

Minutes Approved this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_

Jennifer Gariety \_\_\_\_\_

Bridget Brisson \_\_\_\_\_

Mason Maltais \_\_\_\_\_

## North Hero School Board

Tuesday, March 20, 2018 | North Hero School

**Board Present:** Mason Maltais (chair), Bridget Brisson, and Jennifer Gariety

**Administration Present:** Rob Gess (Business Manager)

**Guests:** Lawrence O'Reilly, Shirley O'Reilly, Hannah Gariety, Bart Wilcox, and Chico Martin

### Call Meeting to Order

M. Maltais called the meeting to order at 7:01PM.

### Pledge of Allegiance

M. Maltais leads the pledge of allegiance.

### Recognition of Visitors

M. Maltais asks for questions or concerns regarding the fiscal year 19 budget which the school board will be addressing next.

Shirley O'Reilly asks what the true tax rate percentage increase will be for real property taxes. She would also like to know if the tax bill in legislature will be vetoed.

The board states they do not know what will happen at the state level but will address the tax rate increase in the budget discussion.

Bart Wilcox asks for more financial information including a balance sheet and revenues.

Discussion with the board follows. R. Gess states projected revenues were included in the town report. The numbers are not official until the audit is complete. The audit is projected to be complete in mid-July.

### Business of the Board

#### FY 19 Budget Review

M. Maltais asks R. Gess to review information he has received since the last meeting.

R. Gess states announced tuitions for FY19 have been finalized by the state and he has reviewed them with what was budgeted in North Hero. South Burlington tuition was overestimated so tuition costs can be lowered in the budget by \$32,000.00. He makes the changes to the budget.

M. Maltais asks if there are other areas that can be reviewed. R. Gess states 74% of the budget is wages, benefits, and high school tuition making very little of the budget discretionary spending and after two months of budget meetings any cuts on the discretionary side would be detrimental to the learning environment without having a material difference on the tax rate. He states SU allocations were

confirmed and are correct. R. Gess asks if the board would like to do a line by line review of the budget. He also asks J. Resteghini for his thoughts as principal. J. Resteghini states there aren't items in the budget that can be taken out that would make a significant benefit to the tax payers that would also have an equal and opposite reaction to kids learning.

M. Maltais asks for exact figures on the tuition reduction effect on the budget. R. Gess states \$32,571.00 is the amount reduced which equates to reducing the homestead education rate by 5 cents.

R. Gess states salaries are flat and the only shift for the general instruction line item would be if J. Resteghini made a fundamental decision on restructuring how education is taught in the school.

The board discusses special ed. costs. J. Resteghini states the need is there and reflects the lack of mental health services in the islands. He expects costs to go up. These are costs to service student's needs including being supported by a school off -islands, increased faculty, and individual needs.

The board addressed Shirley O'Reilly's question regarding percentage of tax rate increase. R. Gess states the homestead tax rate for the budget that failed was 1.683 and now with the reduced tuition is 1.6504. A 22.3% increase is now projected at a 19.5% increase.

The board briefly discusses what may happen at the state level with the tax restructuring bill.

Discussion follows on the elements that increased the tax rate this year including the equalized pupil count error, the lowered CLA, increased health insurance costs, and the 9 cent increase for the state education fund shortfall.

The board assures Bart Wilcox they will work to get him the information he is asking for.

#### Discussion of Teacher Contracts

M. Maltais states Don Van Nostrand suggested this item be added to the agenda and reads aloud an email from him on the matter. The board agrees they have no intention of letting teachers or staff go.

#### Schedule FY 19 Budget Revote

The board sets the date for the next vote as April 17<sup>th</sup> with polls being open from 7:00AM to 7:00PM. The information meeting is set for April 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:00PM.

#### Approve warning

R. Gess is working on calculating the equalized pupil percentage.

#### Discuss timeline for "Get out to Vote" initiative

The board distributes the following tasks to advertise the revote:

- B. Brisson will put weekly updates on Front Porch Forum;
- M. Maltais will reach out to the PTYO for help contacting parents;
- J. Resteghini will continue with announcements on Facebook and in the Islander;
- B. Brisson will work on a mailer.

Approve warning

M. Maltais reads the warning aloud. There is a grammatical typo, a redundant “per pupil,” which is removed by R. Gess.

B. Brisson motions to approve the warning with the correction. J. Gariety seconds the motion and it passes 3-0 with no further discussion.

**Executive Session**

None needed.

**Future Agenda Items & Next Meeting**

April 3, 2018 @7:00PM:

- Review Get out to Vote initiative
- Answer email questions

J. Resteghini verifies with the board and R. Gess that Mr. Wilcox will get the information he requested. Discussion on budget preparations and how the public sector differs from the private follows.

**Adjournment**

J. Gariety motions to adjourn at 8:11PM; B. Brisson seconds and the motion passes 3-0 with no further discussion.

Respectfully Submitted, Corinn Julow

CC: Board Members

GISU Office

Principal Resteghini

Town Clerk’s Office