

**Monadnock Regional School District  
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes  
November 29, 2022  
MRMHS Library/Zoom, Swanzey, NH**

**Budget Committee Members Present:** Wayne Lechliger, Ed Sheldon, Doug Bersaw, Dan Coffman, Robert Audette, Jon Hoden via Zoom, Adam Hopkins, Anne Marie Osheyack via Zoom and Nancy Carney. **Absent:** Scott Peters, School Board Liaison, Phyllis Peterson, Richard HKS Thackston, Open Seat for Roxbury and Open Seat for Gilsum.

**Also Present:** J. Morin, Business Administrator and L. Aivaliotis, MRSD Recording Secretary.

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

2. **Approval of the September 27, 2022 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes:**

**MOTION:** W. Lechliger **MOVED** to approve the September 27, 2022 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes as amended. **SECOND:** D.Coffman **VOTE:** E. Sheldon-abstain, D.Bersaw-abstain, members remaining-yes. **Motion passes.**

3. **Administration Reports:**

a. **Transfers/expenses:** J. Morin explained that there were a few transfers which the Board approved. The first transfer is in the amount of \$106,910 to Contracted Services from Social Worker's salary and benefits, the second transfer is in the amount of \$110,473 to Contracted Services from the Psychologist Salary and Benefits and the third transfer is to move \$10,000 from the MRMHS to the Troy School to cover staff.

b. **Monthly Expense Report/Budget Tracking Report:** J. Morin presented the documents to the committee in their packets. There were no questions at this time.

c. **Staffing:** A. Hopkins reviewed the information which L. Witte had presented in an email regarding the staffing issue. There are 25 vacancies. For the past 2 years it is abnormal for that amount of vacancies. The vacancies are in the budget. J. Morin explained a number of vacancies are from staff who will be retiring and we have budgeted a lower dollar amount to fill those positions.

d. **Out of District Placement:** A. Hopkins reviewed the information L. Witte presented. There are 22 students who are placed out of district. The placements are related to safety and the severity of the disability of the student. There are 2 elementary students, 4 Middle School and 16 high school students. There will be 2 additional placements next year. D. Bersaw asked why there is a large number in the high school. J. Morin said she cannot not speak to that. She explained the cost for the out of district students. She said there are a number of lines within the budget that are related to out of district placements. W. Lechliger spoke about a previous Special Ed. Director and the fact that more out of district students came back into the District. D. Coffman would like to know why the big number now. He spoke to parents of out of district students and those parents want their students back. Is it possible to have 2 paraprofessionals for the student? It was commented on where you will find the extra paras. J. Morin commented 2 paras will cost about \$100,000. W. Lechliger asked why with a SRO and a SSO and still this disruption. B. Audette would like to know the facility or school the students are going to. It was

explained that C. Woods submitted this information. W. Lechluder said we can request the breakdown of where the students attend but there are no names.

**4. Review:**

**a. Elementary school bond/project update:** J. Morin explained the next step for the Elementary Renovation Project is the Bond Hearing. It will be the same night as the Budget Hearing. Currently the amount being used for the project is \$41,000,000 but will be discussed at the Finance/Facilities Meeting on December 6, 2022. The amount is not carved in stone. Also at that meeting the committee will be discussing the proposed warrant article draft. The School Board will be running the Bond Hearing.

**b. MESSA Contract:** A. Hopkins commented that the Budget Committee received the contract early and that was great. The committee reviewed the yellow information sheet. W. Lechluder commented that he hopes there is nothing that they are not seeing in the contract. It was commented that there is a red line contract which contains the changes.

D. Coffman would like to know if the staffing issue has contributed to the out of district placement. J. Morin explained there were no Special Ed. staff or paras reduced last year. There was an increase in paras. It was commented by a committee member that there are some out of district students that need to be out but what if we had 2 paras for each student in order for them to come back. D. Coffman commented that we have to believe that the staff has a part in this. W. Lechluder asked if the craziness was wearing on the students. Can we say that the students were affected by COVID and use the COVID funds for out of district placement. A. Marie Osheyck commented that in her district students go out of district because there is a lack of programming. W. Lechluder would like the administration to share that information with the committee.

**c. Proposed Default Budget:** J. Morin shared a draft of the Default Budget with the committee. A. Hopkins explained that the default budget is based on last year's budget backing out one time expenses. It builds in required Union contracts and vendors. The proposed Default Budget is \$33,075,189. If the budget proposed by the administration fails the default budget will go into effect. The committee looked through the proposed default budget draft and had asked questions. The committee will review the proposed default budget draft, email questions to A. Hopkins and share with J. Morin. The committee asked what the proposed increase is going to be for the administration at the SAU. J. Morin explained that the conversation takes place in May. D. Bersaw commented that the Adequacy Aid for Richmond went down. J. Morin explained the State formula for the amount of adequacy for the individual towns. The committee questioned the legal line in the default budget. J. Morin explained that the funds will be used for a number of reasons. D. Coffman questioned the amount. He asked what the funds would be used for. A. Hopkins will contact S. Peters regarding the amount of increase for the administration. J. Morin explained in the past it was a cost of living increase. The Superintendent's contract and increase is separate. E. Sheldon commented that in the proposed default draft there is a 3%-4% increase. W. Lechluder suggested the committee look closer at the increases.

**c. Budget Committee By-Laws:** D. Bersaw and E. Sheldon explained the By-Laws are not ready yet.

**5. Superintendent's Comments:** The Superintendent is not in attendance.

**6. School Board Liaison Comments:** S. Peters is not in attendance.

**7. Chairperson Comments:** There are no comments from the chair.

**8. Next Meeting: December 21, 2022**

**Agenda Items:**

- a. Expendable Trust**
- b. Bond**
- c. Proposed Operating Budget**
- d. Roof Repair**
- e. MESSA**
- f. Unassigned Fund Balance**
- g. Minutes**
- h. Out of district**
- i. Administrative raises.**
- j. Bond Options**

W. Lechluder commented that he feels the Budget Committee should have input on choosing a bond. The dollar amount on the bond is essential to the voters. You need to keep it around the warrant article amount. A. Hopkins will ask S. Peters to email the bond options to this committee.

**9. Public Comments:** There are no public comments.

**10. Motion to adjourn: MOTION:** E. Sheldon **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 8:24PM.  
**SECOND:** D. Bersaw **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Laura L. Aivaliotis**  
**Recording Secretary**