be funded from the June 30, 2008 unreserved fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2008. (Majority vote required)

**Recommended by the School Board**  
**Recommended by the Budget Committee (Vote 4-2)**  
**Majority voice vote received. *Article 10 passed.***

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Article 10 read into the record and displayed on the overhead screen. Motion to accept the Article as presented was made by Ms. Bloomfield and seconded by Ms. McCann. Ms. Bloomfield stated that this Article would allow excess money from the year to be put into the paving fund, but only if there is an excess.

Meeting opened to public comment. Seeing no one at the microphones, Mr. Hatem called for a vote. Majority voice received in the affirmative. Article 10 passed.

Motion made by Ms. Bloomfield, seconded by Ms. Baier to adjourn the meeting. Majority voice vote received. The Annual School District Meeting of March 14, 2008 adjourned at 11:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

*Louise LeBlanc Knee*

Louise LeBlanc Knee  
School District Clerk

On behalf of the School Board Chair Pansy Bloomfield, Vice Chair Deb McCann and Members Anne Baier, Dr. Stephen Elgert and Warren Fargo