

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
School Board Meeting Minutes
January 5, 2021
Zoom Virtual Meeting, Swanzey, NH

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

Administration Present: L. Witte, Superintendent, J. Rathbun, Director of Curriculum and Student Assessment, C. Woods, Director of Student Services 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 opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

2. Public Comments: M. Divens hoped everyone had a wonderful holiday. She commented that her daughter who earned high honors through remote was not on the list in the local paper. Apparently, remote students were excluded from the list. She would hope this will change.

D. Caper asked if the Board was going to discuss going full remote in the meeting tonight.

H. Sokol thanked the Board for enhancing the mask policy. It was not popular or easy but would agree it is for the safety of our kids. The situation in the State is getting worse. Thank you for taking a stance.

3. PUBLIC HEARING: S. Peters opened the Public Hearing regarding the Health Trust’s Return of Surplus Funds: **MOTION:** B. Bohannon **MOVED** for the District to accept the Health Trust’s Return of surplus in the amount of \$283,521.52 as unanticipated funds. **SECOND:** E. Stanley. **DISCUSSION:** **MOTION:** M. Connor **MOVED** to amend the motion that the District refund the employees their share of the \$283,521.52 Health Trust Return of FY 2020 surplus accepted as unanticipated revenues and that except for the funds used to refund the employees their share of the refund, no additional monies of this refund be spent without prior approval of the School Board. **SECOND:** W. Wright. **DISCUSSION:** J. Morin explained at what percentage the employees and the district will receive the funds. She said if it is based on 82%-18%. The District will receive \$232,487.65 and the employees will receive \$51,033.87. This example is if it were a straight 82%-18%. **VOTE:** 13/0/0/0. **Motion passes.**

S.Peters CLOSED the PUBLIC HEARING.

4. MATTERS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION:

a. Proposed Operating Budget(s): L. Witte explained the proposed budget number is \$33,307,289.00, which \$19,000.00 different from what was presented to the Budget Committee. The difference is due to insurance. There was restructuring of positions at an increase of \$55,000.00. **MOTION:** K. Noonan **MOVED** to approve the proposed FY 2021/22 Proposed Budget number in the amount of \$33,307,289.00 **SECOND:** W. Wright.

DISCUSSION: L. Witte explained the Budget Committee will determine the default number. J. Morin has prepared the information for the committee and it is usually accepted with little change. The default number is \$250,000.00 higher than the proposed number. L. Witte said the Budget Committee has the authority to change the proposed and default numbers after the Public Hearing. **VOTE:** 11.665/0/1.335/0. **Motion passes.**

b. Approve/Support Warrant Article 1:

c. Approve/Support any new Warrant Articles:

d. Approve Draft Warrant Articles in Plain English: S. Peters explained there is no need for a motion tonight. C. McDaniel-Thomas reviewed the warrant articles in plain English with the Board. The CRC worked on this earlier this evening. M. Connor asked for a modification in Warrant Article Two stating the funds are to (replace existing ventilators). The Board reviewed the remaining articles. The contract warrant articles are in the order that they were ratified. Article Seven is for the Special Education Expendable Trust, currently this account has \$333,922.76 in it. The Board will leave \$1.00 on the ballot just in case it needs to be increased at the Deliberative Session due to unforeseen placements. The Board will approve the Warrant Articles in Plain English at their next meeting.

e. Approve CRC Mailer/Pamphlet for Construction Projects: C. McDaniel-Thomas reviewed the changes made to the pamphlet. The numbers for Gilsum and Fitzwilliam have been corrected and the acronym MPR has been explained. C. McDaniel-Thomas in regards to Gilsum she said K. Barker said the smaller school numbers are not as accurate. The amount could go down 1 million dollars but after the blueprints. B. Tatro questioned the amount of money for Gilsum. She thought we were going to back it down. **MOTION:** C. McDaniel-Thomas **MOVED** to adopt the elementary school construction pamphlet as presented by the CRC Committee and mail to all homes in the District prior to the March 2021 vote. **SECOND:** D. LeClair. **DISCUSSION:** K. Noonan appreciates the work of the CRC but she will be voting no. The Fitzwilliam taxpayers will not agree with the numbers. L. Steadman said some of the towns that pay taxes are not getting any renovations in their towns. B. Bohannon commented it is a fair amount of government money the District will be getting. This opportunity may not happen again and we may have to pay the entire amount in the future. N. Mosher is concerned there will not be State funding available and there are more immediate needs in the District. He will vote no. S. Peters said the Board has already moved on Option 10 and we are now voting on the motion for the pamphlet. K. Noonan feels the numbers are still off. N. Mosher said the Board voted as a whole but as an individual he has a different view. B. Tatro said we need to submit the application to the State to receive the funds. **VOTE:** 10.915/1.328/.757/0. **Motion passes.**

f. Assign Board Members to attend the NHSBA Annual Delegate Assembly on 1/23/21: S. Peters explained the NHSBA Annual Delegate Assembly is on January 23, 2021. L. Steadman who has attended sessions in the past explained the process to the Board. S. Peters explained the Board will appoint a Board Member to attend on behalf of the Board. The Board will review all of the resolutions at the next meeting and send the Board Member to vote on behalf of this Board. **MOTION:** S. Peters **MOVED** to appoint L. Steadman to

attend the NHSBA Annual Delegate Assembly as the MRSD Board representative on January 23, 2021. **SECOND:** C. McDaniel-Thomas. **VOTE:** 13/0/0/0. **Motion passes.**

g. Deliberative Session Structure: L. Witte met with L. Sutton, K. Thiebault, B. Hutwelker and J. O'Shaughnessy to discuss the Deliberative Session. The proposal is for Swanzey and Richmond to meet at the MRMHS Auditorium, Fitzwilliam to meet at Emerson, Troy to meet at Troy School and Gilsum and Roxbury to meet at Gilsum. There will be an assistant moderator at each location. Social distancing and masks will be required. We will have a contracted service help with the virtual event. N. Mosher would like to ask the people in his town how they feel. L. Sutton has sent this out to the towns prior to Christmas. L. Witte said the classrooms at MRMHS may need to be used if the auditorium is full. She explained to participate you must be present but can view only by Zoom. L. Witte said it was suggested to have the pre-meeting and post meeting on separate days. Cleaning will be taken care of. There is no obstacle or burden in regards to cleaning on Saturday. **MOTION:** W. Wright **MOVED** to approve the strategy for a hybrid Deliberative Session on January 30, 2021. **SECOND:** M. Connor. **VOTE:** 11.665/.213/1.122/0. **Motion passes.**

h. Swanzey Election Day Request: The Town of Swanzey has asked the Board to reconsider the request to use the MRMHS for voting day. S.Peters said whatever the decision we need to send a correspondence to Swanzey. L. Witte said it is a staff issue and the hybrid days would be lost. It is different from a scheduling stand point. There are a lot of pieces. If we close one school, we close them all. It is not safe for the students if the public were to use the auditorium. It is also a cleaning issue as well. B. Tatro suggested changing the hybrid days. L. Witte said bussing is an issue in that case. E. Stanley suggested they use the Whitcomb Hall. **MOTION:** D. LeClair **MOVED** to allow the Town of Swanzey to hold the March election at the MRMHS (one-time exception for the March 9, 2021 election) The District will switch to a virtual school day. **SECOND:** C. Toomey **DISCUSSION:** L. Steadman would agree with E. Stanley. There may not be as many people as in November. K. Noonan is concerned with the deep cleaning if it is a long night. L. Steadman suggested the counting be done at another location. **Friendly amendment: the Town of Swanzey must move the booths and counting of ballots to another location once voting is closed (7:00 PM) to allow the cleaning prior to the next school day.** M. Connor said we already voted on this in the negative and the kids need hybrid. She will not vote yes. K. Wheeler asked S. Peters if this motion was in line with the Board policy. S. Peters said this is not a motion to reconsider. **VOTE:** 6.606/6.394/0/0. **Motion passes.**

i. Troy Town Meeting Request: *N. Mosher leaves at 8:30 PM.* L. Steadman explained the Town of Troy is requesting the use of the Troy School for their Annual Meeting on March 10, 2021. She said the meetings do not usually go past 11:00 PM. She also said the Town of Troy would clean up either at night or in the morning. J. Morin explained the custodians leave before 10:30 PM. They will have to have time to clean and disinfect with the machines. L. Witte explained cleaning in the morning is not an option with the preparation of food. L. Witte mentioned that the Town of Fitzwilliam made a similar request. S. Peters suggested the Town Meeting be moved to Friday with plenty of time to clean and disinfect. L. Steadman said it could not be moved. **MOTION:** L. Steadman **MOVED** to approve the building use request by the Town of Troy to host the Town Meeting on the evening of March 10, 2021. The Town of Troy shall be responsible for providing their own seating and the town must vacate the building by 10:00 PM to allow time for the chemical disinfectant process to be completed before the end of the evening. **SECOND:** B. Tatro. **DISCUSSION:** K. Noonan will vote no. There are a lot more people and she is concerned for the custodians. S. Peters commented any town wanting to change their day to Friday or Saturday would be

better to consider. L. Steadman said the Town of Troy has looked at different venues. **VOTE:** 7.721/4.068/.998/.213. **Motion passes.**

j. Policies: (1st Read)

- i. KAA-School, Family and Community Partnerships:**
- ii. BEDB-Agenda Preparation and Dissemination:**
- iii. BEDDA-Board Meeting-Rules of Procedure & Order:**
- iv. BEDH-Public Comment and Participation at Board Meeting:**
- v. EBB-Safe Schools:**
- vi. GBCD-Background Investigations and Criminal History Check:**

MOTION: K. Noonan **MOVED** on behalf of the Policy Committee to retire Policy KAA and accept the changes to Policy BEDB, BEDDA, BEDH, EBB and GBCD as presented by the Policy Committee. **SECOND:** C. Toomey. **VOTE:** 12.303/0/.757/.213. **Motion passes.**

k. December 15, 2020 Minutes: MOTION: K. Noonan **MOVED** To approve the December 15, 2020 Public and Non-Public School Board Meeting Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** B. Tatro **VOTE:** 12.787/0/0/.213. **Motion passes.**

l. Manifest: MOTION: B. Tatro **MOVED** the manifest in the amount of \$1,543,893.77. **SECOND:** B. Tatro **VOTE:** 12.787/0/0/.213. **Motion passes.**

5. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION:

a. Board Goals: S. Peters commented the Education Committee is looking at a dashboard, Finance/Facilities has completed the CIP, CRC has prepared a pamphlet on the elementary renovation which is a huge milestone and the Policy Committee is working on the backlog of policies.

b. School Board Candidate Filing Period: S. Peters reminded the Board Members who need to file if they plan on running again for School Board, B. Bohannon, K. Noonan, C. McDaniel-Thomas, N. Mosher and S. Peters. The filing period is January 20-January 29, 2021.

c. Operations/Superintendent's Report:

i. Hybrid/Remote Counts: The hybrid/remote percentages are 80% hybrid and 20% remote. The information is in the packet.

ii. Swimming Update: L. Witte informed the Board the Swim Team did not have a venue and was not mentioned in the discussion of Winter Sports. The Swim Team does have a venue. She just wanted to inform the Board. She said there are a good number of kids interested.

L. Witte did receive an email but not a formal request from the Town of Swanzey to use the school building on February 2, 2021.

6. SETTING NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA:

- a. Approve High School Program of Studies for 2021/22**
- b. Votes to Support/Not Support Each of the 2021 NHSBA Proposed Resolutions**
- c. Warrant Article One**
- d. Update on Remote**
- e. Video from K. Barker**

7. **Public Comments:** There were no public comments.

8. **9:13 PM Motion to enter into a Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II(c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person: MOTION:** K. Wheeler **MOVED** to enter into a non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person. **SECOND:** W. Wright **VOTE:** 13/0/0/0. **Motion passes.**

9. **9:50 PM Motion to enter into a Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee: MOTION:** K. Wheeler **MOVED** to enter into a Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee. **SECOND:** W. Wright. **VOTE:** 13/0/0/0. **Motion passes.**

10. **ADJOURNMENT: MOTION:** W. Wright **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 9:54 PM. **SECOND:** L. Steadman **VOTE:** 13/0/0/0. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording Secretary

VOTING KEY:Yes/No/Abstain/Absent