

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
School Board Meeting Minutes
October 19, 2021 (corrected 12.28.2021)
MRMHS Library/Zoom, Swanzey, NH

Members Present: Winston Wright, Colleen Toomey, Scott Peters, Michelle Connor, Karen Wheeler via Zoom, Lisa Steadman, Nick Mosher via Zoom, Brian Bohannon via Zoom, Dan LeClair, Cheryl McDaniel-Thomas, Betty Tatro, Eric Stanley and Kristin Noonan.

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

Also Present: L. Aivaliotis, Recording Secretary

“We collaborate not just to teach, but also to engage and educate every student in our district in an environment that is challenging, caring and safe, while fostering life-long learning.”

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** S. Peters called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.
2. **6:30 PM ENTER INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION: MOTION:** B. Tatro **MOVED** to enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3-II (I) Consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel, either in writing or orally, to one or more members of the public body even where legal counsel is not present. **SECOND:** E. Stanley **VOTE:** 10.544/0/0/2.456. **Motion passes.**

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no public comments.
4. **CELEBRATE MRSD:** No information available.
5. **MATTERS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION:**
 - a. **Overview of Construction Manager 3-Bid Hiring Process (Barker Associates):** S. Peters explained he has invited K. Barker the lead architect for the Elementary School Renovation/Project to explain the bidding process for the construction manager. K. Barker explained the architect's design gets bids and usually awarded to the lowest bidder. The problem is we want a number fairly early in the process. In March of 2022 the voters will approve the money for the design. The project will cost roughly 20 million dollars and the District must pay 1 million before the bond vote. In the beginning of the process you will need a construction manager. The architect will design the project but the construction manager will submit a proposal, estimate costs for the project, collect sub bids and hire the subs. When hiring

a construction manager, you will want to know the company's bonding capacity, their insurance rates, financial capacity and company size. The warrantee is typically one year but some do 2 years. After the first year there are a lot of adjustments. In February of 2022 the Board will hire a construction manager. K. Barker commented that he is holding out on the design to hear from the public first. He hopes through the Input Sessions that he will understand the district a little better. He would like to take the comments from the Input Sessions and use those to complete the floor plan design by the end of the year. The hiring of the construction manager happens after the design. The construction manager will give a GMP and after that they are responsible for future bids. The Board will be able to introduce K. Barker and possibly the Construction Manager at the Deliberative Session. The State Aid application is due in June of 2022. By having the construction manager first, we will have an accurate number for the application which will help with the State. K. Barker explained in the early phases of the design we do not have details. The per square foot is where we will be. After more details are completed they can then go to the favorite subcontractors and get the costs. There will be estimates on one page and then 20-30 pages of bids. At some point the contractor will give his GMP. Adjustments can be made within the budget. If there are mistakes there could be a contingency or the Construction Manager will have to eat it. When hiring a construction company make sure they have insurance. The construction company will hire subs. No more than 10% of the work should be done by the Construction Manager's company. The Clerk of the Works is an independent person and this position's sole job is to be the eyes and ears of the project. This person will be on the job site, reviewing design but does not have the authority to change it, if something is not right it needs to be responded to and to make sure the work every day is done ethically and the design is followed. This person cannot be an employee of the District. The School Board will hire the Construction Manager directly. K. Barker will write the RFP. The Board does not need to have a Construction Manager for this Deliberative Session. The position needs to be filled prior to the application.

b. Board Chair Report:

1. Input Session Slide Deck and Handout: S. Peters explained the CRC is preparing for the upcoming Input Sessions. The committee will be holding their first Input Session here in the auditorium tomorrow to discuss MTC and Cutler. S. Peters and the CRC have put together a slideshow which they will present at each Input Session but will focus specifically on the school in the town the committee is visiting. The ultimate goal is to take the list of questions and comments from the public and create a document for K. Barker. He will use that information for the school designs.

c. Operations/Superintendent's Report:

1. NH SASS Update: L. Witte explained she has provided information on the NH SASS Program. Asymptomatic testing was discussed at the Superintendent's meeting. Some districts have adopted the program. She is contacting UNH to get information on how the symptomatic issue is working and the training of staff to do the test.

If you have willing people it is possible. If the district were to decide to have symptomatic testing, you would need to have one person as the point person to drive to Concord and pick up the tests. Asymptomatic, the State may provide people to administer the test. We could see what the interest is and if it is feasible. The general concern is sending sick kids to school. She would also hate to add a burden to the nurses at this time. If we want to go asymptomatic testing down the road. Is there a desire? Her concern is personnel. B. Bohannon asked what is needed for personnel to implement this program. L. Witte explained we currently have vacancies in the district, if we were to train people for this program they may have to be pulled away from their duties to do the testing. It was commented that we can use the CARES funds and hire. L. Witte explained every district has vacancies. Asymptomatic is different because some of the vendors will provide support and some will not. She is asking for a clear direction from the Board. N. Mosher commented that the information will be useful to detect COVID before the spread. It would be great to focus on cohorts, avoid mixing kids in different groups. L. Witte explained if there is a positive case we report it. It may not be on the tracker. There were 2 separate unrelated clusters at Troy and MRMHS. All of the other cases have no additional cohorts or spread.

MOTION: K. Noonan **MOVED** to direct the administration to further explore options to manage symptomatic COVID testing. **SECOND:** K. Wheeler. **DISCUSSION:** It was

commented that this will help families get the results sooner. People cannot afford to wait and lose time at work. L. Witte explained parental consent is required. K. Noonan commented that asymptomatic does not feel helpful. L. Witte explained asymptomatic by consent. It may be the same students each week. There needs to be a large percentage of buy in. K. Wheeler commented that this testing will help staff and students go back to work and school sooner. N. Mosher said asymptomatic testing is useful for students and staff. He said the Keene School District is doing it and at his work as well. B.Bohannon said it is an option. B.Bohannon would like to add a **friendly amendment** and add asymptomatic. K. Noonan would disagree. We are strapped with everyone working. It is easier to do one at a time. **MOTION:** B. Bohannon **MOVED** to amend the motion to include asymptomatic testing. **SECOND:** N. Mosher.

DISCUSSION: B. Tatro would agree with K. Noonan see how we do first before adding another. N. Mosher is in favor. What is the logic if symptomatic goes well? B. Bohannon would rather host both positions. If there is no interest at least we tried. There are people who want to volunteer. There is not a lot of time to see if it is working. N. Mosher asked if the State requires a self-administered test. L. Witte said the State has strict requirements. She explained asymptomatic will get State funding, symptomatic can use the CARES funds, it is not part of the NH SASS Program. C. Toomey asked if we have looked at other programs. L. Witte said yes. N. Mosher asked if we have looked at our own program. L. Witte does not believe we are permitted to do that. S. Peters commented we are trying to fill a gap for families. We are trying to do something we never do for a sickness. We are turning into a medical facility. We are a school. Do not take away from the staff's direction. **VOTE on amendment:** 3.166/9.834/0/0. **Motion fails.** **DISCUSSION:** C. Toomey asked how many kids are there per nurse. L. Witte explained it is not necessarily a nurse who will give the test. She would not require them to do the test. They

are maxed out on their duties. **VOTE on original motion:** 10.757/2.243/0/0. **Motion passes.** B. Tatro would suggest asking the EMTs to help and volunteer.

2. Motion asking for Remote Learning to be an option:

MOTION: K. Wheeler **MOVED** that the School Board write a letter to the State to support continued options allowing remote learning. **SECOND:** M. Connor **DISCUSSION:** C.

McDaniel-Thomas asked if this is local control. L. Witte explained it is local control when it is convenient. It was an educational proposal without input from an educator. The Blizzard bags came about with the help of all people from the education department and superintendents. If it goes into effect, we will need to follow. L. Witte explained there is a meeting on November 10 she will be attending in opposition. L. Witte said having options is good. Look at what happened last week. K. Wheeler commented if we continue with the staffing situation she would hate to have kids in a learning lab. L. Witte explained last week if we did not have remote learning we would have lost educational hours. L. Witte is not a fan of remote learning or blizzard bags, face to face is the best. Personal interaction with the children is best. **VOTE:** 13/0/0/0. **Motion passes.**

3. GMR-FY23 Health Insurance: J. Morin informed the Board that the GMR from Health Trust is 8.4% and will be figured into the proposed FY23 budget.

4. Timing for Public Hearing for Trust Refund: J. Morin explained there is a need for a Public Hearing to accept the Health Trust Refund. The refund is in the amount of \$565,332.65. The Board will hold the Public Hearing prior to the November 2, 2021 Board Meeting.

6. MATTERS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION:

a. Budget Transfers: J. Morin presented two budget transfers being requested by C. Woods. **MOTION:** C. McDaniel-Thomas **MOVED** to approve the following budget transfers requested by C. Woods and presented by the administration: A transfer from Speech and Language Assistant Salaries to Special Education Contracted Services in the amount of \$42,000.00 and a transfer from Psychologist Salaries to Special Education Contracted Services in the amount of \$84,000.00. **DISCUSSION:** J. Morin informed the Board that the District has not been able to fill the positions and are hiring contracted services. **VOTE:** 13/0/0/0. **Motion passes.**

b. Motion on the Manifest: **MOTION:** B. Tatro **MOVED** to approve the manifest in the amount of \$975,399.17 as presented by the administration. **SECOND:** C. Toomey **VOTE:** 10.764/0/0/2.236. **Motion passes.**

c. Finance/Facilities Proposed Warrant Articles:

1. Review of 2022 CIP Project List: S. Peters explained the Finance/Facilities committee met and discussed a few warrant articles to bring to the Board. The committee set the inflation rate at 4% which K. Barker had agreed. The committee reviewed the individual project list for the district. The entire project list for MTC will be completed with the

Elementary Renovation Project. The committee prioritized the list and came up with 2 motions for consideration as warrant articles. The first article is for misc. maintenance in the amount of \$325,000.00 and the second article for renovations to the high school in the amount of \$1,069,000.00. M. Connor asked about life safety issues. S. Peters explained there are multiple life safety issues throughout the district but they are all part of the Elementary School Renovation Project. The projects included are the ventilation and renovations to the 800 wing, demolition of the portables at the MRMHS and a fire alarm system at Gilsum. Troy has a small fire alarm repair in the amount of \$2000.00 which J. Morin said she could find in the budget. It was commented that MTC can be covered with the surplus and we can take smaller items and possibly cover them in the budget. N. Mosher said we need to maintain the buildings. There will be considerable debate with concerns about leaving some of the critical items off. It was explained they will be covered in the 2023 bond. K. Noonan thanked the Finance/Facilities for all of the work. Nice to see if we have unallocated funds we could chip away at this list. She agrees with the plan going forward. B. Tatro thanked K. Barker and S. Peters for doing the work. The Board would like to know the response of the Budget Committee regarding the line in the budget for small projects.

d. Policies for Second Read:

- 1. JI-Student Rights and Responsibilities:**
- 2. JIA/JIC-Student Due Process/Student Conduct:**
- 3. JICD-Student Discipline and Due Process:**
- 4. IGA-Curriculum Development:** K. Noonan was not at the last

meeting and was wondering if there were any questions on the policies. She also included policies that the committee also looked at. **MOTION:** K. Noonan **MOVED** on behalf of the Policy Committee to accept the policy changes recommended by the Policy Committee.

SECOND: W. Wright **VOTE:** 11.665/0/1.335/0. **Motion passes.**

e. October 5, 2021 Minutes: **MOTION:** C. McDaniel-Thomas **MOVED** to approve the October 5, 2021 Public and Non-Public Meeting Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** W. Wright **VOTE:** 9.794/0/3.206/0. **Motion passes.**

f. Education Support Professionals Day (11/17): L. Witte explained in the Spring we do a large all Professional Recognition Day and we recognize everyone. For Education Support Professionals Day, they would like to do the same and recognize everyone.

g. SETTING MEETING'S AGENDA:

- 1. Hearing for Health Trust Refund**
- 2. State Test Results**
- 3. Update on Input Sessions**
- 4. Grounds Expendable Trust**
- 5. Staff Well-being**
- 6. Budget Books**

7. **Public Comments:** L. Steadman attended the Delegate Assembly and informed the Board that their Resolution passed as well as the Resolution which included part of our last year's Resolution. There were only 2 Resolutions that had passed and they both were just mentioned.

M. Diven would like to volunteer to be trained to help with the COVID testing and she is sure there are other people in the community who would as well. She said there is interest.

8. **8:50 PM NON-PUBLIC SESSION: under RSA 91-A:3, II (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee: MOTION:** W. Wright **MOVED** to enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3,II (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee. **SECOND:** C. McDaniel-Thomas. **VOTE:** 12.243/0/.757/0. **Motion passes. SEALED MINUTES**

The Board Sealed the 8:50 PM Non-Public Meeting Minutes until November 1, 2021.

9. **8:56 PM 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:** C. McDaniel-Thomas **MOVED** 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:** B. Tatro. **VOTE:** 12.787/0/.213/0. **Motion passes.**

10. **ADJOURNMENT: MOTION:** W. Wright **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 9:21 PM. **SECOND:** E. Stanley **VOTE:** 13/0/0/0. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording Secretary

VOTING KEY: Yes/No/Abstain/Absent