

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
School Board Meeting Minutes
August 13, 2019
Monadnock Regional MS/HS, Swanzey, NH

Members Present: Winston Wright, Nicholas Mosher, Colleen Toomey, Rob Colbert, Brian Bohannon, Lisa Steadman, Kristie Wilder, Betty Tatro, Neil Moriarty, Kristen Noonan, Scott Peters and Eric Stanley. **Absent:** Karen Wheeler.

Administration Present: L. Witte, Superintendent, J. Rathbun, Director of Curriculum and Assessment.

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. Public Comments: There were no public comments.

2. MATTERS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION:

a. Feasibility Study Contract: L. Witte explained the Board had hired Warren Street Architect to prepare the feasibility study. The Facilities Committee had been working with K. Barker. K. Barker has since left Warren Street Architect. She would like to recommend to the Board to vote to have K. Barker continue with the feasibility study not under Warren Street Architect. **MOTION:** B. Bohannon **MOVED** to continue working with K. Barker on the feasibility study. **SECOND:** R. Colbert. **DISCUSSION:** L. Witte explained we are on track with the study and application. **VOTE:** 12.030/0/.213/.757. **Motion passes.**

b. Motions from Finance Committee:

i. Approve budget transfer totaling \$119,647.36: L. Witte explained the information on this transfer is in the Board packet. It is a budget transfer in the IT Dept. This is to cover the firewall agreement and intrusion monitoring. This amount is for one year of a multi-year contract. **MOTION:** N. Moriarty **MOVED** to approve the IT budget transfer in the

amount of \$119,647.36 as presented by the Finance Committee. **SECOND:** B. Tatro. **VOTE:** 12.243/0/0/.757. **Motion passes.**

ii. **Set the regular tuition rate for staff asking to send their child to this District at a 35% off the tuition rate including additional special education costs, transportation provided by the parent or guardian, reviewed on an annual basis and no new teacher or space required:** L. Witte explained the Finance Committee discussed this recommendation and would recommend a tuition rate of \$11,687.00. L. Steadman would like to wait until the discussion with the Policy Committee on this motion later on the agenda.

MOTION: B. Bohannon **MOVED** to table the discussion until later in the meeting. **SECOND:** R. Colbert. **VOTE:** 12.243/0/0/.757. **Motion passes.**

iii. **Allow the Facilities Committee to use their discretion for approval on the application for building aid:** **MOTION:** B. Bohannon **MOVED** to allow the Facilities Committee to use their discretion for approval on the application for building aid. **SECOND:** N. Moriarty. **DISCUSSION:** L. Witte explained due to the timing of the building aid application and the timing of the Board Meetings the Finance Committee felt they should make this motion. R. Colbert explained this gives us a place holder regarding the application. It was commented that there is no specific design and it does not lock us in. We do not have to choose an option at this time. **VOTE:** 12.243/0/0/.757. **Motion passes.**

c. **Motions from Facilities Committee:**

i. **Approve Emerson Play Structures from Premier Park and Play for \$36,965.00:** **Motion:** N. Mosher **MOVED** to approve Premier Park and Play as the vendor for the Emerson Play structures as presented by the Finance Committee. **SECOND:** W. Wright. **DISCUSSION:** L. Witte explained this was the lowest bid and the funds were encumbered. **VOTE:** 12.243/0/0/.757. **Motion passes.**

ii. **Approve painting at MRMHS from S & S Painting for \$41,775.00:** **MOTION:** N. Moriarty **MOVED** to approve S & S Painting as the vendor for the work to be done at the MS/HS as presented by the Finance Committee. **SECOND:** R. Colbert. **VOTE:** 12.243/0/0/.757. **Motion passes.**

iii. **Approve parking lot study at MTC from Field Stone for \$12,975.00:** **MOTION:** B. Bohannon **MOVED** to approve Field Stone to prepare the MTC parking lot study in the amount of \$12,975.00 as presented by the Finance Committee. **SECOND:** N. Moriarty

DISCUSSION: L. Witte explained this is to be paid for with the anticipated savings from the feasibility study. R. Colbert commented this study came about after 2 accidents at MTC. **VOTE:** 12.243/0/0/.757. **Motion passes.**

d) Policies:

i. BDA-R: motion to waive second read: MOTION: S. Peters **MOVED** on behalf of the Policy Committee to update Policy BDA-R to include three new cyclical activities, and to remove the requirement to transfer food service account funds and to waive the second read. **SECOND:** K. Noonan **VOTE:** 10.915/1.115/.213/.757. **Motion passes.**

ii. JFAB: motion to waive second read: MOTION: S. Peters **MOVED** to on behalf of the Policy Committee to update Policy JFAB with recommendations from the committee and to waive the second read. **SECOND:** B. Tatro. **DISCUSSION:** It was commented this policy did not make it into the July Board packet. The Finance Committee is suggesting employees pay 65% of the tuition. B. Bohannon said the employees will not be able to afford that rate. E. Stanley suggested tuition free and to use it as a benefit for the employees. R. Colbert said it is 15 days before school and there are employees asking to come tuition free. Making them wait is immoral. N. Moriarty said this would be a good hiring tool. N. Mosher said the taxpayers will have to pay this. If they want to go to our schools let them become part of the community. L. Steadman would suggest pulling out #1 of the policy and move forward.

MOTION: N. Moriarty **MOVED** to table the motion. **SECOND:** R. Colbert. **VOTE:** 8.017/4.226/0/7.57. **Motion passes.** S. Peters explained the committee brought this to the Board as asked for. It was not discussed in the July Meeting. What does the Board want? R. Colbert said there are gray areas. L. Witte would suggest a motion to allow the two students asking to attend the District schools. R. Colbert would agree the families are up in the air. **MOTION:** R. Colbert **MOVED** to renew the approval for the 2 students in question for 1 year. **SECOND:** B. Tatro. **DISCUSSION:** N. Mosher would disagree with this motion. It affects every student here. R. Colbert commented this is 2 students not 25. L. Witte said the students are currently enrolled students. **VOTE:** 9.911/.213/2.120/.757. **Motion passes.** **MOTION:** B. Bohannon **MOVED** to take 35% of tuition off the table. **SECOND:** R. Colbert **DISCUSSION:** E. Stanley would like to have 100% off tuition to attract students. **VOTE:** 11.245/.998/0/.757. **Motion passes.**

3. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION & DISCUSSION:

a) Board Chair Report:

i. **Committee Assignments: MOTION:** W. Wright **MOVED** to approve K. Wilder to the following committees: Extra-Curricular, CRC and Finance and to remove B. Bohannon from the Finance Committee. **VOTE:** 11.122/0/0/1.878. **Motion passes.** W. Wright will come off of the Finance Committee.

ii. **Communication of Committee Motions:** L. Witte asked that any motions from the committees should go to L. Sutton asap. The Chairperson of those committees should get the motions to L. Sutton.

iii. **Strengthening Collaborations with Budget Committee:** L. Steadman is asking the Board to support a mediator to help with communication between the Superintendent and the Budget Committee. The Board Chair, Budget Committee Chair and the Superintendent will sit down with the mediator. R. Colbert commented he had attended the meetings and the level of the emotions run very high. This is a reasonable request. We have some big ticket items and it would improve communication with honest dialogue. He would support this idea. L. Steadman explained this will not be an open meeting. N. Mosher said he is not in favor of a closed meeting. B. Tatro is concerned if the Budget Committee will accept the invitation. S. Peters said we have a representative to their committee and they do not attend our meetings. We will spend money to offer this and give it our best. N. Mosher would like to see more joint meetings with the Budget Committee this year not just one. K. Noonan does not like spending money but will support this. **MOTION:** R. Colbert **MOVED** in an effort to improve relations between the Budget Committee, School Board and the Superintendent employ a mediator to host a session or sessions to improve communication, open communication in a private meeting if the Budget Committee agrees and to cap the cost at \$2500.00. **DISCUSSION:** S. Peters would suggest hiring a mediator that does not live in the district. W. Wright suggested doing this sooner than later. **VOTE:** 10.955/1.288/0/.757. **Motion passes.**

b) Operations/Superintendent's Report:

i. **Student Handbooks:** L. Witte explained she had emailed the Student Handbook out to the Board for review.

ii. Summer Hiring Update: L. Witte passed out information on the summer hirings.

iii. Human Resource Update: L. Witte explained P. Brown started on July 1, 2019. She is reviewing the SAU Handbook, she has tweaked it and will bring it back to the Board for review. She will be attending a job fair focusing on hiring and retaining substitutes. She has been doing exit interviews and making a few changes on the organizational chart. She has been a real positive impact since she came on board.

iv. Superintendent's Picnic: The picnic is scheduled for August 22, 2019. The Board is welcome.

J. Rathbun explained the number of positions still open in the various schools. L. Witte contacted a number of other superintendents in the area and they are also having the same problem filling positions. Friday August 23, 2019 is a welcome back celebration for the staff the Board is welcome.

c) Educational Report:

i. Data and Informational Dashboard: J. Rathbun passed out information to the Board on the data and dashboard. He has created a website in order to see the information on the individual schools. The State site is very easy to access. He asked the Board what information they are asking for. J. Rathbun will ask for reports from the Curriculum Chairs which is to attempt to give information not just data. N. Mosher would like to see the educators give structured information. He also would like to have the same test taken in order to see results and improvement. J. Rathbun explained with the federal grants we need to do the State testing. J. Rathbun explained 90% of the students have to participate. B. Bohannon asked if it has a direct impact. L. Witte said no. It is a data point. The change in the test is out of our control. Testing takes away from learning time. It is a huge stresser for some children to take a test. The State test is an accountability test.

ii. Student Data Report: J. Rathbun had presented real data to the Board with no names. He tried to explain why a child did poorly in one grade and better in another. There are outside conditions. The test is not the whole picture. B. Bohannon commented the Board is here to provide support when asked. J. Rathbun explained the Board has supported the

administration with spending \$200,000.00 on reading materials. Guidance is a topic which we will continue to discuss. The administration has asked for a guidance counselor at the MS/HS. We are not good at taking tests. The local data is not matching the State data. S. Peters commented to bring more to the table, be creative so we can support the efforts. B. Bohannon asked if there are things we can do to identify issues. J. Rathbun explained the principals and the administrative team talk alot about that. Title One is spread out and the focus is in the primary grades. Early intervention is the best intervention and small classrooms as well. N. Mosher thanked J. Rathbun for the information.

4. CONSENT AGENDA:

a. July 9, 2019 School Board Meeting Minutes: MOTION: B. Bohannon **MOVED** to approve the July 9, 2019 School Board Meeting Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** R. Colbert **VOTE:** 9.055/0/3.188/.757 **Motion passes.**

b. July 9, 2019 Non-Pubic: MOTION: R. Colbert **MOVED** to approve the July 9, 2019 Non-Public Meeting Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** B. Tatro. **VOTE:** 9.055/0/3.188/.757. **Motion passes.**

5. Setting Next Agenda:

- 1. SRO-lieutenant**
- 2. Lunch items-free and reduced lunch lines**
- 3. ACES presentation**
- 4. Enrollment**
- 5. Monitor Social Media Communication regarding summer issue**

6. Public Comments: L. Fisk thanked the Board for allowing her grandson to attend school this coming year. If you are going to revisit the policy, she hopes the Board would consider allowing him to attend through the school years.

B. Bohannon explained the Fall Sports Meeting was very positive.

7. L. Steadman called for a recess. J. Rathbun, L. Witte and N. Moriarty leave the meeting.

8. **Motion to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a): MOTION:**R. Colbert **MOVED** to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a) The dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee. **SECOND:** B. Bohannon **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

9. **ADJOURNMENT: MOTION:** S. Peters **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 9:56 PM. **SECOND:** B. Tatro **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording Secretary