

**Monadnock Regional School District
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
December 20, 2023
MRMHS Library, Swanzey, NH**

Members Present: Wayne Lechliden, Nancy Carney, Edward Sheldon, Robert Audette, Anne Marie Osheyack, Doug Bersaw, Jon Hoden, Adam Hopkins, Betty Tatro, School Board liaison via Zoom, Dan Coffman via Zoom and Robert Young. **Absent:** Richie HKS Thackston, Unassigned seat for Gilsum and Unassigned seat for Roxbury.

Also Present: J. Rathbun, Assistant Superintendent via Zoom, J. Morin, Business Administrator and L. Aivaliotis, Recording Secretary

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

2. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

a. **October 24, 2023 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes and November 18, 2023 BC/SB Joint Meeting Minutes: MOTION:** W. Lechliden **MOVED** to approve the October 24 2023 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** R. Audette **VOTE:** R. Young-abstain, R. Audette-abstain remaining members-yes. **Motion passes. MOTION:** W.Lechliden **MOVED** to approve the November 18, 2023 BC/SB Joint Meeting Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** R.Audette. **VOTE:** R. Young-abstin remaining members-yes. **Motion passes.**

3. **Administration Report:**

a. **Transfer/expense:** J. Morin presented the budget transfers to the committee prior to the meeting. She asked if there were any questions. The committee did not have any questions. She explained that the transfers were made to identify where to cover the expenses. D. Bersaw commented on the remaining balance in the budget. He said it is a long way to June 30, 2023. He asked if we get to zero in the budget can we go to the Special Ed.Expendable Trust. J. Morin is hoping it does not get to that point but that is an option. **A. M. Osheyack arrives.** D. Bersaw commented on the increase in Special Ed. from 1.6 million to 2.5 million. He asked if it was an increase in students. J. Morin said it is the cost of a day facility and a residential facility. **D. Coffman arrives via Zoom.**

b. Budget Tracking Report: J. Morin explained that the overage in the District line is due to the out of district students and their related services. W. Lechliden would like to have information on placements and who receives the payment. **MOTION:** W. Lechliden **MOVED** to request from the administration information on the out of district placements, the cost and who is receiving the payments. **SECOND:** D. Bersaw. **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

c. Monthly Financial Report: There were no questions regarding the report.

d. ESSER Funds: J. Rathbun looked into the request from the Budget Committee and see if it is possible to use some of the ESSER Funds for Special Ed. expenses. It is true that the funds can be used for Special Ed. expenses. This is a one-time thing. They can be used because some of the students were affected by COVID. W. Lechliden and D Bersaw thanked J. Rathbun for checking into that. J. Rathbun said that the administration did have other ideas for the funds but it will be put to good use.

e. Staffing

i. Vacancy Update: J. Morin does not have an update on the vacancies but does not believe that there is much of a change.

4. Budget:

a. Default: J. Morin presented the proposed default budget to the committee. She would like the committee to review it. A. Hopkins would like the committee to forward questions to him. J. Morin explained the increase in the GMR. J. Morin also read the statute and definition for a default budget. W. Lechliden questioned the increase in the playground. J. Morin explained that it was for the mulch material under the playground which needs to be replaced every so often. It is required by the insurance company. She said that the district has not been purchasing new equipment but replacement equipment. W. Lechliden asked for a barebone default budget. He feels that the district should not pay for replacement furniture in a default budget. J. Morin explained that this committee reduced the budget last year in Special Ed. and we cannot put it back in the budget. D. Bersaw committed that we may have to tap into the Special Ed. Expendable Trust. The budget items have already been encumbered. J. Morin commented that the default budget is not supposed to be barebones. **B. Tatro arrives via Zoom.** A. M. Osheyack asked what gets lost in the default. J. Morin said she is not clear at this point. It is difficult to determine but a majority is staffing. E. Sheldon would like the Board to explain what is being cut with the default budget. W. Lechliden asked about the late buses at \$74,000.00. J. Morin explained that it is in the

current contract. The contract will be negotiated again next year. W. Lechluder asked about the new truck with 4 doors. Why not 2 doors? J. Morin explained the tools are inside the truck instead of in a tool box which would have to be purchased. W. Lechluder asked if they would purchase a 4 door truck at their home.

b. Operating Budget: J. Morin explained it is a 10.14% increase in the proposed budget. The bond is included. E. Sheldon commented that the increase is the GMR, bond, contracts and the increase in out of district placement. W. Lechluder said to reduce staff and E. Sheldon commented that you will reduce the quality of education at the school. A.M. Osheyack commented that people do not want to move here if we are reducing staff. W. Lechluder is not sold on the 10% increase. There is room to cut. He said with the energy saving with the new renovations he would hope to have staff reduced. He said at his work they are reducing. E. Sheldon commented with the GMR we did not know what was going to happen. A. Hopkins asked if there are specific lines to email him and he will ask J. Morin for the answers prior to the next meeting. The Public Hearing is on January 11, 2024. The last day to set the number is January 25, 2024. J. Morin mentioned that she believes that there may be an agreement for the contract to vote on.

c. Trust Fund Deposits and Warrant Articles: J. Morin explained the Trust Funds and explained they all have a balance. W. Lechluder commented that it may be worthwhile to deposit this year in the Special Education Expendable Trust. D. Coffman commented the committee stopped putting funds in Trusts because of the balances but that will change. W. Lechluder suggested \$25,000.00 in the Special Education Expendable Trust and make adjustments at the Public Hearing if needed. J. Morin read the balances of the Trust Accounts. W. Lechluder would like to leave all of the Trusts at the current balances except add \$25,000.00 to the Special Ed. Expendable Trust.

MOTION: W. Lechluder **MOVED** to leave the Expendable Trust Funds at their current balances except add \$25,000.00 to the Special Ed. Trust Fund Warrant Article.

SECOND: R. Audette. **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

5. Superintendent Comments:

a. Conval Lawsuit: It was commented that the only people who won on this lawsuit so far were the attorneys. The judge had said the number was too small.

6. School Board Liaison Comments: There is no report.

7. **Chairperson Comments:** A. Hopkins explained the committee will meet on January 10, 2024, January 11, 2024 is the Public Hearing and the Deliberative Session is on February 3, 2024.
8. **Next Meeting Agenda:** The next meeting of the Budget Committee is on January 11, 2024.
 - a. **Default Budget**
 - b. **Proposed Budget**
 - c. **Proposed Warrant Articles**
9. **Public Comments:** There were no public comments.
10. **Motion to adjourn: MOTION:** A.Hopkins **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 PM. **SECOND:** W. Lechluder **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording Secretary