

**PASQUANEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
SAU 108
ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 25, 2025**

The Inaugural Meeting of the newly formed Pasquaney School District (PSD) opened at 6:05PM with Moderator Roger Larochelle welcoming everyone. After the Pledge of Allegiance, Moderator Larochelle recognized all of the committees and boards who assisted in the formation of the PSD as well as the members present:

Steering Committee Members:

Terence Murphy – Bridgewater Selectman
Patrick Moriarty – Hebron Selectman
John Rescigno – Groton Selectman
Erick Piper – Bridgewater Representative
Jennifer Larochelle – Hebron Representative
Virginia Parker – Groton Representative
Bill Luti – who assisted this Committee

Bridgewater-Hebron Village District Representatives:

Derry Riddle
William White
Terence Murphy

School Board Members as appointed by the NH Department of Education

Mark Coulson – Hebron Representative
Erick Piper – Bridgewater Representative
Virginia Parker – Groton Representative

Present at this meeting:

Superintendent - Russell Holden
Business Manager - Robin Reinhold
Interim Clerk - Colleen Kenny
Assistant to Clerk - Julie Converse
Bridgewater School Board Member – Mara Capsalis – elected March 2025
Groton School Board Member – Bethany Sharp – elected March 2025
Hebron School Board Member – Jennifer Larochelle – elected March 2025
Moderator – Roger Larochelle – elected March 2025

Moderator Larochelle read the results of the March 2025 election in which the Groton, Hebron and Bridgewater School Board Members were elected as referenced above as well as the outcome of votes on Articles 2 and Article 3 as follows:

Article 2 – 276 Yes 36 No
Article 3 – 269 Yes 41 No

The meeting rules were presented as a handout at this meeting which Moderator Larochelle noted. At this time, this meeting addressed Article #4.

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).*

Virginia Parker moved this Article as written, which was seconded by Mark Coulson. Virginia Parker spoke on this Article noting this would be for the upcoming school year (pre-Kindergarten through 6th grade).

Hebron – Ron Collins asked how this budget would have compared if we had not moved from the SAU.

Virginia Parker stated it would be hard to compare as there are many impacts from each town in SAU 4 that would need to be taken into consideration - noting no solid answer.

Hebron – Ron Collins asked wouldn't you just add each town's portion and compare that to this budget.

Virginia Parker stated those numbers change annually.

Hebron – Vincent Broderick asked the breakdown in the taxes from each town.

Virginia Parker stated the tax bill includes more than just the school costs and questions on that breakdown should be addressed to the Select Boards of each town. The average student number for each town is Bridgewater – 86, Hebron – 55 and Groton – 44, however, these are numbers from the past year.

Groton – Sue Cross asked what the cost per student was.

Russell Holden stated the per-student cost was approximately \$23,000.

Bridgewater – Sharon Thorne asked what the reference to “Tuition to LEAS” referred to.

Virginia Parker stated that is referring to the other institutions that grades 7 and 8 students are being sent to.

Hebron – Jen Lloyd asked what the “SPED Tuition to LEAS” is.

Virginia Parker stated that is the additional costs for special educational students' tuition to other schools.

Hebron – Jen Lloyd asked why there was no Curriculum Coordinator line.

Virginia Parker stated that position is not in the budget as the teachers' compensation package includes additional salary and/or benefits to provide this role.

Hebron – Jen Lloyd stated that this role requires an additional time commitment.

Russell Holden noted that the compensation to include this role is part of the compensation package provided which also includes additional time off and other benefits.

Bridgewater – Chris Bean asked if the cost per student is \$23,000 and you take the number of students being 180 divided by the total budget, this calculates to approximately \$36,000. Why is there a difference?

Russell Holden stated that the budget contains a different formula to calculate that cost. This is due to the amount raised and appropriated through taxes, and not the total proposed budget amount as we receive income from various sources. The department of education sets the actual cost per student.

Bridgewater – Chris Bean asked if his son will still be able to go to Newfound Middle School if he doesn't want to stay in PSD.

Virginia Parker stated that is an operational decision.

Bridgewater – Chris Bean said residents were told their students would have that option.

Virginia Parker stated that question should be directed to the newly elected School Board.

Russell Holden stated that would be included in next year's budget and determined by the new School Board.

Hebron – Bob Brooks questioned the numbers on the budget noting the total appropriations and the net anticipated assessment being different numbers.

Russell Holden explained that difference is due to what is anticipated to be received by revenues and grants.

Richard James moved to approve Article 4, which was seconded by Bob Brooks.

All were in favor. Article #4 passed.

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:

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).

Virginia Parker moved this Article as written, which was seconded by John Rescigno.

Hebron – Jen Lloyd stated she finds this budget confusing to understand and is hoping for clarification. Jen further stated confirmation of this budget needs to happen now.

Virginia Parker stated the budget for staff is included in Article #4 and Articles #5 is over and above the budget for teachers and staff included in Article #4.

Hebron – Jen Lloyd provided further discussion on current teachers' compensation and their ranking compared to others in the State.

Hebron - Jen Lloyd requested an amendment to increase the teacher/staff salaries by \$70,000 which she presented in writing.

Hebron – Bob Brooks seconded this proposed amendment.

Russell Holden noted these negotiations were done by mirroring SAU 4 and then adding additional funding for salary increases. Adding an additional \$70,000 would need to be examined and would cause a delay in the signing of contracts because of negotiations.

Moderator Larochelle stated that the proposed amendment of adding \$70,000 changes what has already been negotiated and would have ripple effects that change the spirit of Article 5. Thus, in his judgment, the amendment as written cannot be advanced. However, a motion could be made to override the Moderator's decision.

Russell Holden stated that on July 1, the teachers can become a union and at that time they can negotiate a change of salary which could be done through a warrant article for next year's election.

Bridgewater – Terence Murphy stated this budget includes an overall 3 year increase with an 18-19% increase over what teachers were paid by SAU 4 as provided in Article #5.

Bridgewater – Chris Bean – made a motion to override the Moderator, which was seconded by Kathleen Connors.

Moderator Larochelle called for a vote to override the Moderator. A yes vote would be in favor of the override, and no to sustain the Moderator’s decision. Majority voted no – the Moderator was not overruled.

Hebron – Kathleen Connor stated that there were four people in the room putting this Article together and they should be careful what information is shared.

Bridgewater – Natalie Murphy requested a copy of the teacher salary scale.

Russell Holden stated that scale is in good faith bargaining and cannot be released until all contracts have been approved.

Hebron – Sharon Phelps asked why the 2026 and 2027 salaries were lower. Russell Holden responded that the increases are above the previous year’s salary.

No further discussion. Majority in favor. Article #5 passed.

A motion to restrict reconsideration of Articles 4 and 5 was made by Virginia Parker and seconded by Pamela Hammill. Motion passed.

Groton – Stephan Spafford questioned the use of the voter cards given during the registration process.

Moderator Larochelle stated those would be used for a hand count if a voice vote could not be determined.

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).

Mark Coulson moved this Article as written, which was seconded by Virginia Parker.

Virginia Parker explained this Article.

No further discussion. All in favor. Article #6 passed.

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).

Virginia Parker moved this Article was written which was seconded by Mark Coulson.

Virginia Parker spoke to this Article noting that this ‘allows’ the PSD to retain unassigned general funds but is not ‘mandated’. A public hearing would be required by statute for the spending of these funds.

Bridgewater – Aubrey Freeman stated he is against the language in this Article as rescinding an Article is very hard to do. Aubrey also stated he believes 5% is too high and a lower percentage would be better.

Aubrey further stated that even though a public hearing is required, most people don’t even know about

those hearing and few attend and believes that it should be one year at a time and should be reviewed each year. Aubrey presented a written amendment to Article #7, however, it was noted by Russell Holden and Moderator Larochelle that per RSA's you cannot change the written language but could change the percentage only. Aubrey decided to rescind his request for an amendment to this Article, but would like to state his opposition to this Article.

No further discussion. Majority in favor. Article #7 passed.

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).

Mark Coulson moved this Article as written which was seconded by Virginia Parker.

Mark Coulson spoke on this Article and the handling of this Trust Fund which would be handled simultaneously with the other Trust Funds as discussed in further articles.

Bridgewater – Judy Faran asked if the \$100 held in the Trust Fund is invested or just deposited.

Robin Reinhold stated the trust funds are invested.

No further discussion. All in favor. Article #8 passed.

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).

Mark Coulson moved this Article as written which was seconded by Virginia Parker.

Mark Coulson spoke on this Article with reference to Article #8.

No further discussion. All in favor. Article #9 passed.

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).

Virginia Parker moved this Article as written which was seconded by Mark Coulson.

Virginia Parker spoke on this Article and the related Agreement stating this Article helps non-resident students to attend BHVS as well as our resident students to attend other schools in SAU4.

Bridgewater – Ken Weidman asked for an explanation of this agreement.

Virginia Parker stated as previously written, it allows students not living in Bridgewater, Hebron or Groton to attend BHVS and allows students in Bridgewater, Hebron and Groton to attend other schools in SAU 4 if they so desire. This is a fully reciprocal agreement.

Bridgewater – Ken Weidman asked why this agreement was only for four years and what the cost is.

Virginia Parker stated this is a no cost agreement, but the formula that is used across the

SAU's. The four-year agreement was felt to provide more stability and flexibility.

Bridgewater – Ken Weidman asked if a student from Alexandria could come to BHVS.

Virginia Parker stated yes.

Bridgewater – Ken Weidman asked if PSD would then be paid by SAU4.

Virginia Parker stated yes.

Bridgewater – Chris Bean asked if this was the agreement to allow his son to go to an SAU 4 school.

Virginia Parker stated there would be no reason that he would not be able to do that.

No further discussion. All in favor. Article #10 passed.

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).

Mark Coulson moved this Article as written, which was seconded by Virginia Parker.

Mark Coulson spoke on this Article stating this would be for the high school choice of grades 9-12 to allow students to go to SAU 48 (Plymouth). This is a one-year agreement. The cost will be determined by the State and is the same cost for every town in the State.

Hebron – Sharon Phelps asked if her home-schooled son could attend curriculum and extra curriculum classes.

Russell Holden stated if there is space for that student this option would be available.

No further discussion. All in favor. Article #11 passed.

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).

Virginia Parker moved this Article as written which was seconded by Mark Coulson.

Virginia Parker spoke on this Article stating the cost for the lease of BHVS has been \$1 for the past 25 years.

No further discussion. All in favor. Article #12 passed.

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).

Mark Coulson moved this Article as written which was seconded by Virginia Parker. He stated this would

allow the Supervisors to perform their duties as they have tonight at this meeting.

No further discussion. All in favor. Article #13 passed.

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).*

Mark Coulson moved this Article as written which was seconded by Virginia Parker.

Virginia Parker spoke on this Article stating this would allow the three towns to hold the PSD election with their Town election as was done at the last Town election held earlier this March.

No further discussion. All in favor. Article #14 passed.

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).*

Mark Coulson moved this Article as written which was seconded by Virginia Parker.

Mark Coulson spoke on this Article stating that under this Article any trust funds held by PSD would be held by the Hebron Trustees which are handled by a professional investor and undergo three different levels of audit each year.

No further discussion. All in favor. Article #15 passed.

7:19PM – Hebron – Richard James made a motion to adjourn this meeting, which was seconded by Hebron – Paul Hazelton.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen Kenny

Pasquaney School District Clerk