

## MINUTES OF THE LOWELL ANNUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING 2024

---

The legal voters of the Town of Lowell, Vermont are hereby warned and notified to meet at the Lowell Graded School on **TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2024** at **10:00 a.m.** to act on the following articles of business:

**Note:** The Town of Lowell has a checklist of 752 eligible voters. The number of votes cast for School Elections was registered at 124 votes for the NCSU Ballot, 51-yes and 73-no

- The School District Meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. Moderator Alden Warner asked voters to take a moment to honor our American Flag and led voters in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- The moderator read the announcements.
- Alden reviewed the Roberts Rules of conduct to be adhered to throughout the meeting.

### **SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING:**

**ARTICLE 1:** *To ELECT SCHOOL MODERATOR for the ensuing year.*

- Alden Warner nominated
- **ALDEN WARNER – ELECTED**

**ARTICLE 2:** *To ELECT an ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DIRECTOR for a three-year term.*

- Shauna Richardson was nominated; voice vote/carried
- Moderator asked the Clerk to cast one ballot for Shauna Richardson. The Clerk then verified that one vote had been cast and put in an envelope for the record.
- **SHAUNA RICHARDSON-ELECTED**

**ARTICLE 3:** *Shall the voters of the LOWELL TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT approve the school board to expend **\$2,354,444.00**, which is the amount the school board has determined to be necessary for the ensuing fiscal year*

- Article moved and seconded.
- Motion was made to pass over the Article. Moderator asked for ayes or nays to pass over the Article-Nays have it.
- Motion was made and seconded to vote by paper ballot; moderator then asked for a show of at least 7 hands to be able to have a paper ballot to pass over the article; not vote on the budget for clarification. Yes=44 No=71 Total votes 115, motion to pass over the article has been defeated.
- Some questions were asked about the revised numbers of the budget and why were they not final hard numbers. The School Board Chair answered that they in fact were the final hard numbers and that the budget was not going to change again for this year.
- Steve Mason, School Board Chair, took a moment to recognize Scott Boskind and Interim Principal Brandon Blunk for filling in this school year and what an amazing job they both have done. Steve also thanked all the non-profit groups who help out the school every year like F.O.L.K. who have helped with playground equipment and fundraisers.
- Steve also mentioned that when the teachers and aides have taxes taken out of their pay its nice to know that it goes back to the town.
- Steve took a minute to talk about his dad who was the last name sake of Mason's to be born here in Lowell, and that he really like being a part this community where his family heritage started.
- Questions and comments continued after Steve's heartfelt speech. The Comments were about consolidating our school, leaving it the way it is and sending the budget back to the State for reassessment as we the people have paid enough and need a break from the rising costs.

- Someone asked if Covid funding was still in effect? Steve answered that there is no longer Covid funding, it has come to an end.
- Steve also said that if anyone wanted to, they could come to the meetings to offer ideas that could help our school.
- Question was asked if there were grants the school could get but are not being utilized. Steve stated that all grants have to be approved by the Supervisory Union, and that there are only certain ones that can be applied for.
- Someone asked if health insurance had anything to do with rising cost of the budget. Steve answered that health insurance is a separate cost. He also stated that the Board only has 6% of control for the school budget , when it used to be 18%. He said they have less and less control every year.
- Motion was made to call the Question; and seconded, floor vote, ayes have it.
- **ARTICLE 3 PASSED AS WRITTEN BY VOICE VOTE.**

**ARTICLE 4:** *Shall the voters of the **LOWELL TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT** authorize the Board of School Directors to use **\$52,600.00** of the unallocated, unaudited general fund balance from the 2022-2023 school year, to **reduce taxes** in the **2024-2025** school budget?*

- *Motion made and seconded to authorize Article 4 as written.*
- **ARTICLE 4 PASSED BY VOICE VOTE**

**There was no article for non-binding business, or to adjourn on this year’s warning. Moderator took it upon himself to assume this was an unintentional oversight, and allowed comments and allowed the meeting to adjourn.**

**The following comments were made:**

- Jennifer Blay spoke to thank Steve Mason for his many years on the School Board.
- Scott Boskind spoke to thank Steve for all the years he had Steve to rely on during his time as principal of the Lowell Graded School. Scott also thanked everyone for asking him to come back and fill in until they were able to find a replacement. It really meant a lot to him. Scott also took a minute to thank the Town for naming the circle after him. He was very honored by this.
- Moderator asked for motion to adjourn. Motion made and seconded. Voice vote carried.
- Meeting adjourned 11:44 a.m.

**Attest:**

MODERATOR: Alden Warner \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL BOARD DIRECTOR: Shauna Richardson \_\_\_\_\_

*Received for recording in Town Proceeding Book*

*Attest: Christy M. Pion- Town Clerk*