

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
School Board Meeting Minutes
February 6, 2024
Monadnock Regional Middle/High School, Swanzey, NH

Members Present: Kristen Noonan, Scott Peters, Edmond LaPlante, Lisa Steadman, Stephanie Lawlor, Betty Tatro, Dan LeClair, Cheryl McDaniel-Thomas and Jeff Cesaitis.
Absent: Jennifer Strimbeck, Gina Carraro, Brian Bohannon and Eric Stanley

Administration Present: J. Rathbun, Superintendent and J. Morin, Business Administrator

1. **CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER at 7:00 PM.** S. Peters called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** D.LeClair of Swanzey explained that he had sent an email to the administration and the Athletic Director regarding the Varsity Boys Basketball Team. His son was demoralized by the coach and wanted to quit the team. He was so upset he did not want to go to school. He said there are certain students that are embarrassed in front of the other players. This is mental abuse. He is asking that the coach be terminated. He said the situation hurts him more than his son. S.Peters explained that he appreciates the comments but you should not discuss students or coaches in public.

3. **Celebrate # MRSD:** J. Rathbun reported on the following students who won the Spelling Bee in their school: Cutler-Marco Smith and Aubree Lewis, Emerson-Isabella Suprenant and Elias Gentile, Troy-Dominic Lerio and Gabriel Dominguez. Those six students will move on to the State Spelling Bee. Congratulations!!

James Wiley, a paraprofessional at Emerson who has worked in the district for 16 years has passed away. He was described as a very special person, a great person and will be missed.

Rob Colbert, a MRHS Varsity Girls Basketball Coach and former School Board Member has passed away. He was described as an honorable man. S. Peters said that he was thankful for his service to the district. He was very passionate. He will be missed. The Board had a moment of silence for James Wiley and Rob Colbert.

4. MATTERS FOR SCHOOL BOARD INFORMATION & DISCUSSION:

a. Student Government Report: Owen Higgins reported that the Student Government conducted a recycling survey. They have presorting bins in 20 classrooms. The group is also looking at food lunch options.

b. 2023/24 School Board Goals: The Board reviewed the list of Board Goals.
i. Hire New Superintendent: MRSD has a new Superintendent Jeremy Rathbun. Congratulations!!! This goal is complete.

ii. Document Educational Philosophy: The Education Committee has completed this process and the Board voted on it.

iii. Propose First Educational Strategy: This is work of the Education Committee to the Board.

iv. Complete Annual CIP: The Finance and Facilities Committee completed the Annual CIP and it was approved by the Board.

v. Propose Project-Specific Warrant Articles: There are no project specific warrant articles being proposed.

vi. Cohort Study: This study continues and is regularly presented by J. Rathbun to the Board.

c. Overview of upcoming board self-evaluations: S.Peters passed out the Board self-evaluation to the Board. He explained that the questions do not change each year except the ones at the end. He is asking to have the evaluations back to collect at the next meeting and the results at the following meeting.

d. Recap of Deliberative Session: S.Peters explained after the Deliberative Session the Board voted to support the change to Article Three. Article Three was amended from \$1.00 to \$54,000.00. This amount will round out the Special Ed. Expendable Trust to \$400,000.00. K. Noonan explained that J. O'Shaughnessy explained that the funds in the Special Education Expendable Trust Fund can be used even if there are still funds in the budget. He said most districts wait until the funds in the budget have been spent. There are no restrictions but the best practice is to wait.

e. Warrant Articles in Plain English: S. Peters explained that currently there is no Community Relations Committee for this. He is looking for ideas for the green sheet. L. Steadman volunteered to do the green sheet or she will look at last year's warrant articles in plain English, complete and share with the Board. **MOTION:** S. Peters **MOVED** to empower L. Steadman to write the Warrant Articles in Plain English using last year's template. **SECOND:** S. Lawlor. **VOTE:** 9.829/0/0/3.171. **Motion passes.**

5. MATTERS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION:

a. Timing of June 2024 Graduation Ceremony: S.Peters explained that this topic was brought up through Public Comments. After years of the Meet of Champions date conflicting with graduation the Board voted to change it to a Friday night. Being on a Friday it is the same night as the KHS graduation. The Board needs to decide if graduation should stay on Friday or move to Saturday. J. Rathbun explained this is the first year that it is on the school calendar due to snow days. **MOTION:** K. Noonan **MOVED** to change the graduation date to Saturday June 8, 2024. **SECOND:** C. McDaniel-Thomas. **DISCUSSION:** K. Noonan explained that she wished the Board had done a survey. She did a survey on Facebook and most of the families want to have graduation on Saturday. There were a lot of family conflicts and only a few sporting event issues. J. Rathbun explained that the tent is all set for Friday or Saturday and the AV tech is okay with either date. It will be tough but good to go. He also commented that the administration was asked to have it on Friday and now it is being changed back. We did what you asked us to do. There is no rain date if it is on Saturday. The graduates will be dry under the tent. He had asked KHS if they would move their date. Keene's response was a chuckle and a no. J. Rathbun commented that there are 2 or 3 members to attend the Meet of Champions, a few members of the class might have a baseball game as well as the members of the softball team. It is not easy to move things around. If the day is Saturday it is at 10:00 AM. K.Noonan commented that 3 years ago when the discussion began it was a different group of people. S. Lawlor commented that it has always been Saturday. **VOTE:** 6.605/3.224/0/3.171. **Motion passes.**

b. Northlands Music & Arts Festival Donation (\$3000) to MRMHS Music: J. Rathbun explained that this donation came in over the summer but got lost in the transition to a new Superintendent. **MOTION:** K. Noonan **MOVED** to accept the donation from Northlands Music & Art Festival Donation in the amount of \$3000. **SECOND:** B. Tatro **VOTE:** 8.731/0/1.098/3.171. **Motion passes.**

c. MRMHS Volleyball Club: J. Rathbun presented 2 clubs that the students and parents would like to see at the school. A Volleyball Club and a Powerlifting Club. The groups were told that any new clubs need to be approved by the Board. D. LeClair asked if there were any stipends and who would coach. J. Rathbun commented that there is no budget and they are aware of that. **MOTION:** J. Cesaitis **MOVED** to accept the proposals for a new Volleyball Club at Emerson and a Powerlifting Club at the MRMHS. **SECOND:** C. McDaniel-Thomas. **DISCUSSION:** J.Rathbun explained the clubs are adult supervised, background checks and clubs are not part of the NHIAA. He also said this came to L. Spencer from a student. **VOTE:** 9.829/0/0/3.171. **Motion passes.**

d. Approve the Consent Agenda

- i. **January 2, 2024 Minutes**
- ii. **January 23, 2024 Minutes**
- iii. **Manifest:**

iv. **Budget Transfer: MOTION:**D. LeClair **MOVED** to approve January 2, 2024 School Board Meeting Minutes, January 23, 2024 School Board Meeting Minutes, the manifest in amount of \$3,603,624.49 and the budget transfer requested by J. Morin in the amount of \$560,000.00 from multiple lines in the budget to Private Tuition. **SECOND:**9.829/0/0/3.171. **Motion passes.**

v. **2024/25 School Calendar (Draft):** J. Rathbun would ask to have the draft calendar voted on at the next meeting, before February vacation. J. Rathbun was asked about blizzard bags. He said that they are not worthwhile, not a huge benefit. The Board discussed the calendar, the soft openings and a 2-week Winter break. S. Lawlor commented that kids regress with the long break and it is hard on the teachers.

6. SETTING NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA:

- a. **Board Self-evaluations (prior to the new Board forms)**
- b. **2024/25 School Calendar**
- c. **Renovation Project Update**

7. **Public Comments:** Heather Dean of Swanzey thanked the Board for discussing graduation. She commented that the Senior Athlete posters should be displayed. The students work very hard and need to be recognized. She also commented that the Football Coach should be reinstated.

8. **8:14 PM Motion to Enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely adversely affect the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. MOTION:** D.LeClair **MOVED** Motion to enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely adversely affect the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. **SECOND:** S.Lawlor **VOTE:** 9.829/0/0/3.171. **Motion passes.**

9. **8:30 PM Motion to Enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (k) Consideration by a school board of entering into a student or pupil tuition contract authorized by RSA 194 or RSA 195-A: MOTION:** J.Cesaitis **MOVED** to Enter into

Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (k) Consideration by a school board of entering into a student or pupil tuition contract authorized by RSA 194 or RSA 195-A. **SECOND:** K. Noonan. **VOTE:** 9.829/0/0/3.171. **Motion passes.**

10. Return to Public Session: MOTION: S.Peters **MOVED** to SEAL the February 6, 2024 8:30 PM Non-Public Meeting Minutes until February 6, 2025. **SECOND:** K. Noonan. **VOTE:** 9.829/0/0/3.171. **Motion passes.**

11. ADJOURNMENT: MOTION: C.McDaniel-Thomas **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 PM. **SECOND:** K. Noonan **VOTE:** 9.829/0/0/3.171. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording Secretary

VOTING KEY:Yes/No/Abstain/Absent