

PASQUANEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
SAU 108
BUDGET HEARING
February 13, 2025

The meeting opened at 6:00PM with the following members present: Virginia Parker, School Board Chair from Groton, Erick Piper, School Board Vice Chair from Bridgewater (who appeared via Teams meeting), and Mark Coulson School Board Member, from Hebron. This school board was appointed by the NH Department of Education 06/13/2024.

Also in attendance at this meeting was the Consulting Business Administrator; Robin Reinhold and the Consulting Superintendent; Russell Holden, who both provide advisory services for their individual roles. There were approximately 45 people in attendance.

Virginia Parker led this meeting providing a slide show presentation on the formation of SAU 108 which included:

- *Initial Board Goals & Objectives – Creation of Operational Infrastructure for a Functional SAU
- *Initial Board Priorities – A focus on the Preservation of BHVS Culture and Choice HS Model
- *Overview of the proposed First Year Budget including concerns and issues

The Proposed Warrant Articles for the 2025-2026 Fiscal year are as follows:

Article 1: *“To choose by official ballot the following Officers:*

- *District Moderator for one year (all District Towns);*
- *1 School Board Member from Bridgewater for a two-year term;*
- *1 School Board Member from Groton for a three-year term;*
- *1 School Board Member from Hebron for a three-year term.”*

Article 2: Relative to Changes to Articles of Agreement: *“Shall the Pasquaney School District vote to amend Article 3 of the Articles of Agreement among the School District towns of Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton to add two at-large School Board members as follows:*

Current: There shall be three (3) members of the Bridgewater-Hebron-Groton Special Purpose School District Board (“School Board”). The voters of each town shall be entitled to elect one member of the School Board at the organizational special meeting and thereafter to elect their successors, by voting separately by ballot at the official ballot session of the organization special meeting and at later annual School District meetings. The ballot shall be a nonpartisan ballot consistent with RSA 669. Each town shall coordinate its own official ballot voting for election of its school board member.

Proposed: Effective March 2026, there shall be five (5) members of the Pasquaney School District Board (“School Board”). The voters of each town shall be entitled to elect one member as a town representative and two members shall be elected “at-large” by a majority vote of the entire District at annual School District meetings. The ballot shall be a non-partisan ballot consistent with RSA 669. Each town shall coordinate its own official ballot voting session for the election of its School Board member and District-Wide representative.

Article 3: Relative to Changes of Articles of Agreement: *“Shall the Pasquaney School District vote to amend Article 4c of the Articles of Agreement among the School District towns of Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton to simplify the minimum contributions from each town as follows:*

Current: Upon successful withdrawal from School Administration Unit Number 4, as of June 30, 2025, and as of the operating date of July 1, 2025, the initial total student enrolment from each town in the Newfound Area school District during the previous 2024-2025 school year as of June 30, 2024, (“initial total student enrolment number”) shall be the basis for setting and apportioning a minimum percentage contribution to the annual district apportionment between the towns of Bridgewater, Groton and Hebron and shall be considered the benchmark for setting a minimum contribution floor. A member town’s enrolment may drop by up to 15% below the initial total student enrolment number, however, a minimum contribution floor shall be set at the initial student enrolment number, less 15% and that number shall be used to determine the ADM ratio.

Proposed: As of the operating date of July 1, 2025, the minimum base ADM charge for each pre-existing town shall be 15 students and base ratio formula approved in the initial Articles of Agreement shall be replaced with the minimum student maintenance number of 15. Should student enrolments fall below the base student maintenance number in a member town, the town will be assessed an ADM charge of 15 students and the differential deducted equally from the remaining towns. This minimum number may only be modified by a 2/3 majority vote of the current district school board and the district voters. (2/3 vote required).

Article 4: *“To see if the Pasquaney School District will vote to raise and appropriate the amount of Six Million Five Hundred Ninety-Five Thousand Nine Hundred Seventy Four Dollars (\$6,595,974) for the support of school, for the payment of salaries for the school district officials and agents and for the payment for statutory obligations of the district. This Article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles address separately. (Majority Vote Required – Recommended by the School Board).*

Article 5: *“Shall the Pasquaney School District vote to approve the costs included in the employment agreements between the Pasquaney School Board and the certified teachers at Bridgewater-Hebron Village School for the following Salaries and benefits for the 2025-2026 school year and the following increases in salaries and benefits over next year’s current salaries:*

Account	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028
Salaries	\$49,014	\$37,459	\$55,825
Retirement & Taxes	\$13,175	\$10,069	\$15,006
Total	\$62,189	\$47,528	\$70,831

And further, raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty-Two Thousand, One Hundred Eighty-Nine Dollars (\$62,189) for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, such sum represents the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits contained within the Agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels. The costs for the years of the Agreement beyond the upcoming 2025-2026 fiscal year will be include in the operating budget proposal each of those years.” (Majority Vote Required – Recommended by the School Board).

Article 6: *“Shall the Pasquaney School District accept the provisions of RSA 198:20-b providing that any school district at an annual meeting may adopt an article authorizing indefinitely, until specific rescission of such authority, the school board to apply for, accept and expend, without further action by the school district, unanticipated money from a state, federal, or other governmental unit or a private source which becomes available during the fiscal year?” (Majority Vote Required – Recommended by the School Board).*

Article 7: *“To see if the Pasquaney School District will vote to authorize, indefinitely until rescinded, to retain year-end unassigned general funds in an amount not to exceed, in any fiscal year, 5 percent of the current fiscal year’s net assessment, in accordance with RSA 198:4-b II.” (Majority Vote Required – Recommended by the School Board).*

Article 8: *“To see if the Pasquaney School District will vote to establish a Technology Expendable Trust Fund under the provisions of RSA 198:20-c for the purpose of purchasing, installing, repairing, maintaining, replacing and upgrading the District’s technology-related resources and to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Dollars (\$100) to be placed in the Technology Expendable Trust Fund, and to further name the School Board as agents to expend from the fund.” (Majority Vote Required – Recommended by the School Board).*

Article 9: *“To see if the Pasquaney School District will vote to establish a Special Education Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1-b to meet the expenses of educating children with disabilities and to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Dollars (\$100) to be placed in this fund. Further, to name the Pasquaney School Board as agents to expend from said fund.” (Majority Vote Required – Recommended by the School Board).*

Article 10: *“To see if the Pasquaney School District shall vote to ratify and approve the Reciprocal Tuition Agreement between the Pasquaney School District and the Newfound Area School District for the education of Pasquaney students in middle and high school, for a term of up to four years commencing on July 1, 2025.” (Majority Vote Required – Recommended by the School Board).*

Article 11: *“To see if the Pasquaney School District shall vote to ratify and approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the Pasquaney School District and the Pemi-Baker Regional School District, for the education of Pasquaney students in grades 9-12, for an initial term of one year, commencing on July 1, 2025 with an automatic annual renewal each school year, unless terminated by mutual agreement of the two school boards or upon written notification from one school board to the other.” (Majority Vote Required – Recommended by the School Board).*

Article 12: *“To see if the Pasquaney School District shall vote to ratify and approve the multi-year lease agreement between the Pasquaney School District and the Bridgewater-Hebron Village District, allowing the Pasquaney School District to lease the Bridgewater-Hebron Village School for a term of 5 years, commencing on July 1, 2025 and continuing through June 30, 2030, at a rate of \$1 per year.” (Majority Vote Required – Recommended by the School Board).*

Article 13: *“To see if the Pasquaney School District shall adopt the provisions of RSA 194:4, III and RSA 194:19-c, I and vote that the Supervisors of the Checklist of each Town (Bridgewater, Hebron, Groton) shall act as the Supervisors of each pre-existing District (Bridgewater, Hebron, Groton) for purposes of making, posting and correcting the checklist, along with certifying the making posting and correction of the same, whenever the Pasquaney School District is required to hold such sessions.” (Majority Vote Required – Recommended by the School Board).*

Article 14: *“To see if the Pasquaney School District shall vote to elect its School District Officers and other matters requiring an official ballot vote at the second Tuesday in March as the first session of its Annual meeting and to utilize the Town Election officials in each of the pre-existing School Districts (Bridgewater, Hebron, Groton). RSA 671:22, II.” (Majority Vote Required – Recommended by the School Board).*

Article 15: *“To see if the Pasquaney School District shall vote to designate the Trustees of the Trust Funds for the Town of Hebron as the Trustees to hold and administer gifts, legacies or devise made to, and accepted by, the Pasquaney School District, as well as the Trust Funds created by the Pasquaney School District.” (Majority Vote Required – Recommended by the School Board).*

FUTURE IMPORTANT DATES:

- Voting March 11, 2025 – Individual Town Locations
- School District Annual Meeting March 25, 2025 at 6:00PM at the Bridgewater-Hebron Village School gymnasium.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS:

Derry Riddle – Hebron – thanked the Board for all their work on this project. Derry also wanted to confirm the correct dates were updated in Article 14 to show that Hebron holds their election in May. This correction was confirmed. Derry also requested confirmation that the lease as described in Article 12 was updated to 5 years and not 10 as original printed. This correction was confirmed.

John Rescigno – Groton – thanked the Board for all their work on this project.

Aubrey Freedman – Bridgewater – questioned the transportation costs and if it was going to 28%. Virginia Parker stated these figures are being re-evaluated as newer buses will be needed as opposed to buses 10 years old and over.

Dave Darlington – Groton – questioned why there are not equal numbers of school boards representatives from each town as stated in Article 1. Terry Murphy stated this is for the purpose of preventing one town from outvoting the other two ones or even two towns outvoting the last town. Dave also questioned in Article 2 if a vote to be confirmed would it need to be the majority of each town to pass or the majority of voters. Virginia Parker said this will need to be clarified. Dave questioned Article 3 which original Articles of Agreement stated articles can only be changed every five years so how can we amend articles now if it hasn't been five years. Virginia Parker said this will also need to be clarified.

Parker Griffin – Hebron – questioned the estimated taxes to be raised and how those taxes will be allocated to each town in relation to SWEPT and ADM and if prorated by what each town pays.

Melissa Olszak – Bridgewater – questioned how many students there were for each town and the cost per student. Virginia Parker confirmed Bridgewater – 86 students, Groton – 44 students, Hebron 55 students. The cost per student will need to be calculated. Melissa also asked who would be responsible for the technology maintenance which Virginia stated would be the operators of Bridgewater-Hebron Village School. The concept of a cap on the budget via petitioned warrant articles brought forward by residents was also discussed. It was clarified that the voters can certainly bring petitioned warrant articles forward, however, there is a timeframe for which to do so which has currently passed. Melissa also requested confirmation that any spending done from a Trust Fund will need to come before a public vote prior to be spent and that the Trustees of all Trust Funds for the Pasquaney School District will be overseen by the Hebron Trustees of the Trust Funds. Confirmation provided.

Aubrey Freedman – Bridgewater – questioned if Article 4 was voted down what would happen next as there is no previous budget for this District to act in its place. Virginia stated that at the end of the meeting in March a budget must be set regardless.

6:43PM: Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Kenny

Pasquaney School District Clerk