



WINOOSKI SCHOOLS

We are the future.

Winooski School Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, January 10, 2024, 6:00pm
WSD Library Learning Commons or via Zoom
Google Meet Link: meet.google.com/szx-gwkh-oee

Policy Title 1.0 Ends Statement: All students will graduate from the Winooski School District (WSD) college and career ready at a cost supported by a majority of the Winooski community. WSD students will lead healthy, productive and successful lives and engage with their local and global community.

Attendees: Wilmer Chavarria, Sarah Haven, Robert Millar, Kamal Dahal, Nicole Mace, Elijah Phillips, Isaiah Donaldson, Kristine Lott, Thomas Renner, Carson Russell, Allyssa Ravelin (Board Recorder)

1. **Call to Order of Regular Meeting:** (5 Minutes)
 - a. Robert Millar calls meeting to order at **6:03pm**
2. **Agenda Review and Adjustments:** (5 Minutes)
 - a. No adjustments from the board.
3. **Public Comments:**
 - a. No public comments.
4. **Consent Agenda:** (5 Minutes)
 - a. Minutes of Meetings
 - i. Regular School Board Meeting: 12/13/2024
 - ii. Special Board Budget Meeting Minutes: 12/6/2023
 - iii. Special Board Budget Meeting Minutes: 12/20/2023
 - iv. Special Board Budget Meeting Minutes: 1/3/2024

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b. Policy Title: 2.3 Financial Condition and Activities

i. Approval of Bills

1. **Robert Millar asks for a motion to approve consent agenda**
2. **Kamal Dahal makes a motion to accept the consent agenda.**
3. **Passes unanimously.**

5. **Executive Limitations (Policy Section II):** (60 minutes)

a. Policy Title: 2.4 Financial Planning and Budgeting

i. Action: Adoption of 2024-25 Winooski School District Budget

1. Wilmer Chavarria- Review of what the Education of the Public entails.
 - a. A District Budget
 - b. Education Spending
 - c. The Role Of the Board
 - d. The Role of Winooski Residents
 - e. Wilmer Chavarria shares our end statement, [“Policy Title 1.0 Ends Statement.](#)
2. Wilmer Chavarria shares the final recommendation to the Board. \$32,220,907. If this budget is to be accepted and adopted by the residents, there will be no cuts; However, that doesn’t mean there are no changes, we are cutting funding in certain departments.
3. According to the presentation, the budget entails the following numbers:
 - a. Forecasted CLA: 101%
 - b. Estimated WLTM: 2,160
 - c. Forecasted Yield: \$9,452
4. We are doing the most responsible thing we can right now by using these numbers, but there are possible uncertainties.
5. Robert Millar shares that the budget on the slide is different from what was shared last week \$32,220,907.
6. Wilmer Chavarria there was an error on the presentation, apologies. Updated the budget proposed.
7. Wilmer Chavarria asks for a quick recess for Sarah Haven and him to check the next slides for accuracy before going forward.
8. Robert Millar acknowledges this request at 6:20pm.
9. Wilmer Chavarria everything else is fine, ready to continue
10. Robert Millar brings meeting back at 6:21pm
11. Wilmer Chavarria clarifies the additional bullet point to the “what the budget allows” slide- shares the frozen number from the state, starting with a 75K annual to the Capital Reserve.
12. The other bullet point that was added was what the additional \$250K would be funding.

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13. Wilmer Chavarria shares the FY'25 tax impact estimates, which can be viewed on [this presentation](#). The income percentage is set to increase .02% which equates to about \$1 per month if you are paying based on income.
14. Nicole Mace - Very interested in modeling about seeing tax bills, not just tax rates because Winooski is in the middle of a reassessment, and there are many unknowns because of this reassessment. Nicole is very interested in seeing the actual impacts of a tax bill not just a tax rate due to the unknowns making it to approximate what might happen to assessed values. Due to the inability to predict the percent increase, using a 60 CLA is a reasonable approximation for what we might see in terms of home values after the appraisal is done.
 - a. Isaiah Donaldson- I agree. I think dollars is what homeowners are looking at, not percentages. They are hard to guesstimate. Most people are worried about what they can afford.
 - b. Kamal Dahal- The community members want to know how much more or less people are going to be paying. He notes that it will be difficult and confusing to the public to tell them the rate decreases, but their tax bill will increase.
 - c. Isaiah Donaldson- Part of this presentation is to educate the public. Going back to the basics and teaching what these terms actually mean. I lean on this alot, simple steps to get to the point of rate changes and potential dollar changes of your assessed amount.
 - d. Robert Millar I think it's important to state that these are estimates. We are not just saying everybody's property is going to be reappraised at the same increase. Most people will see an increase, which is worth saying, not just here but across the board, community and state.
 - e. Nicole Mace refers back to Kamal's statement and notes that at the end of the day the board needs to be clear when presenting the budget to the community.
 - f. Robert Millar states that he agrees we also need to be very clear about our messaging but we also need to be very clear, to my mind, that pieces are not within our control such as property values and the housing crisis.
 - g. Nicole Mace We control the budget that we are about to vote on.
 - h. Robert Millar So that rate is controlled within that budget.
 - i. Kamal Dahal Also, I am thinking from a voter perspective. An average voter would accept or reject on the ballot after being informed if that budget would impact their dollar amount.
15. Wilmer Chavarria shares the Impact of Proposed Tax Increase Without Tax Credits. To hear the explanation regarding values of homes and increase or decrease in tax rates, [WSD School Board Jan. 10, 2024](#)

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16. Wilmer Chavarria shares Impact of Proposed Tax Increase After Tax Credits for people who pay based on income, prebate. Reference the video: **WSD School Board Jan. 10, 2024**
17. Nicole Mace - Going back to the previous scenario, I am seeing an average 11% increase on the bill. Last week when we talked about Long Term Weighted Membership, we talked about \$1M in additional capacity. The conversation for me seems that since we went with \$250K, we would be delivering a decrease. I am seeing a double digit increase.
18. **The school board holds an extensive conversation. The conversation can be viewed via the recording WSD School Board Jan. 10. , 2024**
19. Robert Millar **calls a recess at 7:33pm**
20. Robert Millar **calls meeting back to order @ 7:41pm**
21. Robert Millar entertain a motion to approve a budget of \$32,220,907.
 - a. Isaiah Donaldson makes a motion to approve the budget
 - b. Robert Millar asks for any further discussion
 - c. Kamal Dahal appreciates the discussion and the diversity perspectives that were shared through the discussion. He goes on to asks Nicole Mace if she has any reservation presenting the budget if she doesn't agree with it.
 - d. Nicole Mace states that she is prepared to vote against this budget and does not feel it would be fair for her to present the budget and will need to consider what areas of the budget she does feel comfortable presenting.
 - e. Kamal Dahal feels another discussion may be in order before the board votes. He states that he does not feel comfortable presenting without Nicole Mace and feels it may be more realistic to give the budget more space and time for discussion.
 - f. Robert Millar notes that a motion was made so the board will need to move forward with that and if the budget doesn't pass, the board will have to take another vote tonight or at another meeting.
 - g. Robert Millar Any further discussion?
 - h. Nicole Mace I should have asked for models earlier in the discussion. I apologize. I regret not doing it earlier, I could have gotten to a place where I was more comfortable.
22. **Robert Millar Asks for all those in favor of this motion?**
23. **Vote does not pass 3-1**
24. *Further discussion of the next steps from the school board and superintendent continue (WSD School Board Jan. 10, 2024). With the board making the decision to decrease the budget by \$250, 000 and provide a budget presentation to help the community fully understand any implications on their future tax rates.*

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25. Robert Millar asks if anyone would like to make a motion

26. Nicole Mace makes a motion to approve an operating budget of \$31,970,907

27. Motion passes unanimously.

ii. Action: Adoption of 2024-25 Budget Warnings

1. Isaiah Donaldson makes a motion to approve the warning for the newly adopted budget with the monetary amounts being adjusted to reflect approved \$31,970,907

2. Passes unanimously.

iii. Action: Approve Announced Tuitions

1. Robert Millar states that there is no change to the budget, looks for a motion to accept the tuition.

2. Nicole Mace I will make a motion to approve the announced tuition presented. But I have a couple of questions when we get to discussions.

3. Robert Millar We have a move to discussion

4. Nicole Mace Have these rates changed from 20 this current year?

5. Wilmer Chavarria We kept the high school tuition the same because that's the one that makes a difference in whether somebody wants to attend. The other two, we did a whole calculation with the forms, but the resulting number was substantially different from the one from the previous year. We didn't want to make too much of a move there.

6. Nicole Mace Substantially higher?

7. Wilmer Chavarria Yes, substantially higher. So what we did was use the per pupil spending that we were projecting for this year's budget and used that number.

8. Nicole Mace I imagine that number is similar to last year making us the lowest in Chittenden county? Or amongst the lowest?

9. Sarah Haven From what I am seeing, definitely.

10. Nicole Mace I think that is awesome and helpful in our campaign to attract students.

11. Robert Millar Any further questions? All those in favor?

12. Passes unanimously.

b. Policy Title: 2.7 Compensation and Benefits

i. Discussion/Approval: Monitoring Report

1. Tabled- This is from last month.

6. **Governance Processes (Policy Section IV):** (45 Minutes)

a. Policy Title: 4.0 Global Governance Commitment

i. Discussion: Upcoming March Elections

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1. Robert Millar makes an announcement that there will be positions up for city and school board elections.
 2. Steve Berbecco is **not** running in the next election.
 3. Nicole Mace shares that she is planning to run for the remainder of the 3 year term
 4. Elom Kpessa is planning on running for the 2 year term
 5. Isaiah Donaldson is running for the 3 year seat.
- b. Policy Title: 4.2.2 Create Written Governing Policies
- i. Discussion/Action: Policy Second Read and Approval for Adoption
 1. AOE 1 Local Wellness Policy
 - a. Robert Millar- Second reading and approval. Any questions, comments?
 - b. None provided.
 - c. **Nicole Mace - makes a motion to approve the AOE 1 Local Wellness Policy**
 - d. **Passes unanimously.**
 2. A22 Notice of Non-discrimination
 - a. Robert Millar looks for questions or comments on this second read?
 - b. None shared.
 - c. Robert Millar asks for a motion?
 - d. **Isaiah Donaldson moves that we approve for adoption policy A22 notice of non-discrimination**
 - e. **Passes unanimously.**
 3. C27 Student Distribution of Literature
 - a. Robert Millar looks for comments, questions, or a motion?
 - b. Wilmer Chavarria states that the formatting wasn't changed (footnotes and bullet points).
 - c. Robert Millar looks for a motion to approve the C27 Student Distribution of Literature with the changes to format
 - d. **Nicole Mace makes a motion to approve for adoption with the formatting changes.**
 - e. **Passed unanimously**
 - ii. Discussion/Action: Policy First Read
 1. B20 Personnel Recruitment, Selection, Appointment, and Background Checks
 - a. This is a recommended not a required policy and is the VSBA Model with edits made as discussed below.
 - b. Wilmer Chavarria-states that he made changes to reflect not using the word character as it means different things to different people.
 - c. Robert Millar asks if there are any other questions.
 - d. None noted
 2. C22 Student Athletics, Clubs, and Activities
 - a. This is a recommended not a required policy and is the VSBA Model with edits made as discussed below.
 - b. Wilmer Chavarria There was one thing I removed, because it wasn't applicable to us. We don't have multiple schools. Anything that was taken

out does not change the approach it just didn't apply to us. I didn't make note of it because it would be irrelevant.

- c. Robert Millar asks for questions or comments
 - d. None noted
3. D23 Selection of Instructional Materials
- a. Wilmer Chavarria- Nothing changed on this one. This is library heavy. The Librarian is currently working to build a robust procedure. This procedure will be shared once adopted.
 - b. Nicole Mace I would like a future presentation to keep the board informed of how instructional materials are selected in ways that are reflective of our student body.
 - c. Robert Millar asks for questions or comments?
 - d. None provided.
- c. Policy Title: 4.9 Board Committee Principles
- i. Appointment of Negotiations Committee Member
 1. Robert Millar Steven is not running for re-elections. We are getting into discussions regarding support staff. I was leaning towards appointing Isaiah Donaldson. Steven Berbeco will run until the end of his term
 2. Isaiah Donaldson- I am not blindsided here, I am excited about this and take this in with open arms.

7. Community Engagement (Policy 4.2.1): (5 Minutes)

- a. Kamal Dahal with Wilmer Chavarria attended a conversation with residents at Our Lady of Providence. These residents have 55+ years of experience working with the school and it proved to be a great learning moment and was very inspiring
- b. Robert Millar reminds Kamal Dahal he is up for newsletter submission

8. Next Agenda: (5 Minutes)

- a. *None*

9. Upcoming Important Dates:

- a. Thursday, January 18 - Early Dismissal, 12:15pm, No Pre-K
- b. Friday, January 19 - Veggie VanGo
- c. Friday, February 2 - Veggie VanGo
- d. Wednesday, February 14 - Regular School Board Meeting

10. Adjourn:

- a. Robert Millar looks for a motion to adjourn the meeting
- b. Isaiah Donaldson and Nicole Mace "so moved"
- c. **Passes unanimously**
- d. **Adjourned at 8:47pm**