

Monadnock Regional School District
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
September 28, 2021
MRMHS Library/Zoom, Swanzey, NH

Members Present: Adam Hopkins, Dan Coffman, Wayne Lechluder, Megan Foley, Ed Sheldon, Scott Peters, School Board Rep., Wendy Martel, Richard HKS Thackston and Phyllis Peterson via Zoom. **Absent:** Doug Bersaw, Wayne LaCoste, Unassigned Seat from Swanzey, Gilsum and Roxbury.

Administration Present: J. Morin, Business Administrator and T. Breen, Interim Dir. of Facilities.

Also Present: J. Kuhn, B. Parkman and L. Aivaliotis, Recording Secretary

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

2. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:**

a. **Approval of the August 24, 2021 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes:**

MOTION: W. Lechluder **MOVED** to table the approval of the August 24, 2021 BC Meeting Minutes until the next meeting. **SECOND:** D. Coffman. **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

3. **Tour of the new Renovations to the Tech/Ed Dept.:** The Budget Committee and administration walked through the newly renovated Tech/Ed Dept. B. Parkman and J. Kuhn gave a tour of the new area. The space has opened up and has more room to do additional projects. Usually the students have to build their shed project outside and dodge the weather. This year there is room inside to do the work. There is a wood and metal shop add on. The dust collector system is not complete but should be done in October. The garage doors are temporary because the original doors are delayed in shipping. Everything should be complete by the end of October. J. Morin mentioned the district should see a savings in the heat and air conditioning due to the renovations. There will also be a small engine area in the Spring. The rooms are not complete; the staff is still organizing. The students are actively working on projects. It was mentioned that Howard from DEW who was running the job was great to work with.

4. Swanzey Open BudCom. Seat: A. Hopkins explained there are 3 candidates who would like to fill the Swanzey Budget Committee spot until March. At that time if the candidate would like to run for that position they will have to be elected by the voters and fill the remaining 2 years. The candidates' names are as follows: John Hoden, Irene Cedar-Shay and Ann-Marie Osheyark. **MOTION:** W. Lechluder **MOVED** to consider the three applicants. **SECOND:** D. Coffman. **DISCUSSION:** Several members of the committee spoke highly of the three individuals. **VOTE:** The members from Swanzey voted 3 yes for J. Hoden and 1 for Anne-Marie Osheyark. **Motion passes. J. Hoden Swanzey Budget Committee Member.**

5. Administration Report:

a. Budget Tracking Report Review: J. Morin explained the Budget Tracking Report had been emailed to the members and she asked if there were any questions. She explained we are basically on track. If anything we are under budget because we still have positions that have not been filled. We have applicants but once they know the pay they leave. Paras get \$12.00 an hour to start. J. Morin said they are part of the Union contract and the salaries are in the contract. All districts are having the same trouble filling positions. She did explain at the last Board Meeting the substitute pay was increased. The positions that are open are in the MRMHS. J. Morin explained in order to increase the paras pay you would have to hold a Special Meeting and have new negotiations. W. Martel discussed a sign on bonus. J. Morin explained that it is still part of negotiations. S. Peters explained the MDEA is negotiating currently. She also said we have 2 para positions open and a couple of positions at the SAU that we contract out. There was a savings.

b. What major transfers occurred since the last meeting? J. Morin explained the major transfer for K. Barker and Associates in the amount of \$13,400.00 for a CIP review at the MRMHS. S. Peters commented that the Board would like to know what is needed for the next 10 years. W. Lechluder said he spoke to other districts and they said you can use the COVID funds for the HVAC.

c. What major expenses are anticipated for next month? J. Morin explained there are no anticipated major expenses for the next month.

6. Superintendent's Comments: The Superintendent was not able to attend the meeting tonight.

7. School Board Liaison to BC Comment: S. Peters explained that the Budget Committee can find the minutes from the school walk-throughs on the MRSD website.

On October 12 Finance and Facilities will meet with K. Barker and Associates to discuss the CIP List and the items K. Barker came up with.

The Board has voted to retain \$493,819.00 of the surplus. This is possible by a vote on the last ballot allowing the Board to retain up to 2.5% of the net assessment. The Board voted on half of the amount allowed. J. Morin explained the surplus in the amount of \$1,786,999.00. She said there were a number of items that were attributed to this amount. There were 8 unfilled positions, a number of other positions not filled, $\frac{3}{4}$ of the year students were not in the building which meant a lot less in supplies, CARES funds cleaning products were not purchased with budgeted funds, Special Ed., athletics, transportation for sporting events as well as others. As far as transportation we did not save a lot there because we have a contract. We were ahead of the game during remote learning because we had the Chromebooks. J. Morin explained the \$493,819.00 has to be used in extreme cases and approved by DRA. Some districts take some of the funds in order to control the spikes and dips in the taxes. The town has been doing this process for years. J. Morin explained an example of the funds being used is a new septic. She also said to replace the septic at Monadnock it would cost 1 million dollars.

The Board will be discussing with legal counsel questions regarding a bond. There are questions about the obligation of the towns and the School Board. This will be discussed in a Non-Public Session. The Board will be asking for public input the last week in October during the Input Sessions regarding the renovations to the elementary schools. The sessions will be posted on the website. After the Input Sessions have been completed the architect will come back with blueprint proposals.

S. Peters explained there is nothing extra on the ballot unless the Finance/Facilities Committee sees something that must be done.

J. Morin explained the 4 new rooms at MRMHS should be done in the Spring. The bids that the District received did not include Winter conditions.

D. Coffman said L. Witte had sent a link regarding the grants. He said 2 grants have activity. J. Morin explained she has not looked at it. D. Coffman appreciated the cover sheet and the information. J. Morin explained the State is behind in approving the requests of the district. We have written items but the budget review status is behind. S.

Peters explained there was an opportunity for the public to answer a survey in regards to what the grant funds should be used for and 28 teachers responded.

S. Peters commented on a certain amount of funds to be used to help the kids with their education. W. Lechluder suggested hiring a person for 2 years for the students to catch up. W. Martel suggested an interventionist, there may be progress and the IEPs may change. If there are funds available, have an interventionist help these kids. W. Lechluder would like the funds to also help the general population. It was suggested to use the CARES Funds for 2 years to accomplish this. S. Peters said it is part of the plan. Plans have been written but in the approval mode. We have to wait for the funds to be approved. D. Coffman asked if we hire someone and then if the funds are approved would it be covered. J. Morin said we have to wait for the funds. D. Coffman commented go and hire people, spend money to get our kids to the academic level. It does not matter what money we use but fix it. R. HKS Thackston commented that lead testing could help reduce IEPs. Cheshire County is the worst in the State. A lead test is cheap.

S. Peters invited the Budget Committee members to attend the Finance/Facilities Committee Meeting on October 12 at the Wilcox Building. The committee will be reviewing the CIP and the list of items from K. Barker regarding the elementary schools

8. Chairperson Comments: There were no comments from the Chair.

9. Setting Next Meeting Agenda: October 26, 2021. The committee will review the Budget Timeline.

10. Public Comments: There were no public comments.

11. The meeting ended at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording Secretary