

**SAU #9 AREA JOINT BOARDS SPECIAL MEETING**  
**Mineral Springs Cafe at KHS**  
**November 30, 2010**

**Attending:**

Vicki Harlow, Bartlett, Chair	Dr. Carl Nelson, SAU #9 Superintendent
Nancy Kelemen, Bartlett	Dr. Robert Gadomski, SAU 9, Asst. Supt.
Rob Clark, Bartlett	Jay McIntire, SAU #13, Superintendent
Joyce Watson, Freedom	Neal Moylan, KHS Principal
Ingrid DeWitt, Freedom	Kevin Richard, KMS Principal
Anthony Cloutier, Freedom	Lori Babine, Career/Tech. Center Dir.
Janine McLaughlan, Conway	
Dick Klement, Conway	
Alana Starkey, Conway	
Pat Philbrick, Eaton	
Jane Gray, Eaton	
Judie Goss, Eaton	
Joe Kopitsky, Jackson	
Andrew Kearns, Jackson	
Genn Anzaldi, Jackson	
Keith Bradley, Jackson	
Sarah Parsons, Madison	
Wendy Grzesik, Madison	
Colleen Cormack, Albany	
James Sabina, Albany	
Laura Pike, Tamworth	

Recording Secretary:  
Gail T. Currier

Audience: 8

**1. Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman, Vicki Harlow.

- 2. Approval of Minutes (9-23-10):** Notation was made by Mr. McIntire that Joyce Watson's name was reported incorrectly as Denise. **Motion by Ms. Gray, second by Ms. Kelemen, that the Minutes of the Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting be approved as corrected. Motion carried with 17 votes in the affirmative and 4 abstentions (Messrs. Clark and Bradley, Ms. Anzaldi and Ms. Pike).**

- 3. Review of Conway's 2011-12 Budget:** Ms. Harlow explained the purpose of the meeting was to get caught up on cuts in the Conway budget. A report was provided by Dr. Nelson, including the history of how we got to this point and what the Conway School Board [CSB] did on Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Dr. Nelson noted that we were going to have \$1 million to \$1.5 million in additional costs due to health insurance increases, the District's portion of retirement contribution,

Special Education, required maintenance projects. The administration was asked to go through the exercise of looking at cuts of \$1 million and \$1.5 million. In Sept. they brought the results of that to the Conway School Board for review; they also presented the CSB with the administration's budget, keeping all programs the way they are and accounting for the increases, then looked at the tax rate and revenues; they then had an additional \$700,000 revenue coming in from tuition and closing out of the building funds. When they calculated the tax rates they used two scenarios – best case scenario: Conway gets the \$2 million State Adequacy, worst case: for budgeting purposes assume we will get no more, no less, than this year. Dr. Nelson noted if we took the worst case scenario and the administrators' budget, accounting for the change in health insurance rates (about 14%), if approved (without warrant articles), the tax rate would be the same as it is this year. He said under the best case scenario, the tax rate would drop by \$.72 per thousand assessment.

He explained that Conway then said they would vote on reducing the budget by the amount of the principal and interest on the bond retired - \$263,000 in reductions. He stated that is the only thing on the floor in Conway right now. Dr. Nelson noted when they built the \$1.5 reduction they had almost \$1 million of staffing reductions; in the current proposal there is between \$120,000 and \$140,000 in staff reductions. The programs Conway currently has in place would be in place next year; there would possibly be some alterations with the Conway school, but basically the education programs would be the same as enjoyed the last two years. He said even with the three required warrant articles (each of the towns contributes to maintenance trust funds) totaling \$81,000, he is still confident Conway would have a tax rate that is the same as this year - \$11.82 or lower. When Ms. Cormack questioned the maintenance trust articles, Ms. Gray explained they were written in so that we could ensure maintaining the buildings we put money into.

Mr. McIntire questioned changes in the Special Education at the middle school and high school, if they had the effect of providing a lesser array of services could that have the effect of having to spend more in out-of-district placements? Dr. Nelson assured him that would not be the case.

Mr. Kearns questioned estimated tax rate. Dr. Nelson said it would be an even tax rate if the bond reduction was not included. Mr. Klement pointed out the tax rate last year included about \$1 million in warrant articles, and the tax rate Dr. Nelson alluded to does not include any warrant articles, so it is apples and oranges we are looking at. He said there will be about \$3/4 million in warrant articles on top of last year's tax rate. Dr. Nelson said the warrant articles include three union contracts, Project Succeed, maintenance articles, roof at Conway El, air handler at the middle school, trust fund warrant article. Ms. Kelemen questioned whether the programs are staying as is as of this year. Dr. Nelson said yes, as the budget is proceeding right now. Mr. Moylan added "except we will be adding advanced placement courses;" it does not affect anything else.

Ms. Parsons asked what about middle school? Mr. Richard said a few things have been changed a little bit; they try to make the least impact on students as possible.

Dr. Nelson said once we finalize some administrative points of view there is about \$120,000 worth of staff changes and we would want to talk to them first.

Mr. Clark questioned whether there is any rough guess of what each million dollars you have to raise adds to the tax rate. Dr. Nelson said for \$100,000 it is approximately seven and one half cents per thousand.

Angus Badger said his concern is there is not enough discussion of our goals and strategies for the high school. It was his claim that only one or two students of last year's graduating class were able to get into the best colleges. He said the best and brightest in KHS should be able to go anywhere in the country. He asked "Does this budget meet the needs of the school and where we are trying to get to?" Mr. Moylan said we did begin a concerted effort to focus on the top 15 percentile, and have made tremendous strides in the drop out rate; we added two new AP courses last year, enrollment increased by 100%, and we are looking to add two additional AP courses next year. He said his concern as a Principal is the teacher's contract more than the budget - he cannot go out and hire the best teachers available without a contract. We need a teacher's contract that makes us competitive with the other schools, then we can train and retain the great teachers we have. He noted the contract is a warrant article that goes into the budget after it has been passed. We need to make pay competitive.

Dr. Badger asked that the Conway School Board respond to an administrative strategy to increase the starting pay. Dr. Nelson stated the CSB has had that on the table for two years. Dr. Badger said we have to have a strategy to educate the community to what Mr. Moylan is saying. Dr. Nelson said they are in the process of negotiations now with two unions, which is confidential - CSB cannot answer that. Ms. Anzaldi said if they come to agreement on negotiations it has to be put in as a warrant article – is it just put out to the public or is there a marketing campaign? Dr. Nelson stated there is a marketing effort – it was not successful last year.

Mr. Kearns questioned what we, as School Boards, can do to get the public into it? Mr. Bradley stated there is not enough door knocking and marketing to get people out, noting only 17% of interested voters actually showed up. Mr. Klement said of the 1000 people that voted last year there were not enough parents, teachers, mothers and fathers voting that would have passed that budget by a significant amount. Mr. Bradley asked that they let the sending towns know what they can do to help. Ms. Kelemen said it is up to us to talk to the Conway voters, they are the ones who have to take the initiative and go and do it; getting the word out there that it is important for everyone in the community to go and vote on that day. Mr. Kopitsky questioned whether teachers are doing anything to encourage people to get out to vote.

Ms. Anzaldi questioned who is the head of the marketing campaign. She offered to help if the position is open.

Ms. Cormack said this highlights the fact that the sending towns do not have a direct say in what is being done – whether the roof is repaired, what our teachers are paid, or whether or not we have after school programming. She said it is frustrating for the sending towns that they do not have a voice that counts. She asked what constitutes something having to be a warrant article versus being in the budget? Dr. Nelson said in this State the Board, the union, and the voters all three have to agree. Ms. Cormack questioned what about other warrant articles. Dr. Nelson explained the maintenance trust article is sort of a savings account in case something has to be done, and in Conway if a position was funded by a grant, they have to ask voters for it once those funds dry up.

Ms. DeWitt questioned if nothing passes and we get the default budget, what would you be cutting? Dr. Nelson stated probably nothing because they would still have the \$263,000. It would actually be higher than the proposed budget by \$263,000.

Mr. Kearns thanked the Conway School Board for having a transparent budget process. Mr. McIntire added that this information could easily have been distributed through channels and he appreciates hearing it from Dr. Nelson.

4. **Any Other Business:** Dr. Nelson announced the next joint Boards meeting will be held on January 25, 2011

Ms. Cormack reported that she had attended some conferences and learned that renewable energy companies are making changes to accommodate schools that are thinking about clean, renewable energy. She cited as an example Exeter High School saved \$20,000 by putting some solar panels in - the school pays the solar company with the savings they yield each year. She noted before a school seriously looks at clean energy, conservation needs to take place, energy efficiency needs to be looked at. Ms. Cormack stated if there are schools who want to look at that, she can point them in the right direction.

5. **Adjourn: Motion was made by Mr. Klement, seconded by Ms. Philbrick and carried, that the meeting be adjourned at 7:10 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Gail T. Currier  
Recording Secretary