

Jackson Trustees of the Trust Fund Minutes, March 17, 2020

Members Voting: Chris McAleer, Helene Matesky and new member, Dan Andrews.

Chris McAleer forwarded a Jackson School Board request for withdrawal of \$60,000 from the School Bus Trust Fund – 0001.

The Trustees decided to vote by email, rather than have a meeting due to the current coronavirus guidelines.

In considering the request, Trustees reviewed 2019 School District Warrant Article 4 - to raise \$95,000 to purchase a school bus, authorizing withdrawal of \$60,000 from the trust and the balance of \$35,000 to come from general taxation.

Also included with the request was an invoice for \$90,875.00 from O'Connor Sales for the bus that was purchased in September 2019.

Helene mentioned that following NH Attorney General guidelines, the Trustees should not release \$60,000 and should reduce the withdrawal to the amount needed to reimburse SAU9 for the actual purchase price of the bus. \$90,875 purchase price, minus \$35,000 raised from taxation, leaves a balance due of \$55,875.

The Trustees are not permitted to release to the school board funds that exceed the purchase price since that fund was established for purchase of a bus only.

Chris suggested that we review the Trustees files in order to assure that we are following regulatory guidelines from the last time this issue came up when a bus was purchased.

Helene reviewed Trustee files for 2015 and 2016 when she, Linda Terry and Chris all researched this issue in detail. Trustee of the Trust Funds minutes can be found on the town website www.jackson-nh.org.

March 30, 2016 minutes indicate that in October 2015 the school board was requesting an amount that exceeded the purchase price of a bus. After

research and review, Linda Terry referenced RSA 35.15 V that states – in all cases, expenditures from a capital reserve fund shall be made only for or in connection with the purposes for which said fund was established or as amended as provided in RSA 35:16.

Additional information can be found in the May 16, 2016 minutes regarding a meeting of Tammy Letson of Crane and Bell Accounting with Helene and Chris that reads as follows:

Helene asked Tammy about an issue concerning the recent purchase of a school bus by the Town. The School Board had asked for a sum that was more than the final, actual cost of the bus. The amount requested had previously been approved by Town Warrant. Tammy said a Warrant Article could make a request that was in fact an “estimate” but agreed that the Trustees acted properly in not authorizing withdrawing funds in excess of the actual cost.

In addition, Trustees confirmed procedures with Terry Knowles of the NH Attorney General’s office at a training session attended by Chris.

June 14, 2016 minutes state: *Chris also commented on Terry’s response to his question about warrant article language and withdrawal of funds from the trust. Terry reported that Trustees should look at the money raised from all sources and only release the amount of funds needed even if the warrant article language exceeds that amount as in last year’s school bus purchase. She confirmed that Boards should not be requesting any funds that exceed the invoice amount.*

After reviewing all of this research, Chris, Helene and Dan voted on the school board’s current request and unanimously approved a withdrawal of \$55,875.00. Chris will be sending a check for that amount to SAU9 Finance Director as soon as possible.

Helene also pointed out that in 2016 Trustees advised the School Board and then Finance Director, Becky Jefferson, of these guidelines and informed them that this applies to all towns in SAU9 and not just Jackson. We again request that SAU9 and Jackson School Board procedures be updated so that future withdrawal requests are in compliance.

These notes/minutes prepared by Helene Matesky March 18,2020.