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**SCHOOL DISTRICT DELIBERATIVE SESSION**  
**Pelham, New Hampshire**  
**February 4, 2009**

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The School District Moderator Kenneth Dunne opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the Pelham Elementary School. Seated on the stage were School Board Members, Chairman Bruce Couture, Linda Koehler, Cindy Kyzer, Eleanor Burton, and Linda Mahoney. Representing the Budget Committee were Chairman John Lavalley and Dennis Viger. Representing SAU No. 28 were Superintendent Frank Bass, Financial Administrator Kathleen Sargent and School District Legal Counsel Mr. Gordon Graham along with Pat Murphy, School District Clerk. Seated in the audience was Assistant Superintendent Roxanne Wilson.

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The Pledge of Allegiance, led by State Representative Shaun Doherty, was recited before the beginning of the deliberative session.

The Moderator instructed persons in attendance the rules of debate including discussion, explanation, questions, amendments and the use of restricting reconsideration of an article. Those in attendance checked in with the clerks/supervisors of the checklist and were given a yellow voting card to use should a hand count be necessary. All non-registered residents and visitors were asked to sit in the first two rows in front and to the right of the stage.

**Article 1:** The official ballot voting for candidates will take place on March 10, 2009.

(Under SB2, it is required by law that bond issues are to be discussed as the first item(s) on the agenda.)

**Article 2:** “Shall the Pelham School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$24,007,621.00 (**Twenty-four Million, Seven Thousand, Six Hundred Twenty-one dollars and no cents**)?. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$24,090,033.07 (**Twenty-four Million, Ninety Thousand, Thirty-Three dollars and seven cents**) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Pelham School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only?”

Not Recommended by the School Board, Recommended by the Budget Committee

\*NOTE: Warrant Article 2 (operating budget) does not include appropriations proposed in any other warrant articles.

John Lavalley, Chairman of the Budget Committee, spoke to the article. Mr. Lavalley explained the reasoning behind the adjustments to the School Board’s budget request. Bruce Couture of the School Board stated that after working with the Budget Committee a decrease of .18% represented a budget that was fair, lean, and tough and thanked the Budget Committee.

Lorraine Dube of Birch Lane offered an amendment to include the cost of two (2) full time teachers and two (2) full time assistants for the kindergarten program. Ms. Dube stated that with a current enrollment of only 37 students we would be more than meeting state requirements.

Ms. Dube stated the decrease would be \$314,605. Moderator Dunne requested Ms. Dube present the amendment in writing with the actual dollar amount.

Bruce Couture informed the audience that the current enrollment for the kindergarten program is actually at 59 and by state statute enrollment stays open until September 1, 2009. He also stated that any new residents moving into Pelham after the September 1<sup>st</sup> deadline would be eligible to enroll. He said that census tells us there are a possible 200 students eligible for enrollment though usually only 50% will enroll the first year of a program. He reassured the audience that only the number of teachers necessary will be hired and that any unused funds will be returned to the taxpayers.

Lorraine Dube submitted in writing her amendment which would change the dollar amount of the article to \$23,703,016 with the default budget of \$24,090,033.07. The amendment was seconded.

Dr. Bass, Superintendent of Schools, confirmed Mr. Couture’s statement regarding the enrollment count for kindergarten and the enrollment deadline. He also stated that we have an obligation by state mandate to provide kindergarten for the possible 200 plus eligible students. Superintendent Bass stated that funding is not 100% from the state but is close. All portables are at no charge to the district and include set-up and the exiting cost at the end of three (3) years. All furnishings, fixtures and equipment are fully paid for by the state. The district would pay only for consumables at an approximate cost of \$5,000. Dr. Bass also informed the audience that the district will receive \$1,200 per kindergarten student from the state as part of our adequacy grant.

Lorraine Dube submitted a second motion to amend Article 2 changing the budget amount to \$23,864,845. The amendment was seconded.

After further discussion and clarification, Lorraine Dube stated that she was misinformed about the enrollment numbers and dates and she withdrew requested amendment to Article 2. Motion to close debate was made and passed. Article 2 will be printed on the ballot as it was originally written.

A motion was made and passed to restrict reconsideration of Article 2.

**Article 3.** “Shall the Pelham School District vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Pelham School Board and the Pelham Educational Support Personnel Association (PESPA) which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

Year:	Estimated Increase:
2009-2010	\$49,031.11
2010-2011	\$48,806.13
2011-2012	\$50,106.76

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$ 49,031.11 (**Forty-nine Thousand, Thirty-one Dollars and eleven cents**) 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

School Board Member Linda Mahoney stated that there are 83 members of PESPA and that there has been very little change from the contract approved by the voters three (3) years ago. She said they are asking for a 2.75% raise in this contract and one (1) additional sick day. Cindy Kyzer informed the audience that this group of employees receives only a 50% district paid portion of a single person health plan.

Brenda Hobbs of Windham Road, President of PESPA, made a point of clarification that as of this week this article addresses 87 people in the district. Ms. Hobbs also stated that the 2.75% raise represented \$0.30 at the end of the year and totaled only a \$1.00 increase by the end of the third year. Susan Harden, Burns Road, President of the Pelham Education Association spoke in favor of this article, commending the support staff for their fine work.

**Article 4.** "Shall the Pelham School District create a half-time nurse position to support the Pelham Kindergarten population and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$26,995.00 (**Twenty-Six Thousand, Nine Hundred Ninety-Five Dollars and no cents**) to fund the salary and benefits for the ½ time nurse position?"

Recommended by the School Board, Recommended by the Budget Committee

Linda Koehler of the School Board spoke to this issue. Linda stated that there are currently 930 students at Pelham Elementary School and only one (1) nurse. With the possibility of 200 kindergarten students an additional nurse is definitely necessary.

Thomas Gellar, Theodore Ave., questioned the wisdom of having only a ½ time nursing position. Linda Koehler reassured the audience that both teachers and aides are trained in first aid and that there is coverage available from Pelham Memorial and Pelham Elementary nurses but agreed that it would indeed be nice to have a full time nurse.

Motion was made and passed to restrict reconsideration of Articles 3 and 4.

**Article 5.** "Shall the Pelham School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$55,063.00, (**Fifty-Five Thousand, Sixty-Three Dollars and no cents**)? Said sum of money being the amount necessary to fund a 2.75% salary increase for non-union employees."

Recommended by the School Board, Recommended by the Budget Committee

School Board Member Cindy Kyzer told the audience that there are 38 non-union members and that the School Board recommended the 2.75% increase (the same percentage that the town had approved).

**Article 6.** “Shall the Pelham School District add the following positions at Pelham Elementary School and raise and appropriate the money to fund salaries and benefits for those new positions as follows:”

a. Assistant Principal \$93,671.00

Recommended by the School Board, Recommended by the Budget Committee

b. Unified Arts/PE teacher \$55,854.29

Recommended by the School Board, Not Recommended by the Budget Committee

c. 1/2 time Special Education Clerical \$8,186.44

Recommended by the School Board, Not Recommended by the Budget Committee

d. Speech Assistant \$20,820.50

Recommended by the School Board, Recommended by the Budget Committee

School Board Member Bruce Couture spoke to part “a” of this article. He stated that there is currently one (1) assistant principal at PES for 930 students, 60 professional staff, and 55 support staff. With the possibility of 200 kindergarten students, enrollment would be over 1,000. The minimum New Hampshire standard is usually one (1) administrator for each 500 students with the principal being the overall administrator.

Part “b” of the article was addressed by Board Member Eleanor Burton. She stated that in 2002 the building was planned as two (2) schools which would separate grades. It was built with two (2) art rooms, two (2) music rooms and a gym large enough for two classes. Comparing 2002 to 2009, the school opened with an enrollment of 600 and is now over 900. Ms. Burton informed the audience that the current limited staffing in these areas effects scheduling. It is suggested that minimum standards (which we are not meeting) for gym class are once weekly. We now have a six (6) day rotating schedule in order to get all students in.

Linda Koehler, School Board Member, addressed parts “c” and “d” of the article. There are between 110 to 130 students at PES requiring services of five (5) Special Ed Teachers. In addition to classes, the responsibilities of these teachers are meetings, evaluations, IEPs and forms. The new position would take some of the clerical work from the teachers so they could have more hands on time with the students. As for part “d” of this article, Ms. Koehler informed the audience that there are approximately 85 students at Pelham Elementary with speech/language impairments. There is currently one (1) therapist and one (1) assistant to service these students. To compensate for the current lack of staffing, we are now contracting out some of the speech/language services which are very expensive.

**Article 7.** Shall the Pelham School District add the following positions at Pelham Memorial School and raise and appropriate the money to fund salaries and benefits for those new positions as follows:”

- a. 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher \$55,854.29

Recommended by the School Board, Not Recommended by the Budge Committee

- b. 1/2 time Special Education Clerical \$8,186.44

Recommended by the School Board, Recommended by the Budget Committee

Cindy Kyzer, School Board Member, addressed part “a” of this article. She stated that there are currently 202 students in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade class with 7 teachers. This brings the ratio to 28.8 students per teacher. An additional teacher would reduce the class size and when this class moves to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade the teacher would follow.

School Board Member Linda Koehler spoke to part “b” of the article. This ½ time position would perform the same type of services as stated in Article 6 part c. Ms. Koehler stated that this would save each Special Ed Teacher approximately two (2) to four (4) hours a day and allow them more time to work directly with the students.

Dennis Viger of the Budget Committee shared stats with the audience that showed the anticipated number of students leaving and entering Pelham Memorial in the fall of 2009. With the number of teachers currently available, the Budget Committee does not believe it would be necessary to add a teacher. Principal Pinnseinault, (non-resident) explained the need for the additional teacher. She stated that the request to increase the 7<sup>th</sup> grade teachers to eight (8) for the upcoming school year would put the student/teacher ratio at a better level.

**Article 8.** Shall the Pelham School District add the following positions at Pelham High School and raise and appropriate the money to fund salaries and benefits for those new positions as follows:”

- a. English teacher \$55,854.29

Recommended by the School Board, Not Recommended by the Budget Committee

- b. Special Education teacher \$55,854.29

Recommended by the School Board, Recommended by the Budget Committee

School Board Member Linda Mahoney spoke to this article. She informed the audience that the addition of an English teacher was Dr. Mohr’s first priority. Since 2004/2005, there has been an increase of 228 students taking English or writing courses.

The request for a Special Education teacher was made because the current three (3) Special Education teachers each have a case load of 32 to 35 students. An additional teacher would allow for more math and reading classes for these students. It would also reduce the case load to approximately 25 students per teacher.

Richard Tarpey, Jonathan Road, questioned Linda Mahoney as to why she did not sign the back of the warrant. Ms. Mahoney stated that she supported all the warrants except Article 2 because of its inclusion of funding for an unfunded mandate for kindergarten. Ms. Mahoney believes that

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3 this strongly goes against the New Hampshire Constitution and could not in good conscience  
4 support it. Mr. Tarpey voiced concerns about additional high school personnel and the  
5 kindergarten. Moderator Dunne asked him to focus on the article at hand. Mr. Tarpey stated that  
6 this article “adds to the population of an already over crowded sick building that we have in  
7 town.”  
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9 After some additional discussion, concerns and recommendations, a motion was made and passed  
10 to restrict reconsideration of Articles 6, 7, and 8.  
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13 **Article 9.** “Shall the Pelham School District raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000.00  
14 (**Fifty Thousand dollars and no cents**) to the previously established Capital Reserve  
15 Fund known as the School Building Land Fund?”  
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17 Recommended by the School Board, Not Recommended by the Budget Committee  
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19 Linda Mahoney of the School Board addressed this article. She stated that the intent of the  
20 School Board was to be able to put a hold on a piece of land that may come up for sale. This  
21 would allow us to hold the land until the property purchase could be put before the voters.  
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24 **Article 10.** “Shall the Pelham School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of  
25 \$85,000.00 (**Eighty-Five Thousand Dollars and no cents**) for the purchase of a new telephone  
26 system for the three (3) schools that comprise the Pelham School District?”  
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28 Recommended by the School Board, Recommended by the Budget Committee  
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30 School Board Member Cindy Kyzer stated that the telephone systems at Pelham Memorial and  
31 Pelham High School have reached the end of their useful lives. The district is currently paying  
32 more than is budgeted for phone and internet connection. By consolidating the three (3) phone  
33 systems into one (1) the district could save approximately \$33,000 each year. The system would  
34 pay for itself in three (3) years.  
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36 **Article 11.** “Shall the Pelham School District create a new position, Full Time Technology  
37 Technician, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1.00 (**One Dollar and no cents**) for the  
38 purpose of funding the salary and benefits of the Technology Technician?”  
39 (If this article passes, the monies from the technology contracted consultant line in the  
40 operating budget will fund this position.)  
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42 Recommended by the School Board, Recommended by the Budget Committee  
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44 Bruce Couture of the School Board addressed this article. He stated the net effect to the taxpayer  
45 is zero. Mr. Couture said that we are currently spending more in contracted services for  
46 technology maintenance than the \$60,000 we have budgeted. By hiring a full time Technology  
47 Technician, we would not only be saving money but have someone readily available.  
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50 **Article 12.** “Shall the Pelham School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of  
51 \$80,000.00 (**Eighty Thousand dollars and no cents**) to repair and pave the existing front  
52 parking lot at Pelham Memorial School?”

Recommended by the School Board, Not Recommended by the Budget Committee

School Board Member Eleanor Burton informed us that this is not only a parking lot but the front driveway which is used by everyone entering the building. The driveway was constructed in 1978 and we have spent a great deal of money on several repairs. It has been recommended that the entire driveway be rebuilt. Ms. Burton believes that the front part of the driveway is a very dangerous situation. She encouraged voters to take a drive over to the school and then make their vote.

Dennis Viger of the Building Committee shared with the audience that the Budget Committee felt the back lot was in worse shape than the front. The Budget Committee asked the School Board to get pricing on both lots. Linda Mahoney stated that the School Board felt that due to the current economy they would come forth with an article for the front lot only.

William "Bill" Scanzani of Victoria Circle presented an amendment to increase the article to \$142,000 and removing the word "front." The motion was seconded. Mr. Scanzani accepted a "friendly amendment" from Mr. Viger of the Budget Committee. Mr. Viger discussed a single pole and transformer in the back lot that should be moved if paving is to be done. Mr. Scanzani asked for assistance from Legal Counselor Gordon Graham. Attorney Graham stated that it is not necessary to be specific in the article regarding square footage and pole moving.

Mr. Scanzani withdrew his amendment and submitted a new amendment in the amount of \$192,000 and deleting the word "front" from the original article.

Richard Tarpey, Jonathan Road, inquired if the article could be broken down into three (3) parts as in Articles 6, 7 and 8. Attorney Graham suggested the district make sure to keep the purpose of the article the same as the purpose that was warned.

The question was moved and seconded. The amendment was voted and approved.

A motion to restrict reconsideration on all articles up to #12 was made and passed.

**Article 13.** "Shall the Pelham School District vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of \$50,000.00, (**Fifty Thousand dollars and no cents**) to be added to the previously established (1999-2000) School District Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund, with such amount to be funded from the June 30, 2009 unreserved fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2009?"

Recommended by the School Board, Recommended by the Budget Committee

School Board Chair Bruce Couture spoke stating that last year the body did establish this fund and that there is currently a \$7,000 balance. He also informed the body that the fund was very useful this year when two (2) boilers went at the high school. This article does not effect the tax rate but does allow the transfer of money available from the June 30, 2009 unreserved fund balance.

**Article 14.** "Shall the Pelham School District raise and appropriate the sum of \$95,000.00 (**Ninety-Five Thousand Dollars and no cents**) for the removal of the electrical transformer

located in the Pelham High School Building and for the subsequent reinstallation of the transformer to the Pelham High School grounds?"

Recommended by the School Board, Not Recommended by the Budget Committee

Linda Mahoney, School Board Member, addressed this article. The transformer is located on the second floor of the high school next to a classroom. In 2006, the State Fire Marshall included the removal of the transformed as one of his life safety issues. He recommended that the transformer be relocated outside the building. Budget Committee Member Dennis Viger stated that although the State Fire Marshall did recommended the removal of the transformer he did not deem it a hazard. He noted that there is currently a Pelham High School Building Committee in place that may or may not make a recommendation to add on to the high school. Not knowing where an addition might be, the Budget Committee decided to wait another year so that we would know where to put the transformer.

Bruce Couture made an amendment to change the dollar amount to \$1.00. He thinks it will show constraint on the Board's part and that if monies become available we would do it as a safety reason. The amendment was seconded.

After further discussion and concerns from the body, the question was moved. A vote was taken on the amendment and passed. A hand vote was requested. Moderator Dunne requested Mr. Hogan and Mr. Currier (Assistant Moderators for the evening) help with the count. There were 34 votes in favor and 28 against. The amendment passed.

**Article 15.** "Shall the Pelham School District vote to establish a capital reserve fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1-b for the purpose of educating educationally disabled children and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000.00, (**Ten Thousand Dollars and no cents**) to be placed in this fund and to designate the Pelham School Board agents to expend from this fund?"

Recommended by the School Board, Not Recommended by the Budget Committee

School Board Member Linda Koehler spoke to the article. With a fund set aside just for this purpose, Ms. Koehler says although \$10,000 is probably not enough at least we have a start. She also said that money would be used for educating educationally disabled children either in or out of district. John Lavallee stated the Budget Committee did not support this article because of the fact that it is a Contingency Fund. Attorney Graham clarified that this article does establish a Capital Reserve Fund (a savings account) into which money will be appropriated this year and the fund will exist now and into the future. He stated that it can be drawn in the future by the School Board and added to by the school district meeting by future appropriations.

**Article 16.** "Shall the Pelham School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$34,251.00 (**Thirty-Four Thousand, Two Hundred Fifty-one dollars and no cents**). Said sum of money being the amount necessary to continue providing Child Benefit Services to the school children attending St. Patrick School?" This will be a special warrant article per RSA 32:3, VI (d).

Not Recommended by the School Board with a vote of 3-1

Not Recommended by the Budget Committee with a vote of 6-5

School Board Member Bruce Couture informed the body that St. Patrick School is helping us out next year with space for the preschool disabled children coming to the district. John Lavallee made a point of information that St. Patrick School has reduced their request for funding by \$19,000 from past years.

Roger Dumont, Principal of St. Patrick School (non-resident), clarified that the amount reflects the money necessary for a school nurse to service 121 Pelham students in grades one (1) through eight (8). The remainder of \$7,124 will be applied to non-religious text books and standardized testing and scoring for grades two (2) through eight (8), which will affect 105 Pelham students. He stated that there are 4,214 taxpaying households in Pelham. It would cost each of these households \$8.13 to fund this article. The estimated cost to educate a student in Pelham next year is \$8,800. If 121 students were to return to the Pelham schools, it would create a burden of \$1,064,800 to the district.

Gael Ouellette, Wheaton Drive, presented an amendment to increase the article to \$34, 660. The amendment was seconded. This amendment would be \$409 for the standardized testing and scoring needed for additional students enrolled since the original article was presented.

After some further discussion, a motion was made to move the question. A vote on the amended article was taken and passed.

Linda Mahoney presented an amendment to strike the wording “with a vote of 3-1” and the wording “with a vote of 6-5.” Attorney Gordon Graham clarified that this is a special warrant article and as such under the Statutes RSA 32:5 V requires that there be a recommendation of the School Board and the Budget Committee beneath the article. In 2007, the Statute was amended to provide a new provision that authorizes School Boards and Budget Committees, after a vote of the district meeting, to put a numeric tally beneath each article that they are required to recommend and all articles on the warrant. He stated that although this district has not adopted that provision; it is unclear whether a board member or the body has the ability to intrude upon the recommendations of the full School Board in an article. The amendment is seconded.

After further questions, discussion and clarification, the question is moved. The amendment is voted on and failed.

A motion to restrict reconsideration on all questions was made and passed.

(NOTE: A special Budget Committee meeting was held after the deliberative session and the amended Article 16 was voted on as follows: Recommended by the Budget Committee with a vote of 8-2)

There were 109 registered voters present at this session. There were State Representatives, members of the press and other interested parties seated separately which were not counted in the figure of 109.

A special presentation to parting School Board Members Linda Koehler and Bruce Couture was made by Cindy Kyzer and Superintendent Bass.

Moderator Dunne thanked the supervisors of the check list along with Mr. Hogan and Mr. Currier the Assistant Moderators. He also thanked the PTV crew under the direction of Jim Greenwood. Applause was given. The meeting ended at 10:30 p.m.

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Submitted by School District Clerk Patricia E. Murphy

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