

JOHNSBURG CENTRAL SCHOOL
Monday, November 18, 2024
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Minutes

Board Members Present: Rachel DeGroat
Chris Jay
Erwin Morris
Tom Ordway

Board Members Absent: Melissa Freebern
Tara Sears
Sarah Williams

Call to Order: Rachel DeGroat opened the meeting at 6:00 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes: Tom Ordway made a **MOTION** to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2024, Board of Education Meeting, seconded by Erwin Morris and carried.

Tom Ordway made a **MOTION** to accept the minutes of the CSE/CPSE/504 report, seconded by Chris Jay and carried.

Presentations: **Golf:** Ryan Fink presented his review of the North Warren Golf team that he participates in. Ryan is the only student at this time who takes part in the golf program and asked the Board to continue the program for the next school year.

Tetra Tech: Spoke on the plans for the upcoming 2026-2027 building project/science room renovation: room configuration, timeline, and financial needs. It will be a 15-year capital project, with construction beginning if approved in 2027.

Motions: Tom Ordway made a **MOTION** to appoint Stephanie Hutchins as the Business Official effective December 4, 2024, as per her individual contract, seconded by Chris Jay and carried.

Tom Ordway made a **MOTION** to appoint Neil Mason as a night-time Custodian effective November 11, 2024, at Level 8, as

per the CSEA contract seconded by Erwin Morris. Mike Markwica explained why the District went with a custodian instead of a cleaner - night shift able to fix problems when the building is empty. MOTION carried.

Tom Ordway made a **MOTION** to appoint Amanda May as Business Office Assistant, effective December 2, 2024, per individual contract, seconded by Erwin Morris. Mike Markwica reported that the finance committee reviewed the contract with her. MOTION carries

Chris Jay made a **MOTION** to accept the following Resolution. WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the Johnsbury Central School District (“Board”) is considering to undertake a project consisting of renovations to its science rooms and classrooms, the abatement of hazardous materials, general construction, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing work related to building renovations, and the addition of a partial emergency generator for its school building (“the Project”); and

WHEREAS, the Board wishes to fully comply with its obligations under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) and the regulations thereunder with respect to the Project; and WHEREAS, the Board has carefully considered the nature and scope of the proposed Project; and

WHEREAS, upon review of the foregoing, the Board makes the following determinations:

1. The proposed Project involves certain renovations, upgrades, and replacements to the District’s existing building.
2. The Board hereby declares the School District as the Lead Agency for purposes of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and regulations associated with the Proposed Action.
3. The proposed Project represents maintenance or repair involving no substantial changes in an existing structure or facility within the meaning of 6 NYCRR § 617.5(c)(1); and/or the replacement, rehabilitation or reconstruction of a structure or facility, in kind, within the meaning of 6 NYCRR § 617.5(c)(2); and/or a routine activity of an educational institution, including expansion of existing

facilities by less than 10,000 square feet of gross floor area, within the meaning of 6 NYCRR § 617.5(c)(10).

4. The proposed Project will in no case have a significant adverse impact on the the criteria contained in 6 NYCRR § 617.7(c) and is not otherwise a Type I action as defined by 6 NYCRR § 617.4.

5. The proposed Project is a Type II action within the meaning of 6 NYCRR 617.5 and, therefore, is not subject to review under SEQRA and the regulations thereunder.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board finds and concludes that the proposed Project is a Type II action within the meaning of 6 NYCRR 617.5 and, therefore, is not subject to review under SEQRA and the regulations thereunder, seconded by Tom Ordway and carried.

Chris Jay made a **MOTION** to accept the following Resolution. BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE JOHNSBURG CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT that a special meeting of the qualified voters of the Johnsbury Central School District (the “District”) be and the same is hereby called to be held in the South Hallway by the Gymnasium of the Johnsbury School, North Creek, New York, on Thursday, January 16, 2025, from 12:00 noon until 8:00 p.m., prevailing time, for the purpose of voting on the following proposition:

PROPOSITION

Shall the Board of Education be authorized to: (1) reconstruct the school building, including site work, acquire original furnishings, equipment, machinery or apparatus required for the purpose for which such building is to be used and pay costs incidental thereto, at a maximum cost of \$3,000,000; (2) expend such sum for such purpose; (3) levy the necessary tax therefor, to be levied and collected in annual installments in such years and in such amounts as may be determined by the Board of Education, taking into account the amount of State aid received; and (4) in anticipation of the collection of such tax, issue bonds and notes of the District at one time or from time to time in the principal amount not to exceed \$3,000,000, and levy a tax to pay the interest on said obligations

when due?

The vote upon such proposition shall be by absentee, early mail or paper ballot. The hours during which the polls shall be kept open shall be from 12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m. prevailing time or for as long thereafter as necessary to enable qualified voters who are in the polling place at 8:00 p.m. to cast their ballots.

BE IT RESOLVED, the snow date for the vote, in the event of cancellation due to weather conditions, will be January 22, 2025 the same time and location as herein stated.

Absentee, early mail and military ballots provided prior to and for the January 16, 2025 vote will be accepted for the vote on January 22, 2025 in the event of cancellation due to weather conditions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the qualified voters of the School District shall be entitled to vote in said special vote. A qualified voter is one who is (1) a citizen of the United States of America, (2) eighteen (18) years of age or older, and (3) resident within the School District for a period of thirty (30) days preceding the annual vote and election.

The School District may require all persons offering to vote at the budget vote and election to provide one form of proof of residency pursuant to Education Law section 2018-c. Such form may include a driver's license, a non-driver identification card, a redacted tax return or any identification containing the person's physical address. Upon offer of proof of residency, the School District may also require all persons offering to vote to provide their signature, printed name and address.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that applications for early mail and absentee ballots will be obtainable between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except holidays, from the District Clerk. Completed applications for early mail and absentee ballots must be received by the District Clerk at least seven (7) days prior to the vote if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter, January 9, 2025; or the day before the election, if the ballot is to be delivered personally to the voter, January 15, 2025. Early mail and absentee ballots must be received by the District Clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. on January 16, 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, a list of all persons to whom early mail and absentee ballots shall have been issued will be available in the office of the District Clerk from 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. prevailing time on each of the live (5) days prior to the day of the vote, except weekends, up to the day set for the vote. Any qualified voter may challenge the acceptance of the ballot of any person on such list, by making their challenge and reasons therefore known to the Inspector of Election before the close of the polls. A challenge against an early mail ballot cannot be based on the reason that the voter should have obtained or applied for an absentee ballot.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Education Law makes special provisions for absentee voting by “permanently disabled” voters of the District and any questions regarding these rights should be directed to the Clerk of the Board.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Education Law also makes special provisions for absentee voting for “military” voters of the District. Specifically, the law provides a unique procedure for “military ballots” in school district votes. Whereas early mail and absentee ballot applications and early mail and absentee ballots must be received by the voter by mail or in person, a military voter may elect to receive their absentee ballot application and absentee ballot by mail, email, or facsimile. The military voter must, however, return their original military ballot application and military ballot by mail or in person. The Clerk of the Board shall transmit the military voter’s military ballot in accordance with the military voter’s preferred method of transmission not later than 25 days before the vote. The Clerk of the Board must then receive the military voter’s military ballot by mail or in person not later than 5:00 p.m. on the day of the vote, seconded Tom Ordway and carried.

Discussions:

Tax Exemption:

Mike Markwica explained that 307 Main Street (previously the Copperfield Inn), has been purchased, and the Town has approved a PILOT (Payment In Lieu Of Taxes) with the new owners. There won’t be a new assessment for ten years. The PILOT is non-transferable.

School/Class Size Projections:

Mike Markwica provided a handout with projections of class sizes up to the year 2030.

Rachel DeGroat stated this information should be valuable for future planning.

Committee Reports:**Finance:**

The Finance Committee worked on contracts for the Business Official and the Business Office Assistant.

Policy:

Rachel DeGroat reported that the Policy Manual is getting revamped.

Curriculum:

Rachel DeGroat stated that college classes, science classes, enrollment, future staffing needs, and future student enrollment were discussed.

Sports Merger:

Michael Markwica reported that a meeting was held with Johnsbury and Minerva (two BOE members and Administration) to discuss the sports merger for the 2025-2026 school year.

Update Reports:

Mike Markwica stated that the Rockefeller Institute - foundation Aid study should be released soon. He believes the recommendation for the Governor is to make changes slowly. He stated we are going into this budget season and we still are waiting to know what our foundation aid will be.

Mike Markwica stated that the projection for health insurance (HRA) could increase by as much as 30%. There was a lot of conversation going on, and more information will be provided when available.

Mike Markwica wanted the District to know that BOCES is looking to move forward - working with a company to build a new facility from exit 17. This would be a positive for our students. Special Ed classrooms would be in the same facility. This one building move would help us with busing. The timeline for completion is three years.

Heather Flanagan provided a handout with the first quarter failing one-failing two reports.

Other Business:

Tom Ordway thanked the bus drivers for the up-and-coming snow season. He thanked his fellow Board members for the many hours they put in. He also thanked Kathy Spring and Cindy Homer for having answers ready when needed.

Visitor Comments:

Joe San Antonio: Spoke on the sports merger with Minerva. He would like to meet with the administration so that they can hear from coaches. He's concerned with kids showing up that coaches don't know as well as talking about numbers. Mike Markwica asked if he had filled out the coaches season evaluation form and he said he had not but would. Mike said this was the place to start.

Tom Ordway stated the merger is good for Minerva, as well as Johnsburg. We have to consider their kids too. Kids are kids.

Rachel DeGroat stated that the athletic directors provide coaches evaluations for coaches to write their thoughts and concerns.

Amanda May spoke about the donated equipment for the Archery Club. If they host a tournament, they will get more equipment.

Adjournment:

Tom Ordway made a **MOTION** to adjourn at 7:04 pm, seconded by Chris Jay and carried.

District Clerk: Cindy A. Homer

Date: _____