Minutes of the Hudson School District Deliberative Session of February 7, 2026
Hudson Community Center, 12 Lyons Avenue
Hudson, New Hampshire 03051

1. CALL TO ORDER - by the Honorable Paul Inderbitzen, School District Moderator

Ladies and Gentlemen I'd like to call the meeting of the Hudson School District Deliberative Session to order at 9 o'clock.

2. AFJROTC PRESENTATION OF COLORS AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Moderator Inderbitzen: Unfortunately, due to the weather, the Colonel thought that he didn't really want his kids, the cadets, coming out in the snow. So we've dispensed with the presentation of the flags. We have the flags behind us. At this point, I would like to ask Mr. Meyer of the School Board to lead us in the Pledge….Thank you.

3. REMARKS BY THE MODERATOR

Ladies and Gentlemen, this is the Deliberative Session of the Hudson School District Meeting. You will act as a legislative body for the purpose of determining the final form of the articles that will be voted on at the March 10th. election. All the articles by law must be placed on the ballot. The rules we will follow are the Moderator's rules which are in the handout that you received or picked up when you came in. If you have any questions about the rules, please don't hesitate to ask for a point of order to get clarification. Most of you have seen this before, but if you have any questions please let me know and we will try to answer them for you. This body can also vote to establish its own rules if you wish that you may deem necessary. You can also overrule any decision of the moderator. That's your prerogative. This is your meeting. If you are new to the deliberative session, review the rules and you can ask questions about them if you are not sure. As a legislature we will be discussing the warrant articles before us. Those discussions will be respectful of everyone's opinion. We do not cheer or applaud when you agree with a speaker. You don't boo or groan when we disagree with a speaker. Please be respectful of all comments as you would want yours to be respected. This isn't an open mic night. To keep the personalities out of the debate please use terms like the previous speaker or the school board member or the budget committee member. That will keep us from getting personalities involved. All questions and comments are to be made through me, the Moderator. There is no requirement that anyone must yield to a question if it's posed. If you are a registered voter of Hudson you were issued a yellow voter card. We will use this card if we need to take any votes at this meeting. Do not lose your voter card. You won't get another one. After the meeting you can recycle your card in a box at the back of the room where you came in. Only registered voters of Hudson are allowed to participate in the discussion of the Warrant. There are some non-voters, staff members of the school district and others who will be allowed to speak and answer questions to assist us in this meeting. Please turn off your phones or put on silent so as not to interrupt the discussions. We will probably take a break or two after some of the articles so we can kind of calm down and there are refreshments for sale by the Hudson Women's Club. This meeting is being televised by our Hudson Cable HCTV and will be available for viewing or steaming after today. We're also being broadcasted live. We appreciate HCTV for all they do in keeping the citizens of Hudson informed. At the end of this meeting the Budget Committee and the School Board will hold separate meetings to consider their recommendations on the warrant articles in case they want to change them. Both the School Board and the Budget Committee will do that.

4. INTRODUCTION OF THE SCHOOL BOARD - by Chairperson Dionne

Chair Maureen Dionne: Good Morning everyone. Thank you for coming today. Here in attendance is myself, Maureen Dionne, School Board Chair, Michael Campbell, School Board Vice-Chair, School Board Members Ethans Beals, Stephen Meyer, Daniel Kilgour. Also in

attendance today we have Superintendent Daniel Moulis, Assistant Superintendent Jessica Benson, Director of Special Services Rachael Borge, Business Administrator Jenny Graves, We have Director of Facilities John Pratte, as well as Director of Technology Chris Jamrog. Finally we have our District's Attorney Peter Phillips. Thank you all, again.

5. INTRODUCTION OF BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS - by Chairperson Lawrence

Chair James Lawrence III: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. Joining me here today from the Budget Committee, I have Vice-Chair Kim Rice, Mr. Kevin Walsh, Mr. Bob Wherry, Miss Donna Boucher, Mr. Shawn Jasper, Mr. Xen Vurgaropolus, Mr. Bill Cole, and sitting on his usual Board, our School Board Liaison Mr. Dan Kilgour.

6. RETURN OF THE WARRANT TO THE DISTRICT CLERK

Moderator: Has the District Clerk received the return of *The Warrant* from the School District. [School District Clerk Diane Cannava holds up *The Warrant*.] And she has. Thank you.

7. DELIBERATIVE SESSION OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING

Moderator**:** To the inhabitants of the School District in the town of Hudson, county of Hillsborough, state of New Hampshire qualified to vote in district affairs. You are hereby notified to meet in the Hudson Community Center in said district on Saturday, the 7th. of February, 2026, at 9:00 am for the first session of the annual school district meeting for explanation, discussion and debate on the Warrant Articles 1 through 12 in accordance with RSA 40:13. Warrant Articles may be amended subject to the following limitations. Warrant articles whose wording is prescribed by law shall not be amended. Warrant articles that are amended shall be placed on the official ballot for a final vote on the main motion, as amended. No warrant article shall be amended to eliminate the subject matter of the article. You are hereby notified to meet at the Hudson Memorial School gymnasium, Ward 1 or Alvirne High School cafeteria, Ward 2 on Tuesday, the 10th. day of March 2026 between the hours of 7:00 am and 8:00 pm for the second session of the annual school district meeting to vote by official ballot on the following subjects:

Moderator: (reading Warrant Article #1 - with slide on screen)

WARRANT ARTICLE 1 Operating Budget

The Hudson School District's average cost-per-pupil as calculated in accordance with RSA 189:751(a) for 2024-2025 was $19,704.38.
The Hudson School District achievement proficiency scores obtained from the Department of Education for 2024-2025 were ELA Proficiency: 58%; Math Proficiency: 42%; Science Proficiency: 41%.
Shall the Hudson School District vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant article and other appropriations voted separately, the amount set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote at the first session, for the purpose set forth therein, totaling $72,166,427? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be $73,252,680 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Hudson School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting under RSA 40:13-X and XVI to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.
Estimated tax rate impact: $.79 Not recommended by the School Board 5-0
Defaulted tax impact: $1.00 Recommended by the Budget Committee 7-3

Moderator: (continuing) **I will recognize Budget Committee Chairperson Lawrence to present Warrant Article #1**.

Lawrence: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. (Slide) There are two budget figures for Warrant Article 1. The first is the proposed operating budget recommended by the budget committee. The second is the default budget which can not be amended and which was set by the school board. The default budget goes into effect if the operating budget is voted down. The school operating budget makes up approximately 54% of the overall property tax bill. The remainder of the bill is for the municipal budget 32%, state education tax 7%, and county tax 7%. (Slide) The school board delivered a general fund school district operating budget. The school board delivered a general fund district operating budget in the amount $73,398,555 to the budget committee. The budget committee held several meetings discussing and debating the school board budget and eventually reduced that budget by $2,232,128 which equates to the budget before you today in the amount $72,166,427. This budget is recommended by the budget committee by a vote of 7-3 and if passed it will result in a .79 increase per $1,000 of assessed value over last year's budget. I want to thank the school board, the school district employees, and the superintendent for their assistance in assembling and answering the questions throughout the analysis portion of this budget, which allowed us to make prudent decisions resulting in the budget that you see before you today. I especially want to thank the members of the Town of Hudson Budget Committee for their tireless efforts that resulted in the fair, reasonable and appropriate budget that we are presenting here today. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. **And I will recognize School Board Chairperson Dionne** for The School Board's approach.

Dionne: (Slide) Thank you very much. Can we go to the next slide, please. (Slide) This slide shows the summary of the operating budget versus the default budget that was just explained with the difference between the two. Additionally, can we go to the next slide, please. (Slide) And this also includes the preliminary estimated tax rate impact for both operating and default budgets. The preliminary tax rate impact shown on the warrant article factors in any changes in the revenue that are expected to be received from the state and other local sources, as well as any fund balances from the current fiscal year that may be used to offset the tax rate. I'd like to take just a moment to talk a little bit about the overall budget process and what the district and the school board do. This process begins in the summer and in the early fall and it considers input and suggestions and information from all levels across the Hudson School District including teachers and department heads, directors, principals, SAU administration that you heard about today and the superintendent. Staff members contact vendors. They receive updated pricing information and quotes for the next fiscal year when budgeting for supplies and other items, furniture, and varying services. Administration then looks at the availability of funding from both federal and state sources and various levels and they consider all legal requirements as well regarding services for students of which we are obligated. The SAU then presents that budget that they create to the school board as you heard about and the school board reviews and makes updates as we did throughout October and early November and presented a budget to review to the budget committee. The administration and the school board believe that the school board's budget that was presented to the budget committee ensured that the needs of all students were met through a fiscally responsible budget. Can we go to the next slide, please. Actually you can go back one. I apologize. Thank you. Along with the 2026 operating budget this slide also includes the initially proposed FY27 superintendent's budget. So I call attention to that because you can see the differences where the administration presented a budget and then the school board made various decisions and you

can see the difference between the two. The initial proposed budget by the superintendent and administration to the school board was $76,298,091. The school board again throughout October made several changes to the proposed budget arriving at a total of $74,262,555, which was higher than the currently proposed default budget of $73,252,680. Again to highlight the default budget is calculated based on the current year's operating budget, plus any contractual obligations that the district has, such as increases in the second year of various contracts and collective bargaining agreements that were approved last year in March 2025. Currently these include the teachers and secretaries contracts that were approved last March by the voters. The default budget then includes increases related to any transportation and special education costs, tuition, minus any one-time expenditures. The default budget can be found specifically with more details on page 14 of your handout. The project of the budget development described on the last slide continues withe school board's budget then presented to the budget committee for consideration. The budget committee held their meetings in early December through January. They made various changes and they arrived at the amount that you see here of $72,166,427. Next slide, please. I call attention to this slide because it shows the education related tax rates for Hudson and other area surrounding districts. And you can see that Hudson's tax rate for 2026 is fifth from the bottoms and it's total is $17.11. Next slide. please. The state average cost-per-pupil in New Hampshire is $22,700 for fiscal year 2025. You can see here on this slide that the cost-per-pupil in Hudson is $19,704. This is certainly significantly under the state average and it's lower in comparison as you also see to many other surrounding communities which are also included on this chart. Next slide, please. You will hear today likely quite a bit about fund balance so I'd like to take a moment to speak about that a little bit. This slide shows the recent, the last ten years of the school district's fund balance. There's several factors that lead to fund balance. Traditionally the largest portion is made up of salaries and benefits savings due to staff turnover or staff positions that are budgeted that we were unable to fill. For example, as long-time employees leave or retire from the district, they may be filled with a less experienced staff member and then their benefits compensation package may be lower. That leads to a fund balance that you see here. Additionally in many years there are savings due to energy rates or we have warmer or cold, we have warmer winters and lower energy costs. Or we have additional discounts when we go out to bid on supplies that while they originally budgeted, we may have a savings which again leads to the fund balance that you see here. Each and every one of these factors contributes to fund balance. In fiscal year the fund balance to reduce taxes was $3,569,588. The past year there were several unique circumstances that I would like to call attention to. As the school district needed to retain funds in FY24 due to the cyber security incident where the district could not pull out encumbrances and invoices at the end of that year. The recommendation that we had from our auditors was to carry forward FY24 fund balance to FY25 leading to the higher than normal fund balance that you see here. This caused a higher than expected fund balance and the additional contributing factors were that revenues were also higher than forecasted in FY25. I want to mention the year however that as we built the budget for FY 27 throughout that budget process all revenues were reviewed and they were actually recalibrated to anticipate the revenues more appropriately and forecast in the budget that you see for FY2027. School districts will typically have a 2 to 3% of the budget remaining as a balance at the end of the year and used to offset the tax rate at the end of the year by lowering the total amounts that need to be raised for the warrants. A positive fund balance demonstrates prudent fiscal management. It can contributes towards an excellent rating when applying for bonds and financing and it also ensures most particularly that the district does not have a deficit. Can you put up the next slide. And finally while not specific to the operating budget I just wanted to highlight that this slide includes all of the warrant articles that we will be discussing today and their current estimated tax rate impact. So that is there as well. Thank you very much.

Moderator: Thank you. **T**hose on this side they're trying to fix the video here, but all the slides that are being presented are in the handout as well. If you can't see over here, they are doing that**.We will now open Warrant Article #1 to questions, comments, or amendments**. Yes Sir. What purpose do you rise.

Edward Thompson, 22 Burns Hill Road: My name is Edward Thompson. I live at 22 Burns Hill Road, Hudson, **I rise to request an amendment to the budget of $72,166,427 by $3,000,000 to $69,166,427.**

Moderator: Do I have a Second for that.

Peggy Huard (shouting out from audience) : Second.

Moderator: Miss Huard seconds. Mr. Thompson's amendment is to reduce the budget $2,000,000. Correct .

Thompson: 3,000,000.

Moderator: Three-million. I'm sorry. We are now going to deal with the amendment reducing the budget of the stated Warrant Article#1 budget by $3,000,000. To address your amendment, Mr. Thompson.

AMENDMENT#1
MOTION: TO REDUCE THE BUDGET $3,000,000
MADE BY: EDWARD THOMPSON; SECONDED BY: PEGGY HUARD

Thompson: Yes, Mr. Moderator, over the last ten years I've watched spiraling cost especially the school side of my tax bill and I'm not seeing a huge return. I've watched budgets increase way far outpacing inflation rates and as you know people are struggling. I'm one of them. I say that as a taxpayer. I'm trying to figure out if I want to live in this town for the next 20 years after I retire. I don't see exactly that we are getting a return on our proficiency scores. It bothers me. I know we are very top heavy on administrative cost. I just think something needs to give and we need a little relief. Thank you, sir.

Moderator: Thank you. On the Amendment One to reduce the budget by $3,000,000 anyone wish to speak on the Amendment. Yes, ma'am. … Name and address, please.

Peggy Huard, 13 David Drive: I'm going to take more of a legal argument to my support of this Amendment. Article 8 of the New Hampshire Constitution affords the taxpayer full transparency and accountability from their government, governing government. This budget was anything but. It was the most convoluted, confusing, non-comparable budget that I've seen since I have been following the budget. Many of us or several of us took the budget and smooth it out and made separate spreadsheets and we found a lot of things that weren't fully disclosed. What did we miss. Mistakes were found. What did we miss. I also want to address the surplus. Year after year we see surplus and publicly we see what's done with it at the end of the year. What many people don't see is what's done with it during the year. I had the privilege of seeing fiscal 24 and 25 every single solitary line item and saw what they spent it on. Let me assure you there is room for improvement. It would take a lot of time to go through great details but there is a lot of spending of surplus on surprise items. Most recently I received a Right-to- Know response that demonstrated the most abuse of power by our administration, and it was heavily redacted and full of confidentiality statements. So I am feeling bad about standing here telling you

something you should have the right to know. I will only summarize this. It was a large sum of money $165,000. It was not planned. It was only approved by our school board and our superintendent. Actually, not even our school board. One school board member approved it and it is outrageously abusive. I should be able to stand here and tell you details but I'm more respectful than that so I will not. We can already see in this list of warrant articles, warrant articles tied to June's fund balance of 2026. Which means that when they prepared this whole cycle of budgeting they knew that they had surplus in 2026 which only carries forward to fiscal 2027. I want to close with this. Not only does the New Hampshire Bill of Rights afford us transparency and accountability but it affords the taxpayer the right to petition Superior Court to determine not only if the spending but the approved appropriations conform with law, ordinance, and constitutional provision. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. On the Amendment to reduce the budget by three-million. Yes, sir.

Steve Beals, 10 Beechwood Road: Good morning. My name is Steve Beals, 10 Beechwood Road. I am the principal of Alvirne High School and I want to make sure that the record clearly reflects that. I speak against the Amendment. Cutting $3,000,000 from a budget that I personally already believe is too low, will decimate the school district. Class sizes, the impact on students, the impact on programs will be vast. All you have to do is to check into other communities that have significant budget reductions, to that extent or more, and know what happens in the school. Morale sinks. Staff members leave for other more lucrative positions or stability in a school district. As an individual who grew up here and has lived here for over 50 years, my kids, my wife and I, my kids being educated in the Hudson School District, which we're proud of. We can not turn Hudson into one of those communities. We have to stand together. There are inefficiencies. There are challenges. Students today are harder than when I started in Hudson 14 years ago. Declining enrollment is real. When I started at Alvirne there were 1450 students and we have 950 students. I would rather see the conversation focused on those aspects, but students are harder. We need staff members to provide services to students as we work to educate them through all the grades. Once again I speak vehemently opposed to the Amendment.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on the Amendment to reduce the budget. Anyone who wishes to speak for the first time. Yes. sir.

Kurt Schweiss, 28 David Drive: Thank you. I speak in opposition to the Amendment. I grew up in Hudson, went to, through the Hudson School District. I feel like I turned out okay. I moved back here because of the Hudson School District. My daughter's in kindergarten. My son's going to be going through the school. I support the schools and the work that they do. I hear the frustration not just in Hudson but all over the state, increasing property taxes for the cost of education. I'm looking at this, to me based on what I've seen from other school districts, seems a reasonable tax impact for the proposed budget. I'm more than happy to pay that to pay forward what my parents did for me and what I'm doing for my kids to properly educate and support our school district. I don't feel anyone's wrong to feel frustrated with the tax impact, but I'm not going to choose to punch down at the local level. I'm going to choose to tackle Concord. I'd talk to them about dismantling of public funding over the years. Seems if we can fix things at that level that we can absolutely fix things at this level. So I support, oppose this Amendment, support the original proposed budget.

Moderator: Thank you. Anyone to speak for a first time on the Amendment. Yes, ma'am.

Nicole Haynes, Lenny Drive: I oppose lowering the budget by three-million. I would think schools in every area would be what shines through and gives you ability to know what your

future's going to be. I just don't understand wanting to cut what it is that we want to grow in the community. Who wants to bring their kids back when you say you don't value them. I can't see lowering these at all. So that's all I can say.

Moderator; Thank you. Anyone to speak on the Amendment. Yes, for the first time.

Gary Gasdia, 4 McCann Road: So I am against the Amendment but I want to address a couple of things because I think it gets lost. First off, the idea of the taxes continually going up because of the schools, obviously there's inflation and it's a big number. But I want to stand here and thank the School Board because last time I checked my tax bill it actually went down 13 cents from what the School Board did last year. Right. So before you talk about runaway spending, your tax bill was lowered by 13 cents a thousand because of the budgets that we had. The other thing is at any moment in time it's very easy to pick and forget the history of why we are sort of outpacing inflation. When we think about 10 years ago we had without question the lowest teachers in the district. The lowest paid teachers in the area, the lowest paras in the area. We couldn't keep anybody. So we were at a very low point and we made a decision as a town that we want to get better. Well if all you do is keep up with inflation, by definition you're not getting better. This year you can buy a dozen eggs and next year you can buy a dozen eggs. You're no better of. So we needed to invest in our teachers. We needed to invest in our educators. We needed to invest in programs. And of course there are a lot of other things that happened. So when I look at a budget that's really barely keeping up with inflation, we're basically saying we don't want to get better. And I understand the results of the test scores. I've been harping on scores for years. You know when you're behind it takes a lot to really start to move things. And we're finally starting to see some progress. Finally for the first time in years our test scores are starting to tick up. And now is not the time to take a step backwards because it's so important that we continue to progress because we can spiral up or we can spiral down. And if we cut that $3,000,000 we are starting that spiral down. You know, this budget is way too low seeing all the numbers. I'm not here to argue that we should be expanding it and I understand people are struggling, but at the end of the day we all talk about the taxpayer that's struggling. There's a lot of us that aren't. And you know we want a good town, we want a good education. And the last thing I wont to say, this whole declining enrollment crap, and I call it crap because when a couple kids leave a school you can't shut down the building. You can't fire a teacher, 30 kids out of a 2,000, 3,000 school district are no longer there. So the costs are still there and we have to focus on the kids that are in our schools, And we have to focus our school system on attracting families that want to come here for education. If we're looking for people who want to come and live to the cheap town then these, we're always going to get people that are struggling. It's time to back education. I think our budget is way too low. If you slash $3,000,000 then send the message and there should be a billboard in front of the SAU saying we don't care about our kids.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion to the Amendment to Warrant Article #1. Yes, sir, for a first time.

Charles Chapman, 42 Quail Run Drive: Good Morning, my name's Charles Chapman, 42 Quail Run Drive. I spent 28 years in the United States Army. My kids went to schools all over the United States. The last school before I got out of the military was in Tennessee. Their education was a lot lower. It was easy for the kids. They had nothing. When I moved up here to New Hampshire I picked Alvirne for my kids. My daughter now, by the way she struggled when she first got up here. She was failing some classes. Mr. Beals can tell you. Through the school, through him and the teachers' efforts my daughter's at Penn State on the Dean's List as a Freshman. So I don't care about these stats that there low. They're going up. These teachers,

Mr. Beals put a lot of effort into my daughter. For us to invest in our kids, I oppose this Amendment. That's all I got to say.

Moderator: Thank you. Mrs. Huard to speak a second time.

Huard: First I want to say I fully respect the opinion and the words of our wonderful Alvirne Principal. If I thought for one minute that this reduction was going to hurt children I would not support it. There is enough area in indirect costs that can be reduced, facilities, technology, the administration, the SAU building, finance. We spend time comparing ourselves to other school districts via cost-per-pupil, by tax rate. You can not compare one school district to another with those numbers because you don't know what the mix is in their cost-per-pupil. You don't know who is on the other side of those numbers. The cost-per-pupil takes into consideration not only the direct cost of our children but the indirect costs that never really reach our children and improve the quality of their education. I have a son who went through the school district and he graduated at the top of his class that was in tact then. I don't think this is a painful Amendment and once again this is not an emotional play. I have long since learned how to budget for my taxes and pay them. I pay them coinciding with paying my tuition proudly out of pocket which ironically was due at the same time. And I did it. This is a legal plea that the school district is doing something wrong by overstating their budget, hiding both the appropriations from the taxpayers as well as expending appropriations in an unethical and inappropriate manner. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on the Amendment to Warrant Article #1. Yes, sir. What purpose do you rise.

Craig Powers, 31 Cedar Street: Good morning, Mr. Moderator. Craig Powers, 31 Cedar Street. Full disclosure, I am on the ballot running for School Board. I rise in opposition to this Amendment. While I share the sentiments and the frustrations, we've had some great speakers bring up some very, very good points. But just by the numbers, and again talking about Warrant Article 1 when we're talking about these numbers. You're not going to see written in the proposed Amendment or the proposed Warrant Article or the Amendment is the general fund. And that's what I think that's what from a tax perspective we all care about. The budget committee's mark on the general fund Warrant Article 1 was, round numbers, $69,000,000. And that was about a $2,000,000 down from the budget or what the school board amended. This $3,000,000 amendment would bring that number down to $65, 000, 000.(Slide brought up: *Warrant Article Proposed Amendment*) For context, the budget authority provided by voters for FY26, apples to apples comparison, was 64,6. This was last year. And what is being proposed to be the Amendment is 64,9 - a 300K increase. Now you start peeling it back. What's changed from year to year. You've got contractual obligations with CBA's, Got to pay that. Those are going up. We've got the increases in health insurance. Certainly the school board has an Action to put more options on the table than rather just taking it. But where we stand right now, this $3,000,000, this cut would essentially put us $2,000,000 at least below the budget authority provided last year. If we had 90% proficient students, I'd be saying sure, let's tighten that belt. But what I've learned in business is that you have to get the job done first before you can start talking about doing the job more efficiently. We seem to be putting the cart before the horse. I've got a lot of concerns about the linkage between this budget and actually remediating students who haven't shown proficiency. I've attended all the meetings. I've been listening attentively. How do we do something different with this money. Is it tutors. Is it a strategy of bringing in unpaid volunteers to sit knee-to-knee. It's that value proposition that seems to be lost here and all we're looking at is the numbers. Again I applaud the gentleman proposing this. I think it cuts way past muscle into bone. But that said, we can't

come here now next year with the same relatively flat performance. And I understand proficiency scores are just a piece of the puzzle. And I share a previous speaker's talking about the kids today are more difficult and more varied than in how to reach perhaps than when we were growing up. And I respect that. I don't presume to have an answer to that but I recognize that larger class sizes would probably move this in the wrong direction, Less personal connection to students and more reliance on technology and laptops is probably going to move us in the wrong direction. So for those reasons I can't support this Amendment but I also say we got a lot of work to do to change how we do business to both keep the cost within a reasonable amount, but to see those test grades and other measures of our success, student result that we're looking for improving. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. On the Amendment to reduce the budget by $3,000,000 is there any further discussion.

Beals (shouting out from audience): Move the question.

Moderator: Mr. Beals moves the question.

Patty Langlais (shouting out from audience): I'll second.

MOTION: TO CUT OFF DEBATE ON THE AMENDMENT
MADE BY STEVE BEALS; SECONDED BY PATTY LANGLAIS

Moderator: This would mean that we would cut off debate on the Amendment and go back to the original and then we would go to a vote on the Amendment. **Those in favor of cutting off debate on the Amendment to Article 1 please raise your voter cards. Those opposed. The Ayes have it. The question is moved.**

Moderator (continuing)**: The Amendment is to reduce the budget by $3,000,000. I f you are in favor of that Amendment please raise your voter card. Thank you. Those opposed. Nays have it. The Amendment fails.**

Moderator (continuing): We are now on Article #1 as written, as printed. Yes, ma'am.

Patty Langlais, 22 Stonewood Lane: I would like to amend this Warrant, this Article. I'd like to add 700,000 back into the budget. I'll wait for a Second.

Moderator: Is there a Second to that.

Gina Beals, 10 Beechwood Road: I'll second.

AMENDMENT #2
MOTION: TO AMEND WARRANT ARTICLE #1 BY ADDING $700,000 TO THE BUDGET NUMBER
MADE BY PATTY LANGLAIS; SECONDED BY GINA BEALS

Moderator: Motion made and seconded to amend Warrant Article #1 by adding $700,000 to the budget number. To address your Amendment, Mrs. Langlais.

Langlais: So I'm not going to go on and on. We've had enough talk. But for me this all goes back to the students. I think you've heard what everybody's come up here and said, and I, if you don't work with children now, you have no idea. This money is definitely needed to put back in the budget. Thank you.

Moderator: (Slide up on screen: *Warrant Article 1 Proposed Amendment*) Thank you. We are on the Amendment now, Second Amendment to add 700,000. Anyone wish to speak on the Amendment. Yes, ma'am.

Huard: Once again going to make a legal argument. For the taxpayers here and the taxpayer watching, this is how this rolls. We will play this game year after year after year after year and they can have their money. That's great. But spend it on the children that is not what I'm seeing, surplus being spent on. So I want to remind the taxpayers once again. We can keep playing this game year after year or we can go to Superior Court. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on the Amendment to add 700,000 to the budget. Anyone wish to speak. Yes, sir, Mr. Walsh.

Kevin Walsh, 5 Stoney Lane: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. I had to turn my ears off. I have cochlear implants and I through the beauty of Bluetooth and our friends at HCTV I'm able to stream this. So, if I don't turn them off I'm talking over my own voice, so you would think I would need a medical emergency. So, I actually rise in support of the Amendment for a couple of reasons. Let me get my notes. I was actually one of the budget committee members that spoke against the budget as it's presented right now. But anyway, to add $700,000 into the budget, this is what my take of that $700,000 is. When you look at the budget there were several elements that the budget committee recommended to be taken out. One of them is $433,000, $433,420 which is a shortfall in the Food Service Fund. We can talk about that. And if you actually look at that on page 13 of your handout, when you look at the revenue. Under Food Service you're going to see revenue of a-million,448,275. And then magically when you turn to page 16, when you look at the district budget, the Food Service goes up to a-million,881,695. So that $433,000 is now coming out of the general fund. That's number one. Number two, there are elements that are not in the default budget, but they should be in the default budget. And there are elements that the budget committee failed to pass on a motion. And that is of the property liability insurance and workers comp. Worker's comp is mandated by law to be in the budget. So there's a property and liability insurance increase of $85,648. There's a worker's comp increase of $26,322. That's a total of $111,970. If you add that to the 433,420 and keep adding them up, There's another piece that I believe is still currently in negotiations with its general transportation for the school district. The contract expired this year, so they need a new contract. You'll notice in the default budget on that page, there is $250,000 they added into regular transportation increase. That's in the default budget but it is not in the operating budget as it's currently presented. So, in my mind, adding $700,000 to this budget makes sense and it's justifiable by those specific line items. These are not luxury things. These are things required for us to provide meals. Make sure that students receive meals. Make sure they are transported. Make sure that our liability property and liability insurance and our workers comp are properly funded. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on the Warrant, Amendment to Warrant Article #1 to add $700,000. Yes, sir. Go ahead, Mr. Wherry.

Bob Wherry, 37 James Way: May I have permission to use slides.
Moderator: If you have them.

Wherry: Thank you. My name is Bob Wherry. I'm part of the budget committee. Mike, if you could bring up those slides. Thank you. I'd like to explain why I'm not in, why I wasn't in support of the previous Amendment and not in support of this. One of the things we did on the budget committee we did take a $2,000,000 decrease in the funding, the operating funding. (Slide up on screen: *EXPLANATION OF THE RECOMMENDED $2,000,000 DECREASE*) I'd like to explain why some of us chose to do that. Next slide. So, there's some key points. I'm going to discuss the current student and teacher levels, staffing levels, and the Department of Education student-to-teacher ratios, a comparison of the current staffing levels to the recommended student-to-teacher ratios, and the rationale for the budget decrease, and provide some additional comments if I could, please. All right. (Slide: *Current Student Population & Teacher Staffing Levels*) So I'm sorry this is like an eye chart test. But what we've done, this is data provided by Dr. Moulis and we went through some different grades. Alvirne was okay but we looked at some things. So we've got the Early Learning Center, Nottingham West, Hills Garrison, Hudson Memorial, the different grades in each school, the number of students and the number of teachers. And then we have a class size ratio. That's listed in the right hand column. Next slide, please. (Slide: *CHAPTER ED 300 Administration of Minimum Standards in Public Schools*) So we looked up, the Department of Education makes the rules, a lot of rules. I don't envy the school board to be knowledgeable of them. They do have some recommended student-to-teacher ratios and they're listed there. Kindergarten-grade 2, you have 25 students or lower. I can't quite read that but, grades 3-5, you have 30 students. And then down in the bottom you have middle school and high school, you have 30 students or less. Basically, they give you a min-max about what you're trying to get and achieve relative to student-teacher ratio. That's from the Department of Education in New Hampshire. It's not federal. It's our own state of New Hampshire thing. Next slide, please, Mike. (Slide: *Minimum & Maximum Staffing Ratios Per DoE Ed Rule 306.14*) All right, so what to try to summarize that and not make it an eye chart. This is so little. So, you have a maximum number of 25 students between kindergarten and grade 2, 30 students between grades 3 and 5, and middle and high school is 30. And you have more of a minimum goal. You want to achieve this just to be prudent with your distribution of students and things like that. So, you then have as a goal, I would say it's a minimum or a target. So 20, 25 and then it's not applicable. 30 is like the kind of number to aim for in middle school and high school. Next slide, please. (Slide: *Comparison of Current Staffing Levels to the Recommended Student-to-Teacher Ratios*) So this big eye chart is even worse, but this shows you the overstaffing levels. If you look at kind of the middle block, that's comparing it to the maximum that were presented. The right hand block is comparing it to the goals. And we have in the right hand column of each of those two blocks on the right, you see what I termed roughly as an overstaffing level compared to the recommended ratios from the rule making from the Department of Education. All right. Next slide, please. (Slide: *Estimated Overstaffing Levels Based on the Minimum & Maximum Staffing Ratios Per DoE Ed Rule 306.14*) So summarizing that, just again to get away from the eye chart, we have a maximum overstaffing level of 1,1,7,9, and 5 to 4,5 for the goals. So, 27 maximum, 12 minimum. So once again this is based on Department of Education Rule. Next slide, please. (Slide: *Rationale For $2MM Budget Decrease*) So, based on that you know, we agree we don't think we should make drastic cuts to the staffing that, you know, we're not. I agree with the earlier comments made. I think there's a lot of students who are still suffering post-COVID. I think there are a lot of students who are still trying to find their way. I think this is at all levels. I do think a cut of 27 would be draconian. But I also think that with the declining enrollment, we do have to be more targeted and more focused on things that need change and we can't, we have to make improvements there. I, so, we have those thresholds if you will and then we looked at declining enrollment. We looked at over the past ten years and looked what we're anticipating for the future, And based on that number 12 over staffing, we decided to, accounting for salaries and benefits and other vacancy and attrition considerations, reduce the

originally proposed budget so that you have what you have originally proposed now of 2,000,000. So specific positions were not specified and so it doesn't mean it has to be reflected to all teachers. It can be various things, but we felt that this was a reasonable position to take from the budget committee. Not everyone agreed. We have differences of opinion but we try to take, I'm an engineer as if you haven't guessed that by now, so I tried to take an analytical position to this to find what was a good compromise and some of you, we, this was the impetus for why we did the cut we did to the original proposed budget. The one major cut we did. Next slide. (Slide: *Additional Comments*) I just want to make some final comments about the statistics that are out there so we can be aware of them. Over the last two decades, New Hampshire has the largest enrollment decline, down by 18.4%. We're the second oldest population in the nation. So that's part of it. Enrollment will continue to decline for the foreseeable future. The per-pupil education spending in New Hampshire grew by 60.5% from 2022 to 2023. That's not in Hudson, but that's an overall average of the state to give you a flavor for where things are going and for comparison's sake. And last, New Hampshire has the fourth highest per-pupil spending growth behind only New York, California and Illinois. Those are not three states we want to catch up with. So, I've explained what I think is a hopefully logical position to why we made the cuts and why I'm not supporting the $700,000 increase. I do agree that you know there are students who are suffering out there because of COVID and other things. I do think there are opportunities that we need to on the education policy side that need to be addressed and I, you, know expect the school board to do that. So that's it. Thank you very much.

Moderator: Thank you. On the Amendment to add 700,000 to the Warrant Article #1. Further discussion. Yes, sir.

Carl Howes, 2 Glenview Drive: I'd like to go back to the previous speaker's slide deck. Slide three, I believe it was. One more. No. That one. Thank you. So the local School Board shall establish, I'm not going to read the whole thing. The key part is instructional method and characteristics of learners. That's not just a numbers game. That's looking at the student population. I am as an engineer myself, I recognize both the analytical mindset and the limits of that mindset. I dealing with personalities, not so much in general. The judgement that's needed to produce a budget for this requires looking at all of the factors, not just the statewide averages established on a larger population. So I invite a member of the school board to speak to what those challenges might be and why the increase in this Amendment could be justified.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion of Amendment to Warrant Article #1 adding 700,000. Yes. ma'am.

Deborah Putnam, 59 Rangers Drive: I want to thank to thank the previous speaker for these set of slides and his in-depth digging into the nitty-gritty shall we say. But what I'm wondering is what came up to the top regarding staff versus teachers, The people who are actually teaching, the aides, etc. and the shall we say management. The assistants to assistants. In following conversations, I know you don't want to hear about this, Facebook, but there has been facts posted and it was due to a lot of hard work and the right-to-knows and the gentleman who spoke regarding these statistics, what did they uncover regarding the staff. Because you say they seem to be lumping student and the educator. Okay. Wait a minute, I look at the educator as the teachers and the aides, not the upper management, shall we say. Was anything uncovered in regards to that matter. Thank you.

Moderator: Yes, Mr. Wherry will respond. Yield to your question.

Wherry: Thank you for your question. So this is only the teaching staff. It doesn't include the aides at all. We, not any aides, paraprofessionals or anything like that. Looking at that and looking at the categories that the Department of Education had defined. There are, you know, we didn't go anywhere near the paraprofessionals and the other aides that are mentioned in the budget. So it was just that one particular aspect that where we had data that allowed us to focus on that.

Moderator: Thank you. Yes, sir, for what purpose do you rise.

Shawn Jasper, 83 Old Derry Road: I rise in opposition to the Amendment. We've heard a number of things, some having to do with the default budget and we will have to have a discussion on that later but I will simply say that I totally disagree with what was said about the default budget. The other thing that was mentioned that I was not prepared to speak to was the tax rate. I don't know about the rest of you, but my tax bill went up substantially last year, and I know it was not because of the Town or the County. S,o take a look at your own tax bills to see the validity of that statement. Now, what I did was I went on the Department of Education website. And I'm going to encourage everyone in the town of Hudson to do that. It's very easy to navigate. They have statistics for every school in the state. There's some really very interesting things in that. The first thing I'm going to talk about is, now what district is similar to us in size. And I looked at a lot. You know I looked at Merrimack. I looked at Londonderry. They're larger than we are and there's some interesting things you can pull from that. The most interesting town that I found was Goffstown which is a community similar to Hudson. Now they have, according to these statistics, in their whole district they have about 111 students fewer than we do. So very similar. What was extremely interesting is that they have 208 teachers versus our 281. Now you just heard the previous statement about, well, what about the support staff. Well, there's only 18 more in Goffstown. So that still puts us something like 55 people more in those two categories in Hudson for 100 students. Well, what about costs. What do we find about what they're actually spending versus what were spending. More importantly, one thing we should be concerned about is what are we getting in return for our money. Are we getting a good education. Now, we heard our scores are inching up. That's really not factually true. Year to year you might find one spot that goes up and down. But if we went to pre-pandemic in Hudson, go to 2019. English, you're going to see we were proficient 62. This is at Alvirne. I didn't do all the schools. Alvirne only. And frankly I think the end result. The high school is where it matters the most because those are the kids who are ready to go out into the world. English, 2019 we were at 62%, 2025, 61%. We were as high as 65% in 2018. Math currently 27% proficient. 2019 we were at 41%. Pretty substantial decrease. Science were currently at 41%. 2029 we were at 46%. So, let's look at where Goffstown is today. About virtually the same size. We've got under 900 in the high school or in the 900's. They're just over a thousand. So again probably 60, 70 student difference. Today, English Language Arts, they are at 77% proficient, in the top 25 in the state. Math, they are at 40%. Remember we're at 27%, the middle 50%. Science, 50%, top 25. What about kids going on to college. Well, let me go back to what I said about cost. So that cost in Goffstown is 18,073. Alvirne, 22,976. What's the state average, 22,700. We're spending above the state average and we're getting worse results than a similar size district, similar size demographics. We need to be focusing on results. So let's look at some numbers in terms of staffing from the district, given to us by the district. 2016-17, we had 214 teachers. Now remember we had a much larger district in 2016-17. 2026- 2027 the proposal is for 280 teachers. Come on folks, we're paying a lot of money and we're not getting the results. The School Board needs to be focused on the results. And I'll tell you one thing that I agree on. Our teachers are not being paid at the state average. They're being paid less than what Goffstown teachers are being paid. But I think we all know and I don't care what industry you're in, I don't care what profession you're in. Paying somebody more does not make them better. So we just can't say,

well, let's increase our teacher salary by $7,000 and problems will be fixed. We've been trying to do that my whole life and we're not getting there. What do we need to do. We need to have performance-based contracts. We need to reward teachers and we can't continue to reward ones who are not proficient and are not able to teach. That's the sad reality and I'm going to challenge the School Board as they move into the next contract to work on proficiency in the contract. Reward those good teachers. This Amendment doesn't do anything except put us about 9, 9 1/2 cents of the default budget. If you don't like the work we did and we did a lot of work, then just vote for the default budget because that only going to cost you 9,000, 9 cents, 91/2 cents more than what his proposal brings us to. The reality is there are a lot of people who are suffering in this town. The one thing I hate more than anything else is when somebody gets on the floor of the meeting and says I can afford to pay more and I'm going to pay more, because you're not worrying about anyone else in the town. Let's give the people of the town a little bit of choice. And it's not a lot. Our budget increases still by 79 cents, the default by a dollar. It's not a lot of money. That's being proposed is even less. But let's give the people who are hurting a chance to have their voice. Thank you.

Moderator: Let's speak on the Amendment, please, to raise the budget $700,000. Please, let's keep our comments on the Amendment for now. Yes, sir.

Chris Landry, 25 Beechwood Road: I'm in favor of the Amendment but I do, feel like I need to correct some numbers. I'm an engineer and a numbers guy. That was stated by a previous speaker. I'm looking at numbers from the town's website and in fact the school tax rate did go down by 13 cents last year. It went from 9.30 to 9.17. The County tax went up significantly, from 94 cents tp $1.25. And the Municipal side on the Town went up from $4.97 to 5.57. So that's a 15% increase on the Town side. So the School continues to take less and less percentage of the taxes within Hudson. That's numbers straight from the town's website. Another statement that was made was that on a per-student basis we're paying less than the state average. Those numbers are also incorrect. The comparison was made between the state average across all grades and the amount being spent at the high school level in Hudson. The high school across all schools is obviously, well maybe it's not obvious, but it is true that it is more expensive. So the number that was stated of 22,700 for the state average is correct. The number for Hudson across all grades the comparable number is 19,704. Hudson used to have, many years ago, used to have the distinction of being the lowest in the state. We no longer are but we are number 17, lowest out of 162 entities reporting. So if you're going to compare numbers like that you need to accurately compare the numbers. So that's all I have to say right now.
Moderator: Thank you. We're on the Amendment to add $700,000. To speak a first time, yes, ma'am.

Leslie Reven, 154 Belnap Road: Good Morning. I just want to speak just quickly to the point where we're looking at bodies instead of the students themselves, We want so many bodies in a room, not what those bodies are doing or what they need. That's important. We can't just can't decide we need a certain number in a classroom instead of looking at what the need is. The other point I'd like to make is Goffstown doesn't have a CTE program. So that would play into our number of teachers. Not hugely, but we do have the CTE. Goffstown does not. So that's going to play into it. And the assistant superintendent has currently started new programs to help get our scores up. We can only do so much with that if students show up to class, if parents don't keep their kids home, if parents don't make excuses for them, and if kids took those tests seriously which they do not. And I think that's probably historically because I don't think I took them seriously when I was bubbling in numbers. But we need, we need to look at that. It's not all on the teachers. The teachers are trying as hard as they can and these kids are not showing up to class. They're not taking the test. The parents are opting them out

of testing. And I think that's got to be noticed and not just look at oh, teachers aren't doing their job. Thank you,

Moderator: On the Amendment to increase 700,000. Yes, sir.

Bryan Thomas, 6 Gillis Street: I just want to comment on the state's maximum ratios or, but as a town deciding to strive towards the maximum allowable ratio. I don't know if that's what we want to decide as a town. I think we should come up with our own ratios. And I'm also concerned with if we're cutting and having more students in the classroom in order to save costs. I think there's going to be unseen costs associated with the students who are kind of on the margins leaning towards special ed who aren't going to be met or we are going to be forgotten or a little lost. The students on the margins who are going to further costs if they're not able to perform based on higher student-teacher ratios.

Moderator: Thank you. Are you in favor or against.

Thomas: Yes, in favor.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion, Miss Dionne, the School Board. There were a number of questions that came up for The School Board.

Chair Dionne: Yes, I'd like to respond to just a couple of items that have been brought up in discussion by prior speakers. First, I just want to be clear that test scores are going up in the Hudson School District. With that being said, you will not hear any person from the School Board or the Administration say that we are where we want to be. If you come to any of our meetings, if you listen to any of our conversations, we are on a forward and upward trajectory And we know we want to do better. So we are on an upward path and we want to continue to see that growth. I'd like to respond to a couple of items in particular. First the state average for ELA proficiency in 2024-2025 math and science proficiencies, was again all directly from the state website that were referenced, The Hudson School District is actually above each of those. We're not below. So in ELA the state average is 55%, The Hudson School District is at 58. Math is 42. We are right at 42%. And in science, the state average is 38%, we are at 41%. Again, you are no going to hear me sit here today or any member of this Board and say that's where we want to be, but I just want to be clear with facts that we are at or above the state average. I also just want to briefly expand the conversation. There were a couple of comments about what would the $700,000 if added back in or even a prior speaker said what are we getting for the budget. Those re absolutely fair questions and comments. What do you as taxpayers get from the budget. And I would just like to expand that conversation that it is not just about test scores. And so while yes those are one metric and certainly again you will hear us talk about them. You will hear us discuss them at our Board meetings. You will hear the Administration have other metrics and goals and things like that. Scores are just one measure of success. For us in the Hudson School District, success is our students that graduate with options. It's a robust CTE Program. It's expanded co-curriculars at the elementary schools and that we're adding money in for expanding co-curriculars at our middle schools and you see new clubs and new programs and new classes. It's students having options and pathways. It's meeting the services and needs of our complex students that are changing. It's meeting and supporting the students as whole people, not just a person that's sitting in a classroom and taking a test. So I just want to expand the conversation about success in the Hudson School District. While yes you will hear us talk about goals and metrics. For whether that's the District, his School Board or the Superintendent or any, many people in this room, that work here and looking at test scores, that is just one indicator of success. And so when we talk about adding

back in $700,000 or what do we as a taxpayer get for our dollars, we are getting a whole student who graduates with options that is supported pre-k through 12 through all areas of this District through all people within this District, It's proactive maintenance on our buildings, It is robust options in all grades for all students. So I just want to expand that conversation and specifically focus on one metric of success.

Moderator: Thank you, Further discussion on the Amendment of adding $700,000 to the Warrant Article #1. Yes.

Huard: I want to thank the previous speaker for highlighting some of the positive attributes of the school district because there are many. Fiscal management is not one of them. I have my own success story. The person that proposed this Amendment to increase this budget, she has her own success story. One of the previous speakers, he also has a very success story. Despite these test scores, there are students that are succeeding, graduating with high honors. We only her about the struggles and the problems. So, I want to go back to more of a legal argument why I oppose this Amendment. If you look at 32, New Hampshire RSA 32, it stipulates, as well as the school district policy stipulates, that an operating budget shall be, and I'm not quoting, for one fiscal one year, the ensuing year, the next year. And that it is an operating budget. Yet we see today six Warrant Articles for capital items that are attaching to the surplus of the operating budget. Clearly showing that there is surplus that the school district knows is in the budget. This isn't going to change foe Fiscal 2027. What will happen to the surplus. If you tell me that this entire budget is going to be spent on the children, I'm all for it. To see an operating budget swindled so you can pay for capital expenses, that is not acceptable. To see things approved that were not appropriated by a five member board is not acceptable. So, I firmly oppose this Amendment. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you, On the Amendment -

Beals (interrupting): Move the question.

Alex Panel, 5 Rosemary Court: I second.

MOTION: TO MOVE THE QUESTION
MADE BY STEVE BEALS; SECONDED BY ALEX PANEL

Moderator: Question moved. This is to cut off debate on the Amendment and we go back to the original Article, depending on what happens here. **If you want to cut off debate on this Amendment, please raise your cards. Thank you. Those opposed. The Ayes have it by two-thirds.**

Moderator (continuing): **We are now going to vote on the Amendment to add $700,000 to Article 1 as it's worded. Would bring the budget to $72,866,427. Those of you in favor of the Amendment, please raise your cards. Thank you. Those opposed to the Amendment. The Ayes have it. The Amendment passes.**

Moderator (continuing): We are now on Warrant Article #1 in the amount of - Yes, sir.

Point of Order: Move to restrict reconsideration.

Moderator: I haven't closed Article 1 yet. That was just the amendment. **We are now on Article 1 in the amount of $72,866,427**. Everybody got that. We know where we are, Thank you.

Moderator (continuing): **On the Warrant Article #1 as amended**. Yes, sir. (Slide on screen: *Warrant Article 1 As Amended*)

Landry: I have a couple of questions for clarification for the school board. It's been stated a couple times by previous speaker that additional warrant articles are coming out of the budget we are voting on in this Article 1. That's not how it's typically done. The Warrant Articles are coming out of surplus from this year's budget carrying over to next year's budget or from next year's budget.

Moderator: Question to The Board. Miss Dionne will yield.

Dionne: Should there be a fund balance on June 30th, 2026, the Warrant Articles would be funded in the order that you see on the ballot in which they appear that is referencing the ballot.

Landry: That's my understanding. The implication was there was already warrant articles looked at for surplus in next year's budget but that's not the case.

Dionne: Not in next year's budget.

Landry:The other question I had, I believe for the School Board. I didn't add it all up, but it looked to me like just glancing through here the increases in the budget due to benefits across various sections is somewhere over $4,000,000 total. I believe a large chunk of that is in health care costs which are contracted. I know the school board is looking at ways to reduce health care costs and ways to maybe combine with the town to reduce those costs. But that's all great, you know, but I think we can't violate the contracts for the year. Does the school board have a number that just represents the health care increased from 2025 to 2026.

Moderator: Does anyone from The School Board able to -

Landry (interrupting): I mean it doesn't have to be to the dollar. You know.

Dionne: Can we have a couple of minutes to get you the answer.

Landry: Sure. Sure. So I'll wait for the answer and then comment further after that.

Moderator: While they're getting the information, speak on the Article 1 as amended.

Huard: Speaking of health insurance costs, we saw $3,000,000 worth of surplus go from, within a week from being returned to the taxpayer to being assigned or reserved for an abusive vendor school care to which one of our school two of our school district employees works there now. I want to close with this. We've been playing this game much too long. We the taxpayers, the conservative taxpayers that want conservative, ethical budgets are not going to get with this traditional system. I'd like to remind you once again, refer you to our New Hampshire Bill of Rights, Article 8. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Is someone from The Board ready to respond to that question. They still need a couple minutes. Sir, to address Warrant Article 1.

Panel: Yes. You mentioned how we can modify, how we execute. I wanted to make a motion or whatever it would be called that people are allowed one time to provide input on amendments or motions.

Moderator: Well, The Body can set its own rules. We haven't done that in the past, but you wanted to make a motion to limit speakers to one time only.

Panel: Yes. And my reason is so that we can hear from everybody and get input from a more variety of the population.

Moderator: Is there a Second to that.

Langley: I second.

MOTION: TO MAKE A RULE TO LIMIT A SPEAKER TO ONE TIME ON A QUESTION MADE BY ALEX PANEL; SECONDED BY PATTY LANGLAIS

Moderator: Miss Langley seconds. This is your own rules. You can make them. Mr. Panel made a. Wait a minute, get my notes here. We're making a Rule at this point to allow speakers only one time to speak on an Amendment, on a Question. This would limit people from coming up and speaking a second time. So, this is a Rule. Someone wants to speak. Did you want to speak on your Rule or you've already stated.

Panel: I've already spoken my piece. Yes. Thank you.

Moderator: Mr. Trost, then Miss Rice.

Ted Trost, 63 Rangers Drive: I have a question. Given that this restricts the rights of people within this room, would this require two-thirds vote.

Moderator: It's a Rule is majority rule.

Trost: Thank you. I'm opposed to this. There are times when people make, speak, come up to talk after I've risen and make good points that I'd like to address and this Rule would prevent me from addressing those comments that come up after I've already spoken. And that would be the case for anybody.

Moderator: Miss Rice

Kim Rice, 9 Hickory Street: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. I too am opposed to this. Several times when you're hearing people speak, a new question could come up. I think that by silencing our citizens, we're doing a disservice to this town.

Moderator: Thank you. Yes, sir.

Mike Tranfaglia, 24 Woodcrest Drive: I agree with the previous two speakers. This Rule is not good. I'm opposed to this Rule for the very same reasons they just said. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. On the Rule of allowing a speaker only one time. Mr. Landry.

Landry: I'm opposed as well. I think we already have the capability to limit debate. While at times we may be frustrated with the process, this is the process and it allows people to speak and to the reasons already mentioned, I think this is probably a bad idea. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. We're discussing at this point a Rule to limit speakers to one time. Do we have any further discussion on that. Yes. sir.

Jeremy Slottje, 20 Old Coach Road: I rise in opposition to the rule change. In Concord we have to sit through a number of speeches, we ought you know, prefer not to have to hear but it's the right of every speaker in this community to have their voices heard and if we start limiting that it sets a bad precedent. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on the Rule proposed.
Putnam: I rise in opposition as this is the ability to discuss is the basis of a deliberative session.

Moderator: Thank you. That's what we are here for, Ladies and Gentlemen. If you're ready to vote on the Rule to allow a speaker only one time per question, to speak only once on the question, on any question. **If you are in favor of that Rule, please raise your voter cards. Thank you. Those opposed. The Nays have it. The Rule is failed.**

Moderator (continuing): That's my first time on that one. We had the Body propose a Rule, but that's your right. You have that right to do that and the Body can make their best judgment on it. We are on Article 1. Did we have any response. Mr. Landry's question. They're still crunching numbers. Okay. **We are on Amendment. We are on Warrant Article 1 as amended**. Any further discussion. Yes, sir.

Slottje: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. Probably should have got up earlier and spoke to this, but I rise in opposition to the Article 1 as amended. And I just want to sort of briefly give a point of sort of for the audience that there's a certain seen and unseen element to what's happening today. We're going to spend a little bit more money and it may not be a huge deal to the people in this room, but I want you to consider the fact your neighbors might be on a fixed income. They might be struggling to make ends meet. Every penny we spend here today could drive them out of their home. And there's a Loy of discussion in this country about borders and people being removed by force. And I want you to understand that this creates an economic border and consider the fact you might be deporting your neighbor. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. On Warrant Article #1 as amended. Any further discussion. Mr. Walsh.

Walsh: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. I'm one of those retirees. My wife and I are retired. Living on a fixed income, social security. We've been in town since 1972. We've seen a lot of changes in the town since that time. I just wanted to point out a couple of hidden figures that don't show up in this information today. At the end of the fiscal year to just in 2025, the school board voted to retain a fund balance of 1,035,479, as they are allowed to retain up to 2 !/2% of the net assessment of the school district. Those funds can only be used for two things. One for contingency emergency purposes and one the other to reduce the tax rate. To use those funds on a contingency basis requires a quite involved process. The Department of Education as well as The Budget Committee. For the last several years voters allowed the school district to retain funds, we've retained typically $1.1 million. Those have gone back to the taxpayers to reduce the tax rate. So that's going to happen most likely between now and the end of June. I

seriously doubt there's going to be any kind of contingency requirement that's going to use those funds. Those funds essentially come up to about 25 cents on the tax rate. So when you think about the tax rate and the impact on folks, yes, we're asking the voters to approve $700,000 into the budget. I think that's a prudent recommendation for people to consider, as I mentioned previously. Secondly, the issue of taxation. When you look at the funds right now prior to this Amendment, 85% of your general fund comes from our pockets. From general taxation number one, and the statewide education property tax. That currently is a tax that is collected locally that stays locally. Six-million dollars comes out of our pocket, stays here for the investment in the school district. You take that with the 51 almost 52 million out of that 68,69 million, that's 85% of the budget. If you look at the total budget prior to this amendment that represents 80% of the budget. Eighty-cents of every tax dollar that comes out of pocket. There's one thing that I think reflects the integrity of and the vision of a community is what we recommend and what we support through taxation. So this is this really whatever we decide to do is going to be the town of Hudson's, the community of Hudson's ability to support public education in the town. Thank you. Appreciate that. Lastly, just as you're looking at the numbers that came in, The Budget Committee did recommend a $1.2 million reduction in salaries and benefits. There were actually five new positions originally proposed by the School Board that has now gone by the board. Three of those were for math and reading interventionists at the elementary schools. There was a special ed position at Hudson Memorial School and there was also a part-time to full-time position for Family and Community, Consumer Science, the old Home Ec teachers. So those right now have been taken off the board, it is my understanding, based on information that we currently have. And lastly, I believe, Mr. Moderator, the School District can amend the default budget up until the Warrant is printed. Is that correct.

Moderator: I could ask our legal. Can the School Board amend the Default Budget up until we -
Attorney Peter Phillips: School Board Members
Moderator: Up until when
Phillips: Until you print the Ballot
Moderator: Ah, so when it gets to the -
Phillips: That is in accordance with the law
Moderator: Thank you. Okay. Thank you.

Moderator (continuing): Miss Dionne. Question way back to Mr. Landry.

Dionne: Yes. So to the question regarding health insurance and benefits increases. The total benefit increase in FY2027 is $1,859,564. Those of you that have looked at the budget, that's Code line 200. Of that $1,636,416 is health insurance specifically, which reflects about 88%. Just to call attention to the other 12%, that's teacher retirement, non-teacher retirement, dental and social security contributions. I also would like to respond to some prior comments from a prior speaker regarding School Care. Many are aware ot the situation in the next assessment we received. The School Board and the District dealt with that as we were required to do. As were over 60 municipalities and school districts around the state. This was not unique to the Hudson School District to be absolutely clear. And we addressed it as we needed to prudently and fiscally responsibly. With that said, we have tasked the Administration to look at all of our options for health insurance and we will be hearing about that in the coming months. So, we will not necessarily, I don't want to say exactly what our plan is because we do not yet know. However, the school board has tasked the administration to explore all of those options. Whether that's with the Tow, other Municipalities, other School Districts, or School Care itself. So, we will be providing further information to the public as we have that as for the research and information is gathered.

Moderator: That answer your question, Mr. Landry.

Landry: It does. Thank you very much for those numbers. Sorry you had to do some scrambling to pull them together, but I think my point is that 1.6, whatever that was. The health care cost increase alone is pretty much in round numbers even with the amended budget is pretty much entirely due to health care costs. I think it's 1.8 -ish now and 1.6 is health care. So the school board has presented what's close to a flat budget except for health care and other benefits. So, there's some other stuff in there. I'm not going to say it's an exactly matching number, but the budget number if pretty flat. While I'm here I do have a couple of other comments to make. Ther's a number of ways to look at things. And I agree it's tough to make comparisons. I have done some comparisons against some other similar towns. I picked a slightly different list of 12 towns compared to what the school board did. But they did make one minor mistake in comparing the tax rates is, I think, they looked at raw rates as opposed to equalized tax rates. So, you really need to look at the equalized tax rates. The four towns that they listed as lower tax rates than Hudson. If you look at the equalized tax rates are actually higher than Hudson. So, that puts Hudson at or near the bottom of that list. So, our tax rates are lower compared to those towns. And if you look at, again my list of towns was similar but a little bit different. If you look at both the total tax rate that is associated with the schools, whether you look at it as just the town portion or the town and state portion combined, Hudson is at the bottom or near the bottom two both in the raw number tax rate as well as in the percentage of taxes that go towards the school. So we historically, I mean we are below average in the percentage of taxes that go to the school. Even if you combine the state and the town portion of that we're at like 61% of that. I asked the question deliberative session last week of the town because I was concerned whether that was, because the schools were lower because the town was high and the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen indicated that he felt it was because the school spending in Hudson was low compared to other towns. So, while I agree we need to be prudent in our spending and make that we are spending wisely. I think it's important that we do do these comparisons and you can't continuously cut budgets and expect to get better results. So, I you know, it's hard to state because the way it's written, but I am in favor of the school board's budget, which I guess means I'm opposed to Article 1 as is written because that's the way it works. One more comment I wanted to make while I was up here, a previous speaker stated that you can't increase employee performance by increasing their salary and that is absolutely true, but when you increase the average salaries that you offer you retain employees longer, you're able to attract more experienced employees and you end with a more experienced and potentially higher performing staff. So, it's important to differentiate between increasing the salaries of a particular employee or a group of employees and having an average employee pay rate, or whatever you want to consider, that's higher which allows you to attract a more experienced staff. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Ladies and Gentlemen are we ready to close down the discussion of Warrant Article #1. Mrs. Huard.

Huard: I want to highlight a good point about the District and their Special Ed program. I participate through my son in the special, unified, drama play and I was amazed to see he amazing job that our district did in getting those children on the stage. I also want to highlight a Chronicle show that highlighted one of the special ed students that went through the Culinary Program. It was an amazing credit to our school district. So, while people think I'm all about money and that and I'm here to attack the Special Ed Program, I'm not. I fully appreciate and understand and want to assist the Special Ed Program. There was a time, I think back in 2014, we didn't have as plush of a budget but I saw maybe 400,000 taken from the general population to fund some of the surprises in special ed. Certainly don't want to be back there by any means, but we aren't any close to being back there. When we see $3,000,000 of surplus

going to a vendor when the school district didn't even make a legal fight that they had a right to do. They didn't even bother to try. We even have other expenditures that they don't even question. They just rubber stamp them. And then again we see surplus. Forgive me, my confusion in the ones tied to the general fund. I know they go to fiscal 26. My statement was that they did that at a time when there was more than half of fiscal 2026 to finish. I know it's if its ready but they anticipate it being ready or they wouldn't have it attached it to them. Any if that was there in fiscal 2026 and we had three-million to go to school choice, you can better believe that a significant amount of that surplus still sits and carried forward in the fiscal 2027 budget because not enough of the line items went down. We see the salary budgets go up. The other line items just continue regardless of whether you use them. I there was surplus in them or they weren't used, they still get carried forward at the same amount. If they need more then they add to it. But we never really see a line item go down. Thank you.

Moderator: Does anyone else wish to discuss Warrant Article #1. Seeing none. **I will close the discussion on Warrant Article #1 and it moves to the ballot.**

Landry: Move to restrict reconsideration.

Moderator: Mr. Landry moves to restrict reconsideration of Warrant Article #1.

Ian Howes, 2 Glenview Drive: Second.

MOTION: TO RESTRICT RECONSIDERATION OF WARRANT ARTICLE #1
MADE BY CHRIS LANDRY; SECONDED BY IAN HOWES

Moderator: Motion's been made and seconded to restrict reconsideration of Warrant Article #1. That means it will not be brought up again later in this meeting. Those in favor of restricting reconsideration, please raise your voter card. Thank you. Those opposed. **The Ayes have it. Article 1 is restricted**. And it moves to the budget [ballot] as amended. Ladies and Gentlemen, could we take a ten minute break, please. Just ten minute break, because what's needed by the Moderator.

Moderator (post-Break): Thank you. Warrant Article #2 (reading Warrant Article #2 - with slide on screen)

WARRANT ARTICLE #2
Collective Bargaining between the Hudson School Board and PSRP
Shall the Hudson School District vote to approve the cost items in the collective bargaining agreement reached between PSRP AFT-NH Local #6245, AFT-CIO for the Hudson School District full and part-time cafeteria personnel, full and part-time paraeducators and kindergarten classroom assistants and full and part-time licensed practical nurses and the Hudson School Board which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels over the amount paid in the prior fiscal year:

2026-2027 $363,639
2027-2028 $326,978

and to further raise and appropriate $363,639 for the upcoming fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement that would be paid at current staffing levels?
Estimated tax rate impact Year One: $0.07 Recommended by the Hudson School Board 5-0
Estimated tax rate impact Year Two: $0.06 Not Recommended by the Budget Committee 6-4

Moderator (continuing): I**'ll recognize Mr. Campbell to present Warrant Article #2**.

Michael Campbell, School Board Vice-Chair: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. Thank you all for coming out today. Yes, that's the slide: *Paraeducator Salary Schedule.* This is a two-year agreement negotiated by the Schoo Board in good faith which will have a total cost increase of $690,617 over two years. The tax impact for the first year is estimated to be seven-cents. The tax impact for the second year is estimated to be six-cents. This contract covers approximately 120 employees including part-time paraeducators, kindergarten classroom assistants working less than seven hours per day, full and part-time food service workers, part-time LPN's working less than seven hours per day, the wages are being increased with the intention that to continue to ensure that Hudson remains competitive in the job market for these positions. As noted on this slide the current starting rate for paraeducator is $18.25 per hour. The new contract would bring this rate up to $20 per hour in the first year and $21.50 in the second year. Food service workers currently start at $15.50 per hour. The new contract would put that starting rate at $17.50 per hour in the first year and then $18 per hour in the second year. As we mentioned, as I mentioned earlier kindergarten classroom assistants are being added to this contract and they support teachers and students in the classroom in the classes. There are currently six classroom assistant, one classroom assistant per two classes at Library S*treet* School. This contract also, sorry you can go to the next slide: *Warrant Article 2 PSRP Contract*. That's some of the changes, sorry about that. This contract updated Longevity Pay to be consistent with other groups in the district. Once an employee has 15 years of service, they will receive $100 per year of service in the district with a maximum of 30 years. So, for example, an employee with 20 years in the district will get a bonus of $2,000 at the end of the year as recognition for the dedication to the district and supporting the students. This covers paraeducators, LPNs, and kindergarten classroom assistants. As mentioned earlier, a high deductible insurance plan has been added to this contract to offset insurance costs and provide a consumer driver option for employees. The tentative agreement reflecting these changes is available on the district's website if you'd like to see the full details. I thank you very much for your time.

Moderator: Thank you. **I will now open Warrant Article #2 Collective Bargaining Agreement with PSRP's and others to questions, comments, and amendments.** Yes, ma'am.

Langlais: I rise in approval of this Warrant Article. I'm going to let all the people behind me speak about what they do so wonderfully, but I'm going to speak a little bit about the fact that this is a negotiated warrant article and this is always negotiated in good faith. And if you have not familiar with negotiations, you may not understand the hours and days of time that goes into. This isn't just, oh this is what we're going to give them and this is what they accept. It's, there's a lot that goes into this and I'm very disappointed because this is always done in good faith. I'm not sure if the Budget Committee didn't get all their questions answered, I'm having a very hard time understanding why you would want to vote against an article that is negotiated. You're basically saying you don't have faith in the School Board, which I have faith in my School Board. I also have faith in you, but right now my faith is a little bit less. So like I said behind me are some principals and people that are going to speak about these wonderful, wonderful people that do such a great job every day. Thank you.

Moderator: Yes, further discussion.

S. Beals: Operationally and all these comments are directed to the Budget Committee. First of all, I respect the work that you've done. I don't know why anyone in their right mind would want to be a budget committee member, but I do appreciate your efforts. Okay, simply put, our

schools cannot operate with this group of people. Plain and simply, they're our neighbors. They are the ones who live in this community by vast numbers. And the small dollar value that we are talking about here, from a day to day basis from the moment the bus arrives at school, we have people who are on. From the moment a kid comes off the bus walking into the building for breakfast, people are on. They're there before I am as the principal, getting ready to start the day. So I can understand concerns of the community about a high-priced principal, though I'm worth it. This group of people are the most worthy people in our school district. I urge and I'm imploring the Budget Committee, your vote matters here. A Not Recommended 6-4, I'm urging at least two of you to flip your vote, and make it Recommended 6-4. Personally, I would love this as you represent me because I voted for many of you to be in an unanimous vote as the School Board votes. Our town needs every one of the people, the 120 staff members in this unit or we do not function school at any of the schools. The needs of the littles are bigger than the needs of the biggers. We get that. At the same time, I urge you to reconsider your vote after the meeting today. We have to send ta statement to these people. When they go across the river to Nashua to work, we can't frequently find their replacement. We have had bad days in the past where we were so short staffed with support personnel, you can make a difference. And within the context of seven or six cents contract, these people, our schools need you to change your vote. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion Warrant Article #2. Yes, ma'am.

Darcy Orellana, 12 Robin Drive: I agree with the two previous speakers. I support this. I work part-time in an elementary school and I see what all of these roles do and how critical and essential they are to the school functioning and running efficiently and for students to learn. So my question, and I'd like The Budget Committee if they would to respond why there's such a divide in the voting. It's shameful. Thank you.

Moderator: A question for The Budget Committee. Anyone wish like to yield. Mr. Jasper will yield.

Jasper: Frankly, I don't think it has to do with any of the work that is being done. You'll notice that we did not recommend any of the moneyed warrant articles. We worked hard. We tried to get the tax impact down. We only got it down in the budget 79-cents. Now, it's back up about 10-cents more. They simply are looking at what's going on with our school district. What's going on with the number of employees. And what's going on with the tax rate. And how much more can we afford. People are hurting. Now, the state employees aren't getting raises. They're laid off literally by the hundreds, probably close to a thousand in state government. There's got to be an end to this and there's got to be some recognition that people are not made out of money. And we've got to begin to work together to try to do the best we can, just simply say we have to have the same number of employees regardless of how many students we have, and we just need to keep going up. I mean I'm sympathetic and I would love to feel that I could recommend all these increases, but I just I can't. The voters are going to make a decision. It's going to be a yes or no here. School Board's made their recommendation and the Budget Committee does not feel at this point that we can afford this and continue as a town where people can live. You know I've always been proud to say that in in a least one case, and I've graduated from Alvirne, it'll be 49 years, tis June. There are still parents of students I went to school with living in their homes. I've always been proud of the fact that people could stay here. I've talked to people in Londonderry and everyone says hey you know what there are very few old-timers here because as soon as the kids leave school they move someplace else. That hasn't happened here, but that's what we're turning Hudson into if we continue down this path.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion. Yes. ma'am.

Laura Noonan, 50 Riverside Avenue: Good Morning. I am in agreement with this article. I've lived in Hudson for 30 years. I am currently the president of the Hudson PSRP's and speaking to respectfully ask for your support of the proposed two-year contract on March 10th. I have two children who attended Hudson schools and graduated from Alvirne. I am proud to be working for the Hudson School District. I have for 21 years. I work in the ABA preschool program at Nottingham West. I'm very proud of all the schools. As a taxpayer I know that we are trying to balance in the real needs of our district. Excuse me, I'm speaking on behalf of the 116 hardworking hourly employees covered by this contract. We've worked very hard to negotiate a contract to help to make sure we can fill necessary and legally required vacancies. We are disappointed the Budget Committee did not recommend this contract, it we're not entirely sure if you were provided the information needed to fully understand the uniqueness of this contract. Perhaps we can change your mind when you go to vote. Paraeducators are covered under two different contracts in Hudson. The full-time paraeducators are covered under the HFT contract. Their benefits and hours of work are different. Our contract covers the following: 28 cafeteria employees, 82 paraeducators, 6 classroom assistants. Now, we have no full-time paraeducators like the AFT contract. None of our paraeducators are eligible for retirement system. Of the 82 paras in our contract, we have 58 who paid 51/2 hours per school day or less. None of these paraeducators are eligible for any district paid health insurance. We have 28 paraeducators, excuse me, who get paid for 61/2 hours per day. For purposes of this contract, these paraeducators are considered full-time, but again they do not qualify for the New Hampshire Retirement System and only qualify for single-person plan health insurance, not two-person, not family. We also have six kindergarten classroom assistants. It used to be a higher paying para position, but now it's at a lesser pay rate. Remember, paraeducators are hourly employees and we're paid for only days worked, which are the student days and required professional development days. We get paid for three holidays now and would receive a fourth holiday with this contract. This contracts puts paras on a pay schedule and eliminates the pay range system. Paras were not placed purely on a step equivalent to years of experience because that would not have been affordable. But this placement does provide a pa raise and most importantly increases the starting pay for para-1 to $20 an hour and para-2, $20 an hour. Please remember these para positions are providing legally required services to our special education students. We do not want wages that are too low that it's too difficult to fill those positions and will force the district to contract out to private agencies which costs somewhere between $45 to $55 an hour. That is not a good use of taxpayer dollars. I apologize for the detailed explanation, but we feel it's important for everyone to know that when you think of us please know that we are not getting an array of benefits like the other employees do and we're a vital part of the school team. This contract helps us move forward a bit so we can continue to have great staff and be able to fill vacancies. Having an excellent para working with our kids is the most important thing we can do. This contract helps us do just that. As your neighbor, as a taxpayer, as a parent, and as a paraeducator, I ask for your support to please vote yes on Warrant Article 2. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Yes, sir.

Powers: We are speaking just about Warrant Article #2, but if we look 2, 3, and 4, which are going to be the three CBA's. Just some context and I do rise in support of this Warrant Article. If we look at the first cost of the three most recently negotiated CBA's, it totals up to about $650K. When I look back at what it had cost us the last time these thre CBA's were negotiated, the first year cost, it was $1.1-million. So I was pleasantly surprised when the actual numbers came out in, I don't know, late November, early December, that it had come down, almost cut in half with what the first year costs are. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion. Warrant Article 2. Yes, ma'am,

Reven: I'm in full support of Article 2. I would just like to say we are currently we're short on paras at Alvirne High School. I am not a teacher or a para, I work in the office. I'm Mr. Beals' slave. You're welcome. So I would say that I'm also impressed with their longevity benefit. I think we're going to have to talk about that the next round for secretaries. But, we need to keep these paras here. They're leaving and we need to keep them here. We need to get good paras. To get good paras we need to offer them more money. A couple years ago, I volunteered at the Food Pantry, pretty much weekly. And I was so shocked and sad. I actually saw some paras there. That shouldn't be happening. It just shouldn't be happening with the job that they're doing. And they need better pay. And if you would like their testing scores to go up, I think we need those paras to be able to support these kids to help increase those test scores. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion,Warrant Article 2. Yes, sir.

Keith Bowen, 10 Webster Drive: Middle School principal. Our paraeducators are probably the most vital resource we have in our schools, also the most under-appreciated when on a large scale. They're the people in the trenches. They're the people working with the students to level the playing field on a daily basis. And I would give them the most credit for some of the improvement we are seeing recently in what we are seeing in our schools. I support this Article. I wish it could be more. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Yes, sir. Warrant Article 2.

Bob Guessferd, 39 Flying Rock Road: I really just had a question for the Budget Committee. It was 6-4. We heard from one side of the Not Recommended. Would it be possible for one of you to come up and talk about if you recommended it, who recommended it, the four of you. If one of you could come up and kind of give your rationale as to why you recommended it.

Moderator: Thank you. Anyone from the Budget Committee wish to yield. Mr. Walsh.

Walsh: (I have to turn my ears off.)Thank you, Mr. Moderator. Yes, I was a voter in the minority for all of the collective bargaining agreements. As the previous speaker alluded to, the contracts the last time around significantly more than it is now. So, where we're getting to we're getting so much more competitive in the Markey place. To not only to retain these key individuals that are so important in the classroom environment. But also to attract new folks maybe with a bit more experience and stuff. So that, to me it's very cost-effective way of making sure that we have the best of the best available folks to be in our classrooms and serve the needs of our students and more importantly make sure that they support those classroom teachers and the instructors to make sure that the day-to-day operations in the classrooms is as productive as it can be. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Mr. Walsh, there are many in this room who would love to turn their ears off. [Laughter from audience] You have the advantage. Mr. Campbell.

Michael Campbell, 6 Baltusrol Drive: I just wanted to give a specific number. Two years ago the PSRP contract was on the ballot and it is, specifically it's $61,000 between the two years, less this contract, than two years ago.

Moderator: Thank you. For further discussion. Warrant Article 2. Yes, sir.

Scott Baker, 17 Maple Avenue: I am the principal of Nottingham West. And I'll just speak from the elementary perspective. These staff members are absolutely critical and I agree, I agree with Steve and Keith and the other principals. We can't function without them. When we have parents absent, we're in an emergency mode at the elementary level. I actually believe they deserve way more money than what we're presenting here. So, I encourage the Budget Committee to rethink their decision. Because without these people, without attracting good quality people and keeping the, I see them work day in and day out actually going above and beyond of what we ask them every day. So, to keep the people that we have and attact good quality candidates, you need to pay them more. So, I absolutely stand in approval of this Warrant Article. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Yes, sir. Warrant Article #2.

Ian Howes, Glenview Drive: I would like to state my support for Warrant Article #2. Additionally, echoing the Alvirne, middle school and Nottingham West principals in their comments. And I am an alumni of our school district because of these paraeducators. Because I had the supports I needed in breaking down assignments, additional time on tests, and being able to take a large project and breaking it down into smaller parts. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Warrant Article #2. Miss Rice.

Rice: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. So here's what I'm going to tell you. I voted against this, and I'll tell you why. Not one department head came in to give us this information. Now that I heard it, I will change my vote. But I felt very disrespected because we have questions, not just for the superintendent but for the department heads who bring in their budgets. So, when we can't get answers to those questions while we're in the Budget Committee, how are we suppose to respond. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Any further discussion on Warrant Article #2, the collective bargaining agreement, PSRP's and additional. Yes, ma'am.

Sherri Lavoie, 58 Windham Road: Special Education Coordinator at Hills Garrison for the last five years. And before that I was Special Education Department Head Coordinator, Assistant Principal for Special Services at Alvirne High School for eight years. Our paraprofessionals are key. I had no idea that anyone wanted to hear that from a coordinator position because I would have been right there. I, myself, had a paraprofessional that didn't come to school Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and then resigned effective immediately in an email at 7:00 Thursday morning. We scramble with one absence. We run with flu season. You can't imagine when COVID hit, I had paraprofessionals that were logging in to support students in an online format three and four times a day in order to help them get their assignments done so they could graduate. They are essential to our day in our school. A previous speaker alluded that little students are little problems. Big students can be bigger problems. Our paraprofessionals run. When a student doesn't want to go to music class and the student runs, they run. You just imagine how much those paraprofessionals keep those kids coming to school every day when their struggle is real. Thank you. And, I'm a 33-year employee of the Hudson School District. Thirty-two is you count the first year that I was a long-term sub, but 33.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion. Yes, ma'am.

Suellen Seabury, 50 Pelham Road: I rise in support of this. I'm a juvenile law attorney, not here in New Hampshire, but down in Massachusetts. And I'm in schools a lot. I have a lot of

younger clients and middle school and certainly a lot of high school clients that have benefit for all of these. I know Hudson does as well. I have a family member who receives special education services through the town of Hudson. If these people aren't here in the morning, who is going to meet our children. And, if any parent out there drops, you know, their child off early and takes advantage of an early program so they can go to work. Any parent out there who has a child who needs maybe a little extra support, maybe an opportunity to just go and just kind of deflate in the nurse's office just for a few minutes. What would happen if these people aren't there. And when I look at 6-cents, 7-cents, and you know, I get it. It's more complicated and there are people in this room who will ell you all the calculations that you need. That doesn't seem that that's so much to give people dignity, health insurance, and a meager raise. They don't work long hours for big money. You know, these aren't the fat cats of the town. And I also graduated from Alvirne. As a matter of fact, Mr. Jasper and I graduated together. And I disagree with while I do agree and I disagree has been our history for the past 49 years or so. Actually, Mr. Jasper was the first person I met when my family moved here in 1966. So, I think we need to keep these people who aren't making a tremendous amount of money, who do a job because they like working with kids, our kids. I think we need to give them this to make sure they're long-timers in our community because it sounds like they're contributing a tremendous amount to it. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you, Further discussion. Warrant Article #2.

Landry: I just want to make a comment. There's been a lot of talk about test results and where we stand on various proficiency scales and I'm glad to hear that we're improving and I the School Board and the Staff are working very hard to make those improvements. And one things to help make those improvements is to have an experienced and stable staff. Right. So we want o have people who know our kids, know the schools, who work with the kids, and can continue to give them support on an ongoing basis. If you have paraprofessionals that you have a hard time retaining because they go across the river or across the border and make a lot more money, then that makes for a less stable staff and it's harder to provide those services on an ongoing basis. We're talking about salaries here that aren't a lot more than people can make working at McDonald's these days. Okay. The minimum wage at in New Hampshire is quite a bit lower, but no one pays minimum wage in New Hampshire. In order to get employees, they're paying quite a bit more than that. I don't think this is a lot to ask for to have for these wages to continue to maintain this great staff of people and to continue to support our kids and hopefully to help support the ongoing increase in the proficiency scores in our schools. So I very much support this Article and I hope that everybody else does too.

Moderator: Further discussion, Warrant Article #2. Yes, ma'am.

Elizabeth Renzullo, 2C Hopkins Drive: I rise in support of this. I actually think our paraprofessionals deserve so much more than this. My son uses those services in our school district. And I actually have two sons that have gone to our school, through our school district. And those paraprofessionals go out of the world to help them with everything that he needs when he needs it, how he needs it. And one of the things that I think is missed the most is the paraprofessional are there to help them how they need it. When a child needs a paraprofessional to access their education, that helps to raise the level of our community because they have that help and support there. Without that help and support, there is no increase in education for that child. That child loses their a chance to reach their potential. And that is what we're looking at in the school when we are here. They have potential. And if you don't support them, they miss that chance. That is our community 's future right there. And that is important and that matters. So I rise in support of this.

Moderator; Thank you. Any further discussion on Warrant Article 2. Mr. Wherry.

Wherry: Hi, I just want to make a quick comment on some aspects of this. It's hard to vote for something sometimes if the only perception your given is just throwing more money at the problem. Albert Einstein and the billionaire Charles Schwab were both dyslexic. They hugely contributed to society. Ans so if we're going to spent special education money we need to focus on teaching compensatory skills and graduating students off of their IEP's as quickly as possible because that will ultimately reduce the spending on that. We should focus on helping them become productive and contributing members of society. There's one school district that they focused on intervention for the young and reduced there special education IEP's from 28% of the student population in the lower demographics down to 1.8. We need to do that sort of intervention and we want to have focused programs that are addressing the problem and you have to get it to the youngest folks as much as possible. You need to support everyone throughout the whole system. You need to get to the youngest folks so you get them got the IEP sooner. We're looking for that sort of information so were getting prudent spending when we're asked to make these sort of decisions. I'm thankful for the speakers who came up and explained some things. I really do appreciate that. So just another comment about the context of how we make some of these decisions.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on Warrant Article #2. For a first time, this lady behind you, Mr. Landry.

Heather Cook, 3 Manny Court: Hi. I'm also running for School Board, by the way. It's nice to meet everybody here. As previously mentioned, we brought up a really good point and we actually brought up a certain learning disability of dyslexia, which is something I'm not personally familiar with, but familiar with. It's not a wrong point to bring up that a shorter IEP would be the goal. But it's important to sort of bring up a fact check that generally speaking this also isn't a choice. Special education, especially when you speak of EP's, are a legal obligation that if we don't meet can cost us more money down the road. Right. And how. Well, parents have rights. Ther's costly mediation. So on and so forth. This affects every district in New Hampshire. Not just our town. This is hardly unique to Hudson. But the previous speaker did bring up a good point that when we have early intervention, problems are addressed easier, Quicker, with better long-term results at less money. So how do you do that. Well, I for one also recognize the importance of being adequately staffed with paras, especially at the younger grades when this is critical to intervening with learning difficulties, whether they're disabilities or not. So to go back to Warrant Article 2, this is something I would wholly support in this town. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion. Article 2. Yes, ma'am.

Stacy Paradise, 4 Meadow Drive: I'm a special educator. I work across the border in Londonderry, but I have an assistant I could not live without her, She is my right hand. And so, I'm in favor of this Article. As to the person who said it would be great if we could get kids off IEP's early. You know that depends on so many things. There's scores, there's cognitive levels. Some kids are never going to get off IEP's. It's just who they are as a person, they're going to be on it to have to get some sort of a plan for college as well. So it's great. We love when we can get them off IEP's, and it's certainly better if we interventions early. And we do that with support from support staff. But, also we would do that with math interventionists, which I was a little disappointed to hear were cut. Now that's the worse. That's saying our math scores were I think 40% and we're going to cut two math interventionists potential positions. It doesn't make sense to me. Thank you.

Moderator: Further discussion. For a second time, Mr. Landry.

Landry: Yes, I think there's a little confusion, this discussion between the number of paraprofessionals or people within this group and the rate of pay we're paying them. This Article has to do with the rate of pay, not the number of people, so we need to keep focused on that. So the rate of pay for people we have that we or intend to hire, right. While the previous speaker mentioned early intervention, that's fantastic. That probably takes more power professionals to make it happen in order to maybe have a long-term reduction after that success. But this is only talking about the rate of pay for the paraprofessionals we do hire. Any discussion about increasing the numbers would be in the main budget which we have already discussed. So let's keep focused on what this Article is really about.

Moderator: Thank you. Any further discussion on Warrant Article 2. Seeing none. **We will close the discussion on Warrant Article #2 and it goes to the ballot.**

Moderator: (reading Warrant Article #3 - with slide on screen)

WARRANT ARTICLE 3
Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Hudson School Board and AFCSME
Shall the Hudson School District vote to approve the cost items in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the AFSCME Local 1906 for the Hudson School District Principals, Assistant Principals, Special Education Coordinators, School Counselors, Dean of Academics, Department Heads, School Psychologists, Director(s) of School Counseling, Athletics, Career and Technical Education and Music and the Hudson School Board which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels over the amount paid in the prior fiscal year:

2026-2027	$235,082
2027-2028	$(69,800)
2028-2029	$223,251

and to further raise and appropriate $235,082 for the upcoming fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement that would be paid at current staffing levels?
Estimated tax rate impact Year One: $0.05
Estimated tax rate impact Year Two: $0.01 Recommended by the School Board 5-0
Estimated tax rate impact Year Three: $0.04 Not Recommended by the Budget Committee 7-3

Moderator: (continuing) **I'll recognize Chairperson Dionne of the School Board to present Article 3.**

Dionne: Thank you. Can we go to the next slide, please. So, this is a three-year agreement negotiated in good faith by all involved. I'd like to thank everyone who was involved in that process. The total three -year cost for this contract is #458,333. This collective bargaining agreement includes 53 members. Key components include a couple of items I'll highlight today. Salary increases to remain competitive with other surrounding area school districts. An additional health insurance option was also added with a high deductible to offset those rising insurance costs. And I would also at this point like to mention, you may have seen in Year Two a decrease of $69,800 and the reason for that in particular is because that reflects the change in movement of the School Counselors from their AFSCME contract to the Hudson Federation of Teachers contract. So that is why there is that decrease in Year Two of $69,800. Next slide. please. Additionally, there was a Longevity Clause that was also added for

employees covered in this agreement with more than 20 years of service to the district. We've talked and we've heard a lot today about achieving the District's Goals and forward trajectory and administrators are a key part of that leading from the top and so that Longevity Clause was added. Additionally, one item to highlight is that this contract actually had language related to a merit and bonus compensation. Those metrics include both academic growth and improvement performance as well as family and student engagement and additional professional development opportunities. So did and were able to work together in there. Similar metrics are used in a variety of industries and this is something we all on the negotiating team felt important. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. **We will now open Warrant Article #3 Collective Bargaining Agreement with AFSCME to questions, comments**. We can't amend this, Collective Bargaining Agreements aren't amendable by law. Anyone wish to speak on Warrant Article #3. Yes, sir.

Gasdia: First off, I want to say I didn't rise for the Paras just because there was so much support, but I definitely support them too. But this group here I think is the easy one to vote down and I want to stay in support of them because, you know, it starts at the top and what I love about this contract is, and I can't imagine it was an easy thing to negotiate, is we have sat up here 20 years and said we need some sort of merit and some sort of accountability. The only way that happens is when the top agrees to it. And so, this is a huge step forward. And so, this to me, this contract can send a message that we've been trying to send for a long time. We have goals. We're going to hold people accountable. And we have, we're very fortunate in tis town to also have a lot of administrators that have been here a very long time. Some may say Mr. Beals has been here too long, but that's it, you know. [laughter from audience] But we have is a great, great group of people and, you can come up and rebuke that in a minute. But in all seriousness, in all seriousness we have a group of people that are the schools and they are doing an amazing job given all the constraints we have, given everything we have. And when you see some things in there. I could go on for hours about our music program and all that's come out of that. And so we need to support all of this. And what I love about this is this contract, and I'll put my old school board hat on, corrects some things that should have been corrected years ago with the counselors, putting them in the right contract. And this merit thing is huge. And so, we need these group of people. This rewards them, but it also gives them skin in the game. And thank you to the School Board for getting that done. And thank you to all of the Administrators and their negotiating team for agreeing to it because that's the direction we need to move. And I think this is a fantastic contract.

Moderator: Thank you. Anyone else to discuss Warrant Article #3.

Huard: I rise in support of this contract. I do want to point out that the very top layer of administration is not in this contract. So just in case you're wondering. I also have a question. Why are the taxpayers not allowed in the collective bargaining. If we are paying for those fees and you want us to respect your contracts, why are we not invited and included. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Question of The Board. Anyone wish to yield. I guess the question is are there citizen members of the negotiating team. I don't think there are. Mr. Phillips, the District's attorney.

Phillips: Good morning, Peter Phillips, the district's attorney. That's an interesting question. The collective bargaining is governed by state law, the RSA 273A, the public employee

collective bargaining statue. That law requires that the employer negotiate in good faith with the exclusive representative and you've got three exclusive representatives here and articles that are before the voters. The School Board is the governing body. They represent the people and they negotiate the contract, they, in all of these negotiations there are School Board members at the table and also administrators as necessary. And I served as counsel to each of these negotiations and I can tell you that in each of these negotiations the Union had experienced, qualified negotiators as well, attorneys or professional union negotiators. It's an extensive process and I think in all thre instances a positive outcome. But ultimately the negotiations are done on behalf of the Public by the elected officials and governing body, which is this School Board appoints two members that sits at the partying table. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you, Mr. Phillips is there any reason why the Board can't put citizens on the negotiating committee. There are restrictions in the law. Just a question that came up.

Phillips: Not to my knowledge. I've never seen that. I've been negotiating contracts in this state for over 30 years and I've never seen that. There have been occasions where one party, one case, the a school board that bargaining be done in public and the Labor Board has ruled that neither party can compel the other party to negotiate in public. There's actually, it might have gone to Supreme Court actually and it was determined that that is not conducive to reaching an agreement. But if the Parties agree to negotiate in public, it could occur in public.

Moderator: Thank you very much.

Huard: Thank you for that clarification. That was going to be my question. So, there is nothing really to prevent them from, again except if the parties don't agree. So, our parties are just excluding us from these bargaining agreement negotiations and then expecting us to support them. There's nothing confidential about the bargaining agreement. We see them. We see the provisions after they're done. So why can't we be part of the negotiations. Those parties who are responsible for making that decision. Make that decision. Make that happen and you have probably more support for your CBA's. But, instead you exclude and you violate our rights under New Hampshire Bill of Rights Article 8 for full transparency. I'd like to see first of all what goes on behind closed doors to increase our, the money spent on these attorneys like him sitting here. What is he getting paid today to sit here. Wouldn't you like to know. [Moderator striking gavel] Thank you.

Moderator: Please be in order. Yes, sir. On Article 3.

Rob Everett, 220 Derry Road: As a member of a collective bargaining agreement in the private sector, prior to that in the public sector, I support all three of these CBA's as well. What the attorney forgot to mention is that The National Labor Relations Act also specifies a lot of what has to be done when you do it. I can tell you Ive negotiated contracts. The last round we did in the private sector, we still don't even get to see them until our bargaining team and in my case managers for the company come to an agreement. When it's presented to us. When I worked for the state and the city. It was the same thing. The negotiating team would come up with it. We aren't even public as members until it's time to vote. Then we go Yea or Nay. And then it goes to them for Yea or Nay. And then it goes to all of us for Yea or Nay.

Moderator: Thank you. Any further discussion on Warrant Article #3. Yes, sir.

Slottje: I have a question for whomever on either Board who feels qualified to answer. Are communications, between the Board and whomever they may be collectively bargaining with,

subject to 91A requests for access to the public. And the second part of the question would be if those are subject to requests 91A, could a citizen be making that request use information in voting for their school board representative. Thank you.

Moderator: 91A is the Right-to-Know Law. Is that our bargaining subject to that.

Phillips: Under the Right-to-Know Law RSA 91A, collective bargaining is excluded from coverage under the Right-to-Know Law. So, when the board meets in negotiations, when a board meets on its own to discuss strategy for bargaining, that is not subject to the Right-to-Know Law.

Moderator: Thank you. Ant further discussion on Warrant Article #3, collective bargaining agreement with AFSCME. Seeing none. **I'll close the discussion on Warrant Article #3 and it moves to the ballot.**

Moderator; (reading Warrant Article #4 - slide on screen)

WARRANT ARTICLE #4
Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Hudson School Board and the Teamsters
Shall the Hudson School District vote to approve the cost items in the collective bargaining agreement between the Teamsters Local No.633 of NH for the Hudson School District Custodians, Electricians, Plumbers, HVAC Technicians, Groundskeepers and Maintenance Staff and the Hudson School Board which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current starting levels over the amount paid in the prior fiscal year:

2026-2027 $56,405
2027-2028 $102,272
2028-2029 $118,749

and to further raise and appropriate $56,405 for the upcoming fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increases in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement that would be paid at current staffing levels?
Estimated tax rate impact Year One: $0.01
Estimated tax rate impact Year Two: $0.02 Recommended by the Hudson School Board 5-0
Estimated tax rate impact Year Three: $0.02 Not Recommended by the Budget Committee 8-2

Moderator; (continuing) **I'll recognize Mr. Meyer of the School Board to present Warrant Article #4**.

Stephen Meyer, School Board Member: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. (Slide on screen) This is a thre-year contract that was negotiated in good faith for a total cost of $277,426. The employees represented in this contract include Custodians, Maintenance Staff, Certified Electricians, HVAC Technicians, Certified Plumbers, and Grounds Staff for a total of 40employees in the district. These employees maintain our schools, ensuring they are safe, clean, and working properly and efficiently on a daily basis. They also maintain our fields and school grounds during winter months, as well as work on preventative maintenance projects. The wage increases are 4% in Year One, 4.5% in Year Two, and 5% in Year Three. And then some other key contract changes include an increase in the Sick Buyback Program from 102 to 120 days. An update to the bereavement language which aligns with the district's other contracts. It makes available a high deductible insurance option as you've heard in discussion of the other contracts. And then it has an update to vacation and sick time to be available at the beginning of each contract year rather than accrue throughout the year. And as noted by the Moderator, this was unanimously recommended by the School Board.

Moderator: Thank you. **We will now open Warrant Article #4 Collective Bargaining with the Teamsters to questions and comments**. Anyone wish to discuss Warrant Article #4. Seeing none. **We'll close discussion on Warrant Article #4 and it moves to the ballot**.

Moderator: (reading Warrant Article #5 - slide on screen)

WARRANT ARTICLE #5 Window Replacement at Hudson Memorial School
Shall the Hudson School District vote to appropriate a sum of $135,000 to replace fifty-two windows at Hudson Memorial School? This is phase eight of eleven phases of the Hudson Memorial School Window Replacement Plan. This is a special warrant article.
Estimated tax rate impact: $0.03
Recommended by the Hudson School Board 5-0
Not Recommended by the Budget Committee 9-1

Moderator: (continuing) **I'll recognize School Board Member Kilgour to present Warrant Article #5.**

Daniel Kilgour, School Board Member: (slide on screen) Thank you, Mr. Moderator. This Warrant Article asks voters to approve funding in an amount not to exceed $135,000 to replace 52 windows at Hudson Memorial School. This project represents phase eight of eleven in the district's long-term window replacement plan for Hudson Memorial School. Now, windows naturally wear out over time and lose their effectiveness due to age and exposure to weather, as I'm sure many of you homeowners and renters know. When windows become inefficient, they allow heat to escape during the winter months and can allow moisture and rain to enter the building. This leads to higher energy costs and the need for ongoing repairs. As part of the district's Capital Improvement Plan, windows at Hudson Memorial School have been replaced in phases to spread costs over multiple years and to address the most critical areas first. This phase would replace 52 windows that have been most impacted by weather exposure and are in need of replacement due to deterioration. Replacing these windows will help improve energy efficiency, reduce heat loss, and protect the building from water intrusion while also improving the comfort for students and staff respectfully. This project is in the eighth of eleven plan phase for window replacement at Hudson Memorial School and the estimated tax impact for this Article is 3-cents. Thank you,

Moderator: Thank you. **Now we will open Warrant Article #5 to questions and comments or amendments**. Yes, sir.

S. Beals: Thank you. I'd like to make an amendment to this Warrant with statement added to the second before, the last sentence, the sentence read Currently before This is a special warrant article, This is phase eight of eleven of the Hudson Memorial School Window Replacement plan. The amendment would read, following that statement, *This sum is to come from the June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1 with no amount to be raised by additional taxation.* If it's seconded, I would be happy to speak to it.

Moderator: Miss Rice will second. Hold on. Did you get that back there [HCTV staff: I believe so.] On the Amendment to add the wording, he'll put it up there, same wording as Article 6, right. *This sum is to come from the June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1 with no amount to come from additional taxation.*

Point of Order (shouting out by audience member): Can you change something besides the amount.

AMENDMENT#1
MOTION: TO ADD THE WORDINGS: THIS SUM TO COME FROM THE JUNE 30 FUND BALANCE AVAILABLE FOR TRANSFER ON JULY 1 WITH NO AMOUNT TO COME FROM ADDITIONAL TAXATION.
MADE BY STEVE BEALS; SECONDED BY KIM RICE.

Moderator: You can change anything. Yes, this one's open. The contracts you couldn't, but this one is. Mr. Beals, seconded by Miss Rice. To add the wording similar to Article 6, and I think they [HCTV}]put it up there. Speak to your Amendment. On the Amendment now.

S.Beals: (slide on screen) Thank you. I believe this window replacement is necessary. For any of us who own a home, or work in a business, school. When we've had seven successful years and we're going to take a year's hiatus, all it's going to do is increase the cost the following year because now we're going to be eventually into year 13 or 12, excuse me. And more importantly than that is my concern when we don't do preventative maintenance in an established plan, something goes wrong with one of those windows with either bug infestation, water leakage, we have a bigger issue to deal with. Personally, I'm not sure why this wasn't originally done with fund balance. I implore The Budget Committee, your vote as I said earlier matters. I am confident if this Amendment passes that those members of the Budget Committee, also prudent spenders of Hudson through their review will understand a window replacement improvement program of 11 years should not be on hiatus for a year. Thank you very much.

Moderator: Thank you. We are on the Amendment to add the wording that it come from the June 30 fund balance. Does anyone wish to discuss the Amendment. Yes, ma'am, Miss Huard.

Huard: This is going to be a seventh warrant article attached to the fund balance for fiscal 2026. In addition to that it really isn't a continuing project. This is should stand alone. It shouldn't be a next phase of project. This represents the front of the school and in my humble opinion believe that it's cosmetic at this point. I do recall when the first, one of the first phases came up and if I'm mistaken I'd have to go back to the Minutes or the video that when the Facilities Director was asked why is this being done. I think it was either HMS or maybe SAU windows. I could be wrong and we had a real flimsy excuse. Something about them smelling funny. So, I don't know what the right way to get this pasted or whether it's even needed at this point. This was actually along with the previous phases buried inside the operating budget. So at last, least happy to see it transparent, as we the taxpayers have a right to full transparency so that you're not relied on going to that cumbersome operating budget that we couldn't read this year anyway. So, I'm happy to see that. I do not support it being attached to to fund balance though. Thank you.

Moderator: Further discussion on the Amendment. Yes, sir.

Everett: I agree with the first speaker, whole-heartedly with all his reasons. The last speaker, I'm not sure this is the front of the building because the front of the building looks like it has all new windows. So, it that correct. [addressing John Pratte, Director of Facilities]. Okay, so it's not the front of the building. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you, Mr. Walsh. To speak on the Amendment.

Walsh: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. I rise in opposition to the Amendment. What I think the budget committee has looked at is really the use of the unexpected find balance at the end of the year. I feel if you look at all of these Articles they are talking about these kind of actions the budget committee did not recommend one. So I assume if this were to pass today as the final wording of the Article, I would assume that the budget committee would nor recommend as well. I do, I will be offering an amendment to this Article, but I'd like to have this one debated first, and I'll come back to the mic.

Moderator: Thank you. On the Amendment to add the words, *the sum is to come from the June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1 with no amount to be raised by additional taxation.* Any further discussion on that, the Amendment.

Huard: Since our wonderful attorney is here, I wonder if he might explain to us the legality of taking money of overstating operating budget for more than one year knowingly and using it for capital projects. Thank you.

Moderator: Question of the voter -

Huard (interrupting): What is the legality of overstating your operating budget in conflict of 32 for more than one year and then using it, using operating, what was meant for operating expenditures for capital improvements. Thank you.

Moderator: Does there any yield. Do you wish to yield to that. No, no one in the board wishes to yield. Nope. Further discussion. Mr. Jasper [Budget Committee Member].Mr. Jasper will respond.

Jasper: Obviously I'm not a lawyer and, but sometimes I play one in various places. Ther's nothing illegal about it. But I have to say that quite frankly, you know with all my differences with the school boards, boards of selectmen over the time period of time, I don't believe they have ever purposely overstated the budget. The budget is budgeted on what would happen if every position is filled, every employee's there. That's never going to happen. But it's also very difficult without specifically elimination positions or things to get it down to nothing. In the state of New Hampshire we do things a little differently on our budgets. We have to return what is called the lapse, generally 3-5% because you can never spend the budget down to zero. And so, I think it's unfair to assume that anybody is overestimating. That's just how things happen. And that's what fund balances can be used for. And this is the best way to do it versus actually just at the end of the year coming up with projects that the voter has never heard of. That I have an issue with. But what's been happening with the use of the fund balances is perfectly appropriate.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on the Amendment to Warrant Article 5. Mr. Landry.

Landry: Yes, I have a question for The Budget Committee if they care to yield, since this was not recommended by the budget committee. Historically, I think, budget committees have been very supportive of ongoing maintenance and trying to maintain our plant and keep our buildings in good shape and stuff like that. So since this was recommended by such a large majority there must be some reason, something you saw here that you didn't like about the project. And it seems like on its face that it's an ongoing project we've been trying to keep this

building in good shape and it should move forward. I'd just be interested in, if you care to yield, as to why you were opposed to this particular Amendment.

Moderator: Question to The Budget Committee. Mr. Jasper to yield.

Jasper: I'll give you pretty much the same answer that I gave before. We were still looking at a budget of .79 cents increase and we received no compelling information that there was going to be any harm to the building if we waited another year to see what the budget was going to be like. There was yes, this is a plan moving forward but sometimes plans due to monetary considerations have to be interrupted. Had we received information about, you know, windows falling apart, coming out, this just seemed to be just well we'd like to do this probably does make sense, but we felt perhaps not this year.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on the Amendment. If you are - Mrs. Huard.

Huard: Yes. And focusing on attaching it to the fund balance. So we pay for the attorney, but the taxpayer can't use them. I do believe if you consider the RSA, you have to consider this as being inappropriate. Whether it be ethically or illegally. Thank you.

Moderator: Further discussion On the Amendment to Warrant Article 5. Are you ready for the Amendment. There's a motion by Miss Rice to move the Question. Is there a second. Second by Mr. Campbell.

MOTION: TO MOVE THE QUESTION
MADE BY KIM RICE; SECONDED BY MICHAEL CAMPBELL

Moderator: (continuing) The question's been called. To move the question, we need to cut debate on the Amendment and then vote on the Amendment, If you are in favor of cutting off debate to the Amendment to arrant Article %, please raise your voter cards. Thank you. Those opposed to cutting off debate. **The Ayes have it. The Amendment to Warrant Article 1 or I mean Amendment to Warrant Article 5 is to add the words after eight of the eleven phases of the Hudson memorial Window Replacement plan. Insert in there the sentence *The sum to come from the June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1 with no* amount to be raised by additional *taxation.***

Calling out from audience: Can I ask a question.
Moderator: No, we are in a voting mode at this point. We've cut off debate, unless it's procedural.

Moderator: (continuing) Those in favor of the Amendment, please raise your voter cards. Those opposed, please raise your cards. **The Ayes have it. The Amendment passes. Warrant Article 5 is now Amended to add that sentence in to the-**

Rice: Mr. Moderator, they have to fix the tax impact rate.
Moderator: That will all have to be done. They'll have to calculate that out, but it'll probably be zero.
Rice: Thank you.
Moderator: It should be mostly zero.

Moderator: (continuing) We are now on Article 5 as amended. Mr. Walsh.

Walsh: Mr. Moderator. I'd like to make an amendment. I beg your indulgence. I would like to include the following statement, after the words 52 windows at Hudson Memorial School, which *said funds to be drawn from the school renovation capital reserve fund established for this* purpose.

Rice: I'll second that.
Moderator: And where did you want to insert the words.
Walsh: After the 52 windows, to replace the 52 windows.
Moderator: And the amount to, you want the amount to come from the -
Walsh: School renovation capital reserve fund established for this purpose.
Moderator: The amount to come from the school renovation capital reserve fund
Walsh: Established for this purpose.
Moderator: Established for this purpose. Okay, do we have that, back there [HCTV]. No, we do not. You want to give them that and they can put it up. Go ahead. Is that the extend of you - Let's just wait till they get that in there. (Pause)

Moderator: The Amendment is besides inserting that is to also strike out the Amendment that was just made before, about taking it from surplus, from the fund balance. So the actual Amendment that he's given them [HCTV] is to add the words *that the amounts are to come from the school capital reserve fund established for that purpose*, and to strike out *the sum is to come from the June 30 fund balance* sentence that was added in the last Amendment.

Calling out from audience: Can someone read out the entire Amendment.
Moderator: Yes, we're going to have them [HCTV] put it up on the screen.

AMENDMENT #2
MOTION: TO HAVE SAID FUNDS COME FROM THE SCHOOL CAPITAL RESERVE FUND ESTABLISHED FOR THIS PURPOSE, AND TO STRIKE OUT LAST AMENDMENT'S WORDING.
MADE BY KEVIN WALSH; SECONDED BY KIM RICE

Moderator: (continuing with slide of Amendment #2 of Warrant Article #5 up on screen) So what this will do, otherwise we will have two conflicting sentences. It would strike out what we just passed a little while ago, and would insert that it would come from the capital reserved fund established for that purpose. It's a summation. Does everybody see that. You know what we're doing. All right, Mr. Walsh, to speak to your Amendment.

Walsh: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. I also don't think you need to have it stated that this is a special warrant article because if we are talking about the capital reserve, it by default it's a special warrant. Correct.

Moderator: I don't know if it has to be a special warrant article if it's from the capital reserve fund. We'll get that from our attorney. But in the meanwhile, why don't you speak to your Amendment.

E,Beals, School Board Member: (sharing with Moderator) It creates a conflict with the capital reserve.

Moderator: Oh, let him go ahead. Mr. Walsh.

Walsh: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. I apologize if this is confusing. But when we look at from the budget committee's point of view. Last time we'e seen the projected fund balance was, I think, November, and I think it was projected at 1.1-million. So what some of the budget committee members are very passionate about looking at the tax rate. Mr. Jasper spoke very eloquently about that. There are other members who like to get down in the weeds and look at every line item and would fight to the death to move money around. This school capital reserve fund was established in1999. I happen to be on the school board at that point in time and there were no capital reserve funds in existence for the school district. So, this is what I would call kitchen table budgeting. My budget is your best estimate for for what you're going to be expending in the following year. Some of those things don't come to fruition so you have a little, quote unquote, that you authorize to spend, but you can't or you don't That goes back to the taxpayers. So, the concept was, okay, let's take a little of that money and put it aside in the capital reserve. Let our Trustees of the Trust Funds put that money to work for us to kind of keep in pace with inflation and so on and so forth. And that's the concept of what we're trying to do. I've look at the capital reserve fund report as of the end of December and it's an estimated amount of $750,253.89. I think it's prudent for us, again to fight over a couple of pennies on the tax rate and utilize some of the capital reserve funds that we're set aside for projects in the school district and use a couple of these pennies towards that and save a couple pennies on your tax rate. Thank you.

Moderator: Technical question we're going to have to ask. Can we add an Amendment to remove from a capital reserve fund, at the Deliberative Session if it's not warned to the public.

Attorney Phillips: Legal opinion is no.

Moderator: No, Okay. **So I'm going to rule that the Amendment made by Mr. Walsh is out of order. It's not, the public was never involved, informed that we were going to take money from the capital reserve fund. So, this this body cannot add that as an amendment to the warrant article. So, I will move it out of order, for legal purposes.**

Moderator: (responding to Budget Committee Member Kim Rice's non-audible inquiry) Because we did not warn the public we were going to take money from a capital reserve fund. That's the way the law reads.

Rise: RSA, please.

Moderator: Do you have an RSA on that, Mr. Phillips.

Phillips: No, I don't …(inaudible)

Moderator: That's why I asked because I thought I read something, that was the way, you can't do something at the deliberative session that the public hasn't been warned of, because the public, all the public, is not here at this time. It's going to be out of order. **So the Amendment made by Mr. Walsh is out of order. So we are on Warrant Article #5 as amended with the words to come from the fund balance.** We're on that now. Anyone wish to speak to that. Yes, sir.

Carl Haas, 2 Glen View Drive: I am in support of the Article as amended. As a forward-looking comment, while I understand the rational about spreading this project out over a number of years, nothing is getting cheaper and I would encourage the boards to consider moving the

remainder of the project and completing it next year, to avoid future cost increases, and the following impact on the tax rate.

Moderator: Thank you. Any further discussion on Warrant Article 5 as amended.

Tranfagila: Move the question.

Rice: Second.

MOTION: TO MOVE THE QUESTION
MADE BY MIKE TRANFAGLIA; SECONDED BY KIM RICE

Moderator: We have a motion to move the question, by Mr. Tranfagila. Seconded by Mrs. Rice. To cut off debate on Warrant Article 5. If you are in favor of cutting off debate for Warrant Article 5, please raise your cards. Thank you. Those opposed. **The Ayes have it. The Question is moved. We don't need to take a vote on Warrant Article 5. We have closed debate on Warrant Article 5. It will moved to the ballot as amended.**

Howes**: Point of Order,** Mr. Moderator. I move to restrict reconsideration of Articles 2 through 5.

MOTION: TO RESTRICT RECONSIDERATION OF ARTICLES 2 THROUGH 5
MADE BY IAN HOWES; SECONDED BY MIKE TRANFAGLIA

Moderator: Okay. Who seconded that. Mr. Tranfagila. Restricted by Mr. Howes. The question before you is to restrict reconsideration of Warrant Articles 2 through 5. They will not be able to be brought back at this meeting. Those of you who are in favor of restricting Articles 2 through 5, please raise your cards. Thank you. Those opposed. **The Article [Motion] passes. The Article are restricted.**

Moderator: (reading Warrant Article #6 - slide on screen)

WARRANT ARTICLE #6 Fire Alarm Replacement at Alvirne High School
Shall the Hudson School District vote to raise and appropriate a sum of up to $180,000 to replace the fire alarm panel at Alvirne High School? This sum is to come from the the June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July1 with no amount to be raised by additional taxation. This is a special warrant article.

Estimated tax rate impact: $0.00 Recommended by the Hudson School Board 4-1
Recommended by the Budget Committee 8-2

Moderator: (continuing) **And I'll recognize School Board Member Beals to present Warrant Article 6.**

School Board Member Ethan Beals: The existing fire panel at Alvirne High School is outdated and has reached the end of it useable life. Replacement is really necessary to ensure the continued reliability of the school's fire detention notification system. (Slide) Project involves replacing the main fire alarm control panel and a whole bunch of other parts that have names I can't even pronounce, in addition to several connected devices, including pull station, smoke detectors, heat detectors, and dust detectors. These components work together to detect

smoke or heat and notify occupants and emergency responders in the event of a fire. This replacement as part of the district's ongoing preventative maintenance and life safety upgrade. Last year the district completed similar fire panel replacement at the Hudson Memorial School, in Nottingham West Elementary School, as also part of this cycle, The cost of this project would be funded entirely from the district's June 30th. fund balance available for transfer on July 1st. and therefore there's no impact on the tax rate for the Article.

Moderator: Thank you. **I'll now open Article 6, the Fire Panel Alarm System at Alvirne High School to questions, comments, or amendments**. Yes, sir.

S.Beals: Just a comment. Anytime you see the word fire and Alvirne, they kind of go hand in hand. (laughter from audience) Living through three recent fires in my tenure, I'm simply raising the point without trying to be funny. I believe both of these votes should be unanimous. So, one [School] Board member who voted against it, I implore you to vote for it. The two Budget Committee Member, I do want to applaud that when we had the fire earlier this in December, the fire alarm worked perfectly. So, I don't want anyone to view something through the audience today suggesting that Alvirne's not a safe place, but the upgrade is sorely needed because it beeps all day long and we have all sorts of other things. But to the credit of the currently fire alarm system and the staff at Alvirne High School, when you're emptying a building at 8:15 in the morning when it's 20 degrees out, you have a lot of scurrying to do. And I want the community at large here and at home to know we got your kid's best interest and our staff's best interest at heart. Thank you.

Moderator: Further discussion on Warrant Article 6, the fire alarm placement. Yes, ma'am.

Putnam: I feel that Kevin Walsh's proposal was like a half an hour too late. I really wish that I had been. Or we had all been aware of that capital reserve fund because it can be used very effectively to solve problems. I'm concerned that all parties involved regarding the distribution of the end of year capital reserve fund that this be at the top of the list when you're considering where shall the monies be spent. Please, as Mr. Beals has already noted we already had fires. We've already lost a whole Alvirne building. Do not out this further down on the list. There was a commitment from the school board and the budget committee that this Warrant Article be at the top of the decision making as how to use those balances. Capital reserve fund balance. Whatever they're called. That would be greatly appreciated.

S.Beals: **Point of Order**: The order cannot be changed that's listed in the Warrant. You don't get to pick and choose which ones goes first if they're funded by the fund.

Moderator: Yes, DRA will follow the -

Putnam: (interrupting) This is first. No, the window replacement they move to capital reserve fund.

Moderator: Yes, sir.

Everett: Just two quick questions. One is, are we operating with a proprietary system or not. And with all the only that was spent to renovate Alvirne, why wasn't there forethought just do it while they were in there doing all those other mess projects.

Moderator: Question to the board. Mr. Beals.

E. Beals: I'm not a fire protection expert, but a quick answer to it, yes. There is no such thing, unfortunately, as a nonproprietary fire system. The downside to proprietary technologies is When the company decides it's going to outdate that panel, it becomes outdated and you can no longer buy replacement parts for it. Unfortunately, that is the world we are living in today. Specifically, to past renovations, the last significant renovation at the high school included installing full sprinklers in the entire high school which again, believe it or not, for a high school that previously has fire issues, did not have active fire sprinklers.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion, Article 6.

Powers: The words that I heard describing this, to me safety just started screaming at me. So I need to ask, is this a safety issue. If it is, were our strategy here is dependent upon having money left over at the end of the year. I, just guarding against the risk, what if there's no money. We saw that the December month end position, and we've seen a pretty large increase in FY26 expected expenditures. If this is a safety issue, and again I'm speaking out of ignorance here, I don't know the answer. Do we have the authority in FY26 to do it right now. Spend FY26. I don't know. Principal Beals had earlier moved up the priority by making a direct tax on an important Warrant Article. Is there an appetite for doing that here as well, giving that it just looks and smells and sounds like a safety issue. Thank you.

Moderator: Yes, Mr. Beals will yield.

E. Beals: My testimony here today is that it is not an active safety issue today and that is what we heard from previous speakers. That said, we want to replace it before it becomes an active safety issue. And that is the goal of this Warrant Article.

Moderator: Thank you. Yes, sir.

Tranfaglia: Don't go away, Mr. Beals. You, if I understood, two statements ago you said that it is proprietary. That's unfortunate. That's the way it is. And the second things you had mentioned was it is we may say it's outdated, it's outdated. Do we have any guarantee on 10 year, 20 year, kind of, do we have a number of years that before we have to start debating this again.

Moderator: Our Facilities Director is here. Mr. Pratte. He's giving the answer to Mr. Beals.

E .Beals: Yes, I think, again I'm not a fire protection engineer. I am an engineer. I like that we were throwing out all that. We were all at engineers [laughter] so I did want to mention that. Yes. The unfortunate part with fire protection systems and largely the fire panels that there's no such thing as a non-proprietary system anymore. Largely it's a couple of vendors that control the entire market. So, I don't believe there's a guarantee, hey, this is a 10 year warranty on this thing. Typically, they're warranted for somewhere between five and ten years. We can't guarantee that we would not be having this conversation again in 10, 20, 30 years. One of the parts, I will say, the past year, as I have previously mentioned, we replaced panels at Hudson Memorial School and Nottingham West. And I'll specifically highlight the Nottingham West one. That panel specifically failed, and so that was an active safety issue. Part of the response and working actively with Hudson Fire Department, we staffed additional personnel to effectively have ongoing walking through the building on what ai will call "fire-watch" in terms of making sure that there was not active safety issues involved because one of the big duties of these fire panels is that it communicates directly with Hudson Fire Department so that when it does detect something, it triggers an alarm and then we get an immediate response. That panel had failed. That function of that panel had failed and therefore if an emergency, it would have to be done in old school pull out a cell phone and actually call HFD.

Tranfaglia: Okay, I'm trying to understand if this was the case. The Hudson Fire Department was consulted regarding this particular

E.Beals: Absolutely. Any safety issues, especially when it comes to fire, we work with, and are very grateful for our partners at the fire department.

Tranfaglia: It's unfortunate there's no specific warranty time frame, but I'm sure the expertise of the fire department is the best we have. Usually I'm in favor of any kind of building and maintenance and, especially safety issues. I am in favor of this. It's just unfortunate we don't have any particular, this has a 10-year warranty or whatever time frame. But, in general, I am in favor.

E.Beals: When we select, sorry just one final, when we select the final panel and what is actually getting installed, we'll have a full detailed brief to the school board and we can provide that to the public as well on what that warranty is included. Because at this time there hasn't been necessary, hey we're getting rid of this panel and is getting replaced on this date.

Tranfaglia: perfect. Thank you for your time.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion Warrant Article 6.

Everett: I recently installed a non-proprietary system in a museum. They are out there. The disadvantage is that they cost more upfront. That's why I asked. Plus side though, I can bring in any vendor that works on those to save money on the other end, So it's a catch-22, kind of thing and they're going to get you either way. But as for the warranty, our system had basically a one-year warranty. Batteries only last a couple years. The systems can be there forever. One of the buildings I helped with in this town has one that was installed in the 70's. You can still find parts for it. It just harder to find them now because they don't make them anymore, like Mr. Beals had said.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on Warrant Article 6.

Huard: Alvirne most recently had a fire in the beginning of December. The fire department responded quickly and saved the school. While it may be on its last leg, it is working now. So, thank you, Mr. Beals, for confirming there is no immediate safety risk. Hand in hand with putting out a fire and alerting the fire department that there is a fire, I would wholeheartedly recommend that the school district have the staff members that work with fire be fully trained in fire prevention. The fire in December could easily have been prevented. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion Warrant Article 6. Mr. Campbell.

Campbell: Previous, previous, previous speaker, Miss Putnam, mentioned about the ordering of importance. And I'd just to point out that Warrant Article 5 when it came to Deliberative was a tax rate impact. Warrant Article 6 was the first of end of year fund balance. So, we do rate them in order of importance. We can't change them now, but I'd just like the public to know we did rank them in order of importance. And you can see that Warrant Article was at the top of the list of the ones coming from fund balance. So, they would be taken in that order when they are expended. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion. Warrant Article 6. Yes, ma'am.

Seabury: I think that if anyone wasn't a resident of this town in 1974, you really don't understand the collective trauma that the entire community had. And, so we're here with money able to do this. And I understand we can't prioritize it. The money is there. We need to rise in support of this Warrant Article. Make sure it gets passed because fire safety can never be something that's in question at Alvirne High School in this community. Not ever again. The only thing that saved the trauma from being worse on that day in 1974 is that the fire occurred when there were no students or staff in the building. It could have been much, much worse.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on Warrant Article #6. Seeing none. **We will close the discussion of Warrant Article #6 and it moves to the ballot.**

Moderator: (reading Warrant Article #7 -with slide on screen)

WARRANT ARTICLE #7 Science Lab at Hudson Memorial School

Shall the Hudson School District vote to raise and appropriate a sum of up to $125,000 to upgrade one Science Classroom/Lab at Hudson Memorial School? This is phase four of four phases of the Hudson Memorial School Science Lab Renovation plan. This sum is to come from the June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1 with no with no amount to be raised by additional taxation. This is a special warrant article.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: $0.00 Recommended by the Hudson School Board 4-1
Not Recommended by the Budget Committee 6-4

Moderator: (continuing) I'**ll recognize School Board Member Dionne to present Warrant Article #7.**

Dionne: Thank you. Can we go to the next slide. Thank you very much. As mentioned, this is phase four of four of the Hudson School District's long-term science lab renovation plan for Hudson Memorial School. In total, Hudson Memorial School has eight science labs. And from the beginning of this plan, and you've likely heard me present this over the course of the last three years at Deliberative, the District planned to renovate these labs in phases, updating two per year over the course of four years for a variety of reasons. First to ensure we could procure the materials in a timely manner and second, certainly to be fiscally responsible and spread that cost out. So, this again is phase four of four. Two labs were renovated in 2024 after approval in March. Two labs were then renovated in the summer of 2025. Two additional labs were then updated at the approval of last year. And then based on enrollment, one lab in fact was converted into a classroom as part of FY2026. This Warrant Article funds the final phase of that plan and it will complete the science lab renovation. The need for these renovations is driven by the age of the facilities. We began by updating the oldest of the science labs and have been working our way through all eight. The updates are the same as we have been doing over the course of the last four years. Removing outdated gas lines, making the learning spaces ADA compliant, improving and adding additional storage space for the instructors and teachers, increasing the useable learning space, and creating adaptable classrooms that have more flexible tables and spaces for students. Over the course of the last three years, these renovations have already improved student learning in a variety of ways. And, this again is the final phase of that plan. Next slide, please. I just show these pictures to highlight the two most Recent labs that were renovated last summer**.** Both were updated, again, with the same improvements that you heard about that will be completed in the final lab this year. And that design is very similar. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. **Now, we will open Warrant Article #7, the Science Lab Renovation at Hudson Memorial School to questions, comments, amendments.** Does anyone wish to speak on Warrant Article #7. Seeing none. **We will close the discussion on Warrant Article #7 and it moves to the ballot.**

Moderator: (reading Warrant Article #8 - with slide on screen)

WARRANT ARTICLE #8 District Wide Facilities HVAC Van

Shall the Hudson School District vote to raise and appropriate a sum of up to $62,000 for the purchase of one District Wide Facilities HVAC Vehicle? The sum is to come from the June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1 with no amount to be raised by additional taxation. This is a special warrant article.

Estimated tax rate impact: $0.00

Recommended by the Hudson School Board 4-1
Not recommended by the Budget Committee 5-5

Moderator: (continuing) **I'll recognize School Board Member Beals to present Article 8**.

E. Beals: The purpose of this vehicle is to support our HVAC technicians with the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems across all school buildings. The district wrote me a whole bunch of response but quite simply it's this. A couple years ago, we transferred one of our basically ongoing maintenance positions to hire a second full-time HVAC personnel. If you're a homeowner, you know, your HVAC, likely your furnace, you have ongoing maintenance every year. It's not really indicative of all systems I terms of you're not going to have ongoing always maintenance every single year of structure of plumbing, etc. HVAC controls in every building control the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning. And it's really one of our biggest and most expensive systems in our buildings. Accordingly, they require exceedingly large amounts of ongoing preventative maintenance. And for a long time, even with one full-time HVAC personnel, we had to go out of district and look for some HVAC vendors to provide that ongoing maintenance. As I just mentioned, a couple years ago we tried to transfer one of our ongoing general maintenance position into a more HVAC focus to try to reduce the amount of out of district contracts for HVAC preventative maintenance, therefore we hired a second HVAV technician. Really, this vehicle goes to support that secondary position. We were able to outfit them with what was the outdated school grounds truck, which is an F250, but if drove it today, it is outdated. It's not in good shape and it's really not indicative of if you were to hire an HVAC personnel for your house. If they came in just an open bed pickup truck, it's pretty rare that you would see that over a more van style structure. Vans help the personnel carry al the tools that are necessary to do their job and reduce the amount of back and forth trips both to stores to secure their parts, but also between the district to get the tools. So, this vehicle really goes to support that second position.

Moderator: Thank you. **We will now open our Warrant Article #8 the District Wide Facilities HVAC Van to questions, comments, amendments**. Yes, sir.

S.Beals: Thank you. I'm in favor of this Article, with a little more detail. We are grateful for the ongoing aspect of our maintenance staff. Currently the maintenance staff member who is fully trained, hired, and certified is driving a pickup truck that was an extra use vehicle through plowing. Instead of getting rid of the vehicle, we held on to it, gave it to the maintenance person. Having an open pickup truck instead of an HVAC van is not appropriate. Every time we have bad weather we cannot transport anything. So, we're delaying all of the previous stuff that was talked about. My reason for providing that information is in hope, frankly, of a budget

committee member switch your vote. 5-5 is obviously not recommended, 6-4 would be. Within the context of the $62,000 aspect, we have an obligation in my personal view that when we have maintenance staff, electrician has a van, our general maintenance has a van, our first HVAC has a van, this secures all of our tools. Vehicles are secured on the Alvirne High School property with video surveillance every single day. The pickup truck is not meeting the needs of HVAC. It meets the needs of grounds, but not of HVAC. So I would urge Budget Committee Members to please review closely afterwards with the additional information, especially out of fund balance. Thank you.

Moderator: Yes, sir, further discussion on Warrant Article #8. And then, Mr. Wherry. Oh, go ahead, Mr. Wherry.

Wherry: Thank you for the new information.

Moderator: Yes, sir.

Tranfaglia: Just a point of classification, AS a former HVAC professional, it this a van or a box truck with the tool bins and the outside access. Thank you.

E. Beals: Can you go to the next slide. I think we might have had a picture of it and may not have done my duty, Mike [previous speaker], to. Nope. Apparently, even though my notes say go to next slide, apparently we don't. I do believe it's a van. Is that correct, John [Facilities Director]. It's a cargo van. (Slide on screen)

Moderator: Any further discussion on Warrant Article #8. Miss Huard.

Huard: I guess I just question why we can't get a used van, or why we can't get a low interest .loan or a lease on a van, instead of taxing the taxpayers all in one sum in one year. Thank you.

Moderator: Question of the Board, concerning lease or used.

E. Beals: In the same way that all when all of us buy vehicles, some people target new vehicles, some target, older, leases or used vehicles. I think hIstorically the district has done well with a point of trying to buy new vehicles and try to use our, fortunately, the shops we have at the CTE to extend the life of those far beyond what you or I see as a typical vehicle owner. I think we are also in some purchasing. We have some purchasing groups that help us try to get, as a municipal use, that try to help us get better rates on some of these vehicles then if I was to go out as an independent citizen and purchase a van. I think those are the facts on this.

Moderator: Thank you. Any further discussion on Warrant Article 8. Seeing none. **We will close the discussion on Warrant Article 8 and it moves to the ballot.** You need to take a little break or do you want to just go on. Shall we go on. Okay.

Moderator: (reading Warrant Article #9 - with slide on screen)

Warrant article #9 Increasing Funds in the Capital Reserve School Renovation Fund
Shall the School District vote to raise and appropriate a sum of up to $50,000 to be added to the Capital Reserve School Renovation Fund established in September 1999? This sum is to come from the June 30 fund balance for transfer on July 1 with no amount to be raised by additional taxation.

Estimated tax rate impact: $0.00 Recommended by the School Board 4-1
Not Recommended by the Budget Committee 6-4

Moderator: (continuing) **And, I'll recognize Mr. Meyer of the School Board to present Article 9**.

Meyer: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. We've already discussed this fund a bit today. But just as a reminder the Capital Reserve Fund was originally approved by the voters in March of 1999, formerly established in September of 1999. It is managed by the School Board as agents. Its purpose is to support capital improvement and renovation projects across the school district. These projects help to maintain and extend the useful life of the school buildings and address major repairs and renovation needs over time. The district's goal in adding funds to the capital reserve fund is long-term financial planning and risk management by planning for future building projects in a cost-effective manner, and reducing the need for sudden large appropriations or emergency funding requests when major repairs are needed. And be able to address these needs in a timely manner. This Article proposes to add to the Capital Reserve Fund using the district's June 30th. fund balance available for transfer on July 1st. and there's no impact on the tax rate for this Article. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. **We will now open Article 9 Increasing Funds to the Capital Reserve School Renovation Fund, for comments, questions, amendments.** Yes, sir.

Slottje: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. Was this Warrant Article noticed to the public.

Moderator: Yes, it was.

Slottje: That we would be adjusting the sum of the Capital Reserve Fund.

Moderator: That we would be adding to the Capital Reserve Fund.

Slottje: I see. In that case I would like to propose we update and change the rules of this session to overrule your previous determination that the adjustment to the Capital Reserve Fund was not noticed. It was not noticed in my opinion and can we read, look at adopting the Amendment that Mr. Walsh -

Moderator: No, we can't add capital according, capital reserves rules are all different. No, we can't come take an article and say oh we want to make it capital reserve, without notifying the public. This one did notify the public.

Slottje: Okay. I tried.

Moderator: This one did notify the public that it's coming from the Capital Reserve Fund and the other one, they wanted to add that in and that's not, that's not under capital reserve stuff can't be done.

Huard: Right. Thank you, previous speaker because that was my point too. I thought the reason that the public didn't know. But what you're saying is the public has to what.

Moderator: It has to be in the Warrant.

Huard: Hit you over the head. It has to do what. (walking away from mic) Thank you.

Moderator: It has to be, no, it has to be in the warrant that is published and posted. That it's lots of different things you can and can't do with warrant articles, but you can't put in something without notifying the public. You can't change that truck to buying a new air conditioning system. That it just doesn't let you do that. But capital reserves are very specific. If it's not warned, you can't do anything with them. Otherwise, The Trustees of the Trust Fund will deny when they go to pay for it. They'll say No, you didn't notice the public. You can't do it. So, even if we past that, they would have turned it down. Yes, sir.

Wilkins: WE just had an example. It looked to me like it should have come out of there although the way it was worded, it couldn't. What would we use this fund for. If not for replacing windows, for instance.

Moderator: The Board. Mr. Beals will yield.

E. Beals: I believe the last time this fund was utilized was to construct, help, I believe to offset and it may have fully funded. So, forgive me for not having. But to construct the new elevator at Alvirne High School was the last time that this fund was utilized.

Wilkins: Would the window replacement be an appropriate use in the future. Thank you.

Moderator: If it had been submitted as coming from capital reserve fund. Yes, that would have been appropriate. Anyone else to speak on Warrant Article #9.

Huard: So just for a point of clarification, again, who are the agents to expend from this capital reserve fund and what are your current plans for building it up if you're attaching to the fund balance right now. Do you have specific plans that you would like to take out of this fund balance or this capital reserve fund. Thank you.

Moderator: Who are the agents to expend. I don't believe it's The School Board.

E. Beals: No, it is The School Board. I don't want to speak for the board, but the school board does not have current plans to expend from this fund. I think it's all up to every individual board member. I have my thoughts. I'm sure everybody else has different thoughts, but at this time there is not a direct plan to say Hey, in two years we're going to expend from this fund for X,Y, or Z project.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion. Yes.

Putnam: My understanding from the BoS side of the town, capital reserve fund in this case, it says School Renovation Fund. The Board, The School Board, is in control of that fund. And I can see that from Mr. Walsh's inout regarding the balance that was in the fund at the end of December. It did not have sufficient funds to, for instance, fulfill some of the needs and pay for some of the Warrant Articles that the residents are concerned about. So I can see that by adding $50,000, it will then give The School Board a chance in the future, should a fire panel, for instance, fail way before it gets replaced. That the funds are there to take care of that expense.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion, Warrant Article #9. Anyone else wish to discuss. Seeing none**. We'll close the discussion on Warrant Article #9 and it goes to the ballot.**

Moderator: (reading Warrant Article #10 - slide on screen)

WARRANT ARTICLE #10 Increasing Funds in the Alvirne Farm Capital Reserve Fund

Shall the Hudson School District vote to raise and appropriate a sum of up to $100,000 to be added to the Alvirne Farm Capital Reserve Fund approved by voters in March 2024 and established in August of 2024? The sum is to come from the June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1 with no amount to be raised by additional taxation.

Estimated tax rate impact: $0.00

Recommended by the Hudson School Board 4-1
Not recommended by the Budget Committee 8-2

Moderator: (continuing) **I'll recognize Mr. Campbell to present Article 10.**

Campbell: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. Thanks again, everyone. Home stretch. This fund was approved by voters of March 2024 and formerly established of August of 2024. The purpose of this capital reserve find is to support capital improvement projects for the Alvirne Farm, including the maintenance and long-term care of farm buildings and grounds. This fund was created following a recommendation from The Alvirne Trustees to The School Board. Their goals to establish a reserve fund of ongoing and future needs for the farm. By adding to this reserve now, the district is planning ahead for major repairs and improvements, helping to preserve the farm as an educational resource, while reducing the need for emergency funding or a one-time appropriations in the future. The past two years, $150,000 has been added, so we reduced it a little bit, but we're still asking. This proposed fund transfer would be funded entirely from the district's June 30th. fund balance available for transfer July 1st. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. **I'll open Article 10, the Increasing Funds to the Alvirne Farm Capital Reserve Fund to questions, comments, and amendments.** Anyone wish to address. Seeing none, oh. Mr. Howes.

C. Howes: Question for The Board. The previous Article was for $50,000 for general purpose capital reserve. This one is 100,000, I logically would expect those numbers to be reversed since the general capital reserve fund would apply to more areas or needs of the school district. So what is the logic of these amounts.

Moderator: Question of The Board. Mr. Campbell will yield.

Campbell: This fund is in coordination with Alvirne Trustees. They reach out. They donate a lot more money to the Alvirne fund. We're just looking fo the district to help them out. The fund is new, It's been two years. We've already expended from it. We're just trying to keep pace with it so we don't have to do a large improvement later on.

Moderator: Further discussion. Mrs. Huard.

Huard: All of the CTE programs, including the farm or some of them have revenue come in and the farm definitely has revenue come in. So, what is the move towards aggressively building up this capital reserve fund. I know I've seen some aggressive buildout of the farm. If you can refer Us to where we can find those plans. So, in closing, my question is why are we moving from using, not capital reserve fund, the revolving fund that their revenue builds up in, why are we now needing to go to a capital reserve fund instead. Thank you.

Moderator: Question of The Board. Oh, Mr. Beals will yield.

S. Beals: That Mr. Beals or this Mr. Beals.

Moderator: The senior Mr. Beals. [laughter]

S. Beals: You're not kidding, the senior. [laughter] Thank you for the questions, first of all. So, the Alvirne Farm and working through the Alvirne Trustees created a Master Plan to try to improve facilities on the farm property. To date, $100,000 of the capital of the Farm Capital Improvement Plan has been expended. Those were expended with $46,500 to the new mechanical garage. All you have to do is drive down the street and you'll see that at the bottom of the farm, And, then farmhouse improvement of, I believe, 53,5_ _. I may have those two dollar figures reversed, but I went to the Trustee of The Trust Fund. They authorized the expenditures, We have all the bills, etc. In addition to that, for several years now, the Alvirne Trustees have been trying to live that Master Plan. Trying to create different improvements for the welfare eof animals, for the safety of farm employees in conjunction with the school district. Currently, as the new mechanical garage has gone online, we have to demo the old mechanical garage. Likewise, the last of the new opportunities for us is to build a new heifer barn and that will probably go in front of The Alvirne Trustees this year. Cannot speak whether they will fund it or not. But the last remaining property that is substandard, meaning it's not ADA compliant. It's harder to manage the day-to-day operations from the farm manager. You can't drive a tractor in there. That's predominately but it's more than that. All you have to do is take a walk down the back of the farm and you're going to know which building I'm talking about. The Alvirne red, historic barn, the milk parlor, really good shape. The chalet out front redone. The farmhouse redone. The mechanical garage redone. Alvirne Trustees supported a hay barn renovation, which you're going to see started in the month of March. So, that project as already started with inside work. The were trying to wait till the December, January, February to start that March 1st. So, the reason in my view from The Trustees' perspective and I sit with the Alvirne Trustees not as a member, but as a liaison as the principal of the high school and we continually thank them for their generosity. The heifer barn is the next and it's a large entity. The initial costs associated with the Heifer Barn are over $350,000. The mechanical barn that we just put in was $325,000. And to the previous speaker's comments about farm revolving account, we have used a collaborative approach for the mechanical garage. 250,00 was expended by the Trustees. 50, I'm trying to do my math in my head, forgive me. Okay. 535, I is the right number. I believe those numbers reversed initially. Was from the Farm Capital Improvement Plan. And 20,000 was from the revolving fund of the farm. So we always want to work in conjunction, to the previous comment. Farm Revolving does make money. They make money on the sale of hay. They make money on the sale of milk. Those monies go into an account managed by the school district. We're expending those funds, in addition to. We will never fund a heifer barn. We will never fund a mechanical garage through the revolving fund. There's simply not enough revenue in it. I hope that answers previous questions and for anybody else who may be looking for information.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on Warrant Article 10. Yes, Mrs. Huard.

Huard: I appreciate that explanation. So, it only leaves me with more questions. We hear about this Alvirne Trustee Fund. Where can we find the Trust documents for that so we can see what this trust fund is actually supposed to be funding. Thank you.

Moderator: Anybody know. Oh, Miss Langlais.

Langlais: Treasurer of the Alvirne Trustees. There not. It's a private Trust. So, we have no need to share or for anybody to look at it where we decide how we want to disburse the funds on our own. We talk with the school district if it has to do something with Alvirne High School with

Mr. Beals. But other than that, we are not required to do that. We are a private group. This has nothing to do with the Town of Hudson.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on Warrant Article 10.

Huard: With all do respect, are you a non-profit organization. And if you're a non-profit -

Moderator: (interrupting) You can ask those questions at other times. Article 10. Anybody further discussion. Seeing none. **We'll close the discussion on Article 10 and it moves to the ballot.**

Everett: (calling out) I move to restrict reconsideration of whatever the last one up through - [laughter from audience]

Moderator: Mr. Everett moves to restrict reconsideration of Warrant Articles 5 through 10.

Point of Order: (calling out from audience) Mr. Moderator, we've already restricted reconsideration of Article 5.

MOTION; TO RESTRICT RECONSIDERATION OF WARRANT ARTICLES 6-10 MADE BY BOB EVERETT; SECONDED BY CHARLES CHAPMAN

Moderator: Okay, so 6 through 10. Thank you. 6t through 10, Mr. Everett. And who seconded that. Mr. Chapman. This would restrict our discussion on Articles 6 through 10 and prevent them from being discussed again in this meeting. All in favor of restricting Articles 6 through 10. [voters cards used to vote] Thank you. Those opposed. **The Ayes have it. Articles 6 through 10 are restricted.**

Moderator: (reading Warrant Article #11 - slide on screen)

WARRANT ARTICLE #11 Employee Benefits Capital Reserve Fund

Shall the Hudson School District establish a Capital Reserve Fund under provisions of RSA 35:1-c called the 'Employee Benefits Capital Reserve Fund' for the purpose of funding the cost of negotiated employee benefits including but not limited to: health insurance reimbursements, assessments, changes in coverage, or policies chosen by employees, and such other benefits that are from time to time negotiated or become contractual obligations of the District, and further to raise and appropriate $1.00 to be added to the fund, said sum to come from the June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1, and to name the School Board as agents to expend this fund?

Estimated tax rate impact: $0.00

Recommended by the Hudson School Board 4-1
Not Recommended by the Budget Committee 8-2

Moderator: (continuing) **I'll recognize Member Beals to present Article 11.**

E. Beals: This Warrant Article asks voters to establish a new capital reserve fund called the Employee Benefits Capital Reserve Fund under the provision RSA 35:1-c. Purpose of this fund is to help the district manage the cost of negotiating employee benefits including items such as health insurance reimbursements, assessments, changes in coverage and other benefit related obligations that are part of employee contracts. The intent of this reserve fund is to provide a financial tool to help offset unanticipated increases in employee benefit costs, particularly

health insurance premiums. Health insurance premiums can increase year tp year and can place a sudden pressure on the operating budget. By establishing this reserve fund, the district can plan ahead and set aside resources over time to help manage future increases rather than having a full impact fall on the operating budget and taxpayers in a single year. This reserve fund, much like a savings account for employee benefits costs, it allows to better stabilize budgeting and reduce the risk of sharp budget increases due to unexpected insurance changes. That's what the district had wrote for me. A quick commentary. Of course we've heard a number of times about the significant cost increases in health insurance, and, I'll call, the one-time bill we received from School Care this past year. Both of those as you're budgeting, both are incredibly difficult to swallow in any individual year. As you heard from previous board members, we are committed over the course of this next year, including actively as we are right now, in exploring all options, including exploring different health risk pools, looking into direct insurance from various insurance providers. This would be one additional tools that we could put in the toolbox when it comes to trying to look at all possible avenues to. School Care may be the correct way to go in the future. And they may also not be. And, but what we know is that this, what's happened in the past years is really a tough pill to swallow in one year. And so, we're trying to hopefully better budget for that.

Moderator: Thank you. For to discuss. **Open Warrant Article #11 to questions, comments, or amendments.**

Huard: So, a couple of comments or amendments. I'm a little confused. I thought we were moving away from School Care and now you're referring to the possibility of using this fund for like School Care. Who are the agents to expend this fund. Maybe I spaced out when you said that.

Moderator: (interjecting The School Board. It's on the Warrant.

Huard: Okay. And I guess that was my only commenting question. Thank you.

Moderator: Thank you, Yes, sir.

Powers: In the last School Board package there was a discussion about the capital reserve accounts. And Im just curious, we capital reserve item GI 1022 school health insurance which I guess was funded in 2004. Essentially no balance. Just curious how this would be different from that.

Moderator: We'll get you that answer. Come back.

E, Beals: Sorry, if you don't mind. The account you just referenced that is specific to self-insurance. So that my understanding is that capital reserve would only be utilized and funded and used if we to explore the one possibility of self-insurance.

Powers: (speaking from his seat) Limitations on what we could spend it on. It would not cover this.

Moderator: Additional question.

Powers: (moving back to mic) Again just to clarify. That fund allows you to do this. But the scope of this is much bigger and you need, the authority from the community, to establish that. Do I understand that right.

E.Beal: Yes, correct. I think in our discussions as a school board, we have tried to say hey we want to set up, we know we don't have the answer for you today and we aren't going to have an answer in the next couple of months on what is the future of health insurance and the future of benefits. But before we get to that answer, we need to be sure we are setting ourselves up for success in terms of keeping the most amount of tools in the toolbox available. One of the tools is what you had mentioned. If we explored self insurance, we would utilize that account. We had there a period of time when we were having the conversation to change out that specific one and grow it. The answer was really no. And, that's why we come forth with this one tonight to be able to keep a tool for a few other potential options.

Moderator: Mr. Wherry.

Wherry: So, thank you, Mr. Moderator. My question is regarding the RSA designation which is non-capital reserve funds authorized and it talks about, I'll just read it, it's just one paragraph. Any town, school district, county, or village district may establish a reserve fund for the maintenance and operation of a specific public facility or type of facility, a specific item or type of equipment or any other distinctly stated specific purpose that is not foreign to its institution or incompatible with the objects of its organization. Such funds shall be subject to the provisions and limitations of this chapter as are applicable to capital reserve funds. - and it talks about the legal validity of what it's called. I'm just wondering if we have the right RSA because this seems it's more associated with equipment and facilities and that sort of thing. But -

Moderator: Question on the RSA reference. Is this the correct one. Attorney Phillips.

Phillips: Mr. Moderator. This is the correct statutory reference. It's a bit, it's one of my colleagues actually assisted me in drafting the language for this article, but the capital reserve fund statute is intended most recently to be applied in a broad sense. It's not as technical as the concern is has been raised. So, thank you.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion on Warrant Article 11. Yes, sir.

Everett: This is one I can't support this one. I applaud you guys for trying to think out of the box with it. But my insurance rates went up this year at work. My benefits have gone down. I'm working tomorrow. You go to find ways to find the money kind of thing to pay your bills. It's a fact of life. And even though it only has a dollar going init, I been going back and forth since public hearing and I don't think I can support it Recommended. And I support The Budget Committee's Not Recommended recommendation.

Moderator: Thank you. Further discussion. Yes, sir. Mr. Wilkins.

Wilkins: Does the contract period of the school benefits align with the fiscal year and the school year or does it align with the calendar year like the ACA. In other words, it's change in the middle of the school year.

Moderator: Question of The Board. Yes.

Dionne: It aligns with the school district's fiscal year.
Wilkins: So, there wouldn't be a surprise increase on January 1st.
Dionne: That is correct. We are budgeting for the fiscal year beginning July 1st. to June 30th.
Wilkins: And that means insurance premiums wouldn't change.
Dionne: That's correct.

Wilkins: Okay. Thank you.
Dionne: Absolutely.

Moderator: Further discussion. Warrant Article 11. Seeing none. **I'll close the discussion on Warrant Article 11 and it moves to the ballot.**

Moderator: (reading Warrant Article #12 - slide on screen)

WARRANT ARTICLE #12 Default Budget Determination(By Petition)
Shall we adopt the provisions of RSA 40: 14-b to delegate the determination of the default budget to the municipal budget committee which has been adopted under RSA 32:14?

Estimated tax rate impact: $0.00 Not Recommended by the Hudson School Board

Moderator: (continuing) This, we found out after the Town Deliberative Session, that these Articles, ther's one of the same on the Town, do require a thre-fifths vote to pass, because it's a change in the adoption of Senate Two Towns, which we are. Even though it doesn't show on the ballot, it still requires a threeModerator-fifths and I'm going to ask the School Board and the Selectmen to put that into what we send out. They send out an explanation of all the Warrant Articles to the households in Hudson and they should put it in there, It doesn't have to be there, but just everybody needs to know it's a three-fifths plus they have to hold a Public Hearing at least 7 days before the election. The Boards do. **I'll recognize Mr. Jasper to present Warrant Article 12.**

Jasper: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. This Warrant Article is presented really by the majority of The Budget Committee. As a matter of fact all the signatures that were collected were collected by Budget Committee Members. The problem is, in our opinion, over the years there has been a real creep into what has been allowed or been calculated for the default budget. Years ago, it was pretty clear to see very large deltas and part of the problem with the law is there is no authority to determine what goes in. I've been to the DRA, the Department of Revenue Administration, and they said well there's nothing we can do. Go to the Municipal Association. Well, that's sort of like the fox watching the hen house. They're not going to say the Town can't put something in. So, there's no ability for the budget committee to go to a court and say we don't think this belongs in there. And so the language that's sort of creates the problem is says what can go in there and it says and other obligations previously incurred or mandated by law. What does that mean. I guess it means whatever some people decide it means. Now, the interesting thing here is that we just had a discussion about Article 11 which talks about your health insurance costs. Well, if it was a true issue that belonged in default, it would be a known cost when the default budget was set. What we found out this past Fall that is it's not. Our tax rate was delayed. There was discussion. In many school boards. We have an obligation contractually to provide health insurance and other benefits, but not at a set dollar amount. We have a set dollar amount to pay to our teachers. So, there's a substantial difference. Our employees, our teachers, whoever, that's set in contract. That's set and there's no change to that. But health insurance, all these other things can be unknowns and they can be changed. Well, you say, how are you suppose to pay them. For instance, in the default this year, just the health insurance increase, which is why really there's so little differences, the contractual employees salaries were just over a million, The health insurance increase was just over two million. You don't just get to say well that because that's outrageously high number, that we get to build that into the default because that's not even necessarily the number that's going to be there because the health insurance company didn't guarantee us something. It

wasn't a contract. It wasn't a guarantee. You have to find it someplace else. And that's why default budgets are meant to be extremely painful. And that's why they should be working together to make sure that we come up with a budget that the voters can support. What we've seen here today is we're really at about 10-cents difference now between th default and the budget. Doesn't really matter which one passes. Th taxpayers don't have much of a choice. So what we're talking about here is saying that The Budget Committee will have control of what goes into the default and hen there is the opportunity for a real difference to be presented to the voters. And I'm not saying that we would ever do anything that we didn't have a discussion about. But I do think there are things that don't belong here. Now I know there is an effort in Concord to further define what this is because everybody's having this problem, The town of Deerfield. I talked to the Chairman o the Board of Selectmen in Deerfield a couple of months ago. He said we've been on a default budget for eight years. The reason they can do that is because they can out whatever they want in there. And think about it. Is the increase in health or dental or any of those other things really any different than the dollar amount than your increase in heat, electric, gas, any of those things. No, it's really not. You just have to work and you have to plan to make that happen. So if this Town and School District voters ever want to have a chance of having a choice and looking at options, adopting this Warrant Article is really the only way to make that happen. Otherwise, we're going to have this delta that doesn't amount to anything. Thank you, Mr. Moderator.

Moderator: Thank you. **I'll now open Warrant Article 12 to questions, comments**. **This one can't be amended. The wording is prescribed by law.** Anyone wish to discuss Warrant Article 12. Someone back here, then Mr. Walsh.

Orellana: I agree with The School Board on this. I don't think turning over that responsibility to people who are less fluent in schooling and all facets of it so that it is beneficial to our community. That is. We've seen examples of the Budget Committee Meetings where people can't read the budgets. They didn't know if they had known they would have voted a different way. I think we need to leave these decisions to The School Board and thus the voters will have an opportunity to make a choice and so to infer that they don't have opportunity is disingenuous to me.

Moderator: Thank you. Mr. Walsh.

Walsh: Thank you. Mr. Moderator. I am one of the signers of the Petition. We had a very spirited discussion I think, would be politely put, with the School District and the default budget this year, going back and forth. Last week we had this same discussion and there was a speaker that stood up and said think about going forward with this. The members of The Budget Committee are hardworking folks. I've been on The Budget Committee. This is my tenth year. And I learned something new today about capital reserve policies. But that's not to say a future Board might have a different approach to these things. I was stuck by two different things when I went through a training program that is offered to The Budget Committee and the governing bodies put on by the Municipal Association with people from DRA attending as well. There are two lawsuits that are reviewed that involve The Hudson Budget Committee. One was from 1970 when The Budget Committee cut the budget to a point where even with a 10% override it did not meet the needs of the School District. The School District sued and The School District won because there wasn't enough money in there for the debt service. So, it went above and beyond that 10%. The most recent was in 2022 when the members of The Budget Committee changed their bylaws and said that those ex officio members, the so-called ex officio members who are the appointed members for The School Board and The Board of

Selectmen were voted to not have the full rights of The Budget Committee membership as it's defined. So, when you think about this, the operating budget, the default budget is meant to be a poison pill for lack of a better term. No means no new spending no matter how important that might be. You're stuck with the number that was there. And looking at the current language in the RSA 4013 it's a lot of different opinions about what should be included and shouldn't be included. So should tis pass and I think The Budget Committee is going to have to put another line item in their budget for legal services because there's going to be some very interesting conversations about what makes an obligation not an obligation.`So, just consider that. Thank you.

Moderator: Further discussion on Warrant Article 12 by petition. Seeing one. Oh, Mr. Jasper, you want to speak.

Jasper; I just wanted to respond to some of the comments that were made that I think lead people to believe that, you know, perhaps The Budget Committee doesn't understand the budget and The School Board does. And I didn't want to go down this path at all because I do have great respect for the members of The School Board and particularly our liaison to The Budget Committee from The School Board. But our entire budget presentation was made by the superintendent and not by the school board rep. And over the years, I think, we have seen less and less participation by school board reps and more relying simply on the superintendent or the principals which we had very little participation. And, also the part about not being able to understand the budget. I challenge anybody to understand that budget. We had to go through section by section to find things in a way. I know they were having computer problems and this is not meant as a derogatory mount, comment to the school district, to the superintendent, to anybody. It was an awful budget. None of us have ever seen anything like that. It was impossible to understand. I doubt and saw no evidence that the school board understood that. So, I think to say that we don't understand, we probably got more information or at least as much information as anybody in the presentation. And I think we made a reasonable recommendation. Yes, this body has added 700,000 back, but we made a reasonable recommendation. And to say that, oh well leave it the way it is and people are going to have a 10-cent decision. People are hurting and so there should be those choices that not good. You know this town doesn't nilly-willy go to default budgets. They do it for a reason but we have to have enough of a difference with enough things taken out so that we will perhaps have better discussions about what goes into the budget, If they know here's a default number and they're not just going to say oh well we'll live with that if we have to and we'll go to school district meeting and add so much back in. I don't think we need to be casting aspersions on each other on this. And if somebody took it like I did, I'm responding that I didn't come with the intent of doing that. But the budget committee works very hard and we had some very frustrating years. You know, I've been on and off the budget committee for decades and I never saw a budget that was so hard to interpret as this one was. Thank you, Mr. Moderator.

Moderator: Discussion. Warrant Article #12. Yes, sir.

Gasdia: So couple things I want to say as I think one of the great things about this meeting every year is that we have bodies that both do their job. And I think the budget committee, honestly I don't know if it was confusing I didn't have to look at it this year. But what I'll tell you I thought it was great like Mr. Wherry. When you came up and said this is what we looked at and this is what how we made the decision. I thought that was awesome. And what Mr. Jasper is saying is a huge problem that is statewide . That is not local to Hudson. That is not a Hudson problem. And so really what this is talking about, we a bunch of people and that they are trying to make a decision and they're not making the decision that way some other people think. And now it's just a matter of shifting that . And so to me I would love to see this fought at the

Concord level. I would love to see it come out and says this is what goes into a default budget, A, B, and C. But what I'm hearing even from the petitioner here is that it's very vague. So, three things that they want in it, you may not want in it. And to me is a weird place to be, And when it comes to pain, I think the other problem we have, and I'm speaking for me, I'm not speaking for anyone else, but I think the default budget is painful. I think that number is shameful. And I think the real budget is aberrant. And the reason why we have such a tight budget is if you only pay for the stuff that's sort of mandatory., then you can't cut much. Like what should have been in the budget, like if the budget was the originally proposed budget of $76,000,000, then you what the default budget is painful. And that's the choice we should have, And to me the long-term problem we have with this, is not what's in the default budget. It's that we've sort of all as a town decided we're not going to pay for education. We've got a default budget saying we should be paying $73,000,000 and our school board and I was on there and I know why because I'd sit there and go it's go to pass, is coming in even lower. To fix this we need to say you're behind education but it's go t to come from Concord. I don't think it's shifting one way or the other. I can easily see this being Mr. Walsh's point, a different group of people siting over there next year, two years, five years from now saying we should give it back to them. This has to be solved in Concord. I understand the intent. I appreciate the problem. To me this isn't a petition problem this is a Concord problem that we shouldn't have to deal with.

Moderator: Thank you, Discussion Article 12. Yes, sir.

Powers: I think we have a huge opportunity here. Concord isn't going to solve our problems for us. We've got two great boards sitting in front of us. We take the FY27, whatever we voters agree on. Our business administrator is going to go over to create a very detailed budget. We've using a new ERP System. Hopefully with a little more flexibility. How cool it would be now before the heat of November, December when time is of the premium, we tag each line, whether it's occurring, non-recurring, whether it be something that is subject. And you know what if the school board comes in with its opinion and these are all the things we feel that should go into the operating budget and aren't subject to the default budget. And these are all the one-time items. And then we convene the board when we have all the time in the world and we say we agree here, we disagree here. And we hash it out. We could hash that out by th end of this fiscal year. And then we mechanize it. It doesn't become a function of who's sitting here. We've got the precedent with perhaps some policies and procedures wrapped around it. That we institutionalize it, just like Concord. And we figure out what works for us. Not the Deerfield approach. But by creating that positive attention, between the two boards, I think we get something and it becomes systematic and not a function of a dynamic personality.

Moderator: Thank you, Further discussion on Article 12. Seeing none. **I will close discussion on Article 12 and it goes to the ballot.**

Moderator: (continuing) Ladies and Gentlemen, I want to bring up to your attention some items that are coming up. There will be a Candidates Night by the Hudson Women's Club. Thursday, the 19th., 6pm here in the Community Center. Now, I understand that they have been having trouble getting people to respond. A lot of people think well no one is running against me, so I really don't have to go out there. The people need to know who you are. I see names on there I don't recognize. I think they need to know who you are and why you're running for office, Even if you're running unopposed, it's a chance to get out there and show those people you reason for running for an office. And it's important for the public to see you, know who you are and vote for you. It could be a write-in, that's the other option. Everybody has a write-in. We almost had a different Moderator at the last Town Meeting, Town Election, because of a write-in. They almost beat the candidate who was running unopposed. So, please, if you are a candidate.

[Patty Langlais announcing I'm right here, I don't have to call you. I'm right here.- laughter] (Slide on screen) I also want to remind everybody Election Day is March 10th. 7:00am to 8:00pm. Ward 1 will be at Memorial School, Ward 2 is at Alvirne High School. And, please come out to vote. The fact that you were here today, a lot of people have left, but you came in some difficult weather shows your interest. But you've got to vote and people have to come out. That's where the decision will finally be made on Election Day. So, get everybody you know to come out to vote. Thank you very much.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Moderator (continuing): Entertain a Motion to adjourn. Made by Mr. Beals, seconded by Miss Rice. This is the only voice vote I take, Please, recycle your cards.

MOTION: TO ADJOURN
MADE BY MR. BEALS: SECONDED BY MISS RICE

All in favor say Aye. Opposed. The Ayes have it. We are adjourned at 1:21 [pm].

Respectfully transcribed by:
Diane Cannava,
Hudson School District Clerk