

MARLBOROUGH BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

**Elmer Thienes-Mary Hall Elementary School – Library
Tuesday, March 12, 2024 @ 6:30 PM**

UNOFFICIAL

1. Call to Order & Roll Call:

Kerri Barella, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm

BOE Members Present: Kerri Barella, Susan Stolfi, Linda Earley, Angela Colantonio, Chip Morris, Jean Wilson and Amy Kuhrt

Administration Present: Dr. Holly Hageman, Superintendent

2. Public Comments:

Ken Hjulstrom, S. Main St. – Mr. Hjulstrom would like to see the BOS focus their attention on Town Hall Operations and Capital budgets and leave the BOE budget to the elected members of the Board of Ed. He encouraged the Board of Education to refrain from making any cuts to the BOE budget.

Jamie Smigel, Roberts Rd. – Ms. Smigel stated that education is always evolving and that elected BOE members, the Superintendent and Principals have the knowledge and experience to know what is needed for students to succeed.

Sue Stolfi, High Meadow Rd. – Ms. Stolfi, member of the BOE but speaking as an individual, stated that the BOE budget was Marlborough's lowest in the last four years yet continues to move the district in a positive direction. She feels it's concerning that the Town's inadequate road maintenance over the years has led to a situation where the Board of Education is under pressure to significantly reduce its budget.

Beth Lander Morris, High Meadow Rd - Ms. Morris stated that as a parent of 2 students at MES, her children are very happy and thriving. When moving, her family sought out Marlborough due to the school district and she could not be happier. She would like to thank the Board and Dr. Hageman for all their hard work and she feels the budget is very reasonable. Ms. Morris feels the quality of the school should not be compromised.

Heather Little, Hickory Road - Ms. Little sent a letter to the Board requesting the job requirements for the pupil service position require a degree in special education not just an 092 certificate.

Patrick Kiernan, South Buckboard Ln. - Mr. Kiernan sent a letter stating he is in full support of the BOE budget and feels it makes complete sense. He does not believe the school budget should be cut due to the Town's lack of planning.

Jennifer Barone, Heritage Dr. - Ms. Barone sent in a statement expressing her full support of the proposed MES budget. She feels the budget honors student learning and growth and should not be cut.

Josh Bruhn, S. Main St. - Mr. Bruhn conveyed in a letter to the Board that he believes reducing the budget today can leave the school and community unprepared for tomorrow and MES must take the opportunity to reinforce foundations and invest in educational quality.

3. FY 2024-25 Budget discussion in response to the Board of Finance requested reduction.

K. Barella provided an update on the budget process to date by referencing the email received by the BOE from the Board of Finance with “a soft ask” that the BOE reduce its budget by \$100,000. She stated that since the BOE was not on the BOF agenda at their March 7th meeting, no one from the Board nor the Superintendent attended the meeting, and she needed to watch the recorded video of the meeting to see and hear what took place. Ms. Barella relayed that there was an informal discussion among the BOF members about how much entities will need to reduce their budgets. Ms. Barella shared her concern that Robert’s Rules were not followed and that there was no motion or a vote by the Board of Finance to adjust/reduce the BOE budget.

S. Stolfi stated she was not in favor of making any decisions at this point in time regarding the budget as the Board of Education was not a part of the conversation with respect to budget cuts.

S. Stolfi made a motion that the Board not make any decision regarding the budget until after the Board of Finance meeting on March 14th. Seconded by A. Colantonio. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Adjournment:

S. Stolfi made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 pm. Seconded by A. Kuhrt. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carmela Monte