

**Monadnock Regional School District
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
March 23, 2021 (Not Yet Approved)
Zoom Meeting, Swanzey, NH**

Members Present: Wayne Lechluder, Dan Coffman (not sworn in yet), Adam Hopkins, Scott Peters, School Board Rep., Melissa Diven (not sworn in yet), Wendy Martel (not sworn in yet), Ed Sheldon, Wayne LaCoste and Richard HKS Thackston. **Absent:** Megan Foley, Phyllis Peterson, Doug Bersaw, Unassigned seat for Gilsum and Unassigned seat for Roxbury.

Also Present: L. Witte, Superintendent, J. Morin, Business Administrator and L. Aivaliotis, Recording Secretary.

Adam Hopkins announced the Budget Committee does not have a quorum and will be holding an informational meeting with no motions tonight.

Welcome Introduce Members (new/current)

- I. Elect Chairperson:**
- II. Elect Vice Chairperson:**

1. Public Comments: L. Steadman of Troy commented on behalf of the Negotiating Committee. The School Board would like to ask the Budget Committee for input regarding the negotiations with the MDEA. She also mentioned the Board has a new Ad hoc Legislative Committee. The Board would like input from the Budget Committee.

L. Witte read RSA 42:2 regarding the swearing in of elected officials.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

- a. January 14, 2021 Public Hearing Minutes:**
- b. January 14, 2021 Meeting Minutes:**
- c. January 28, 2021 Pre Deliberative Session Meeting:**
- d. January 30, 2021 Post Deliberative Meeting Minutes:**

3. Overview of the Budgeting Process:

- a. Committee responsibilities (operating/default):**
 - i. RSA 32:** A. Hopkins would suggest the Budget Committee review RSA 32 and familiarize yourself.
 - ii. RSA91-A:** A. Hopkins would like the members to review the Right to Know Law.

b. Budget oversight throughout the year: The Budget process was explained to the members.

c. Support/Not Support of Warrant Articles: A.Hopkins explained the Budget Committee is responsible for either supporting or not supporting monetary warrant articles on the ballot.

4. Budget Oversight:

a. MRSD Monthly Expense Report: J. Morin reviewed the Monthly Expense Report to the Budget Committee. She said the CCC, graduation expenses, some out of district placements, student loan reimbursement, wellness reimbursement and Ecology School have not been encumbered. There are savings in the health insurance. There is a savings on late busses. There was no need for late busses. E. Sheldon asked L. Witte if she has an idea of what the surplus may be. L. Witte said it was too early to know. She also explained there are 5 open positions, a psychologist, which is currently a contracted service and 3 or 4 paras.

b. What major transfers occurred since the last meeting? J. Morin explained there were two transfers in Special Ed. Funds were moved to online materials from physical materials. The other transfer is from related services out of district to in district. A. Hopkins asked about the \$195,000.00. J. Morin explained it is not a transfer it is an unanticipated surplus from the health care. There is no need for a transfer. It is a major expense.

c. What major expenses are anticipated for next month? J. Morin said she is not sure about any major expenses next month. In regards to the Tech/Ed. Project D.E.W. has ordered the steel. It will be awhile before we see the invoices. W. LaCoste asked how confident she is that the \$195,000.00 will complete the project. J. Morin said that is the guaranteed maximum bid unless we request additional work. It will be 100% paid in full.

5. Administration Report:

a. COVID funding update (if any): L. Witte explained the funds were released to the State last Monday. The funds are in the State, this is a grant and there is an application process. We have not done the process yet because we need to speak to the Board. There was a tech assistant meeting at noon and it was poorly run. There are still a lot of questions. There is another tech meeting scheduled for later this week to ask questions about details, allowability and what strings are attached to those funds. This is an entitlement grant. It is based on a formula based on reimbursement. We have the application along with the vendors and details of service. We spend the funds and we are reimbursed. These funds can cover qualified expenses back to March 13, 2020. It was asked if the UV Ventilators could be covered. She explained if the funds

are not expended by Sept. 2023 they are returned to the Federal Government. There is still no confirmation regarding the funds. We do not spend them until they are approved and discussed with the Board. This will be discussed at the April 6, 2021 Board Meeting. E. Sheldon commented the Budget Committee would like to make recommendations regarding the use of the funds.

b. Hybrid/remote/full return to school plan: L. Witte explained 84% of the students are hybrid. At the April 6, 2021 meeting the Board will be discussing a 4-day full return to school starting May 3, 2021. D. Coffman said we have to do everything to get the kids back into school. There are grade issues and psychological issues. We need to talk about kids. He asked what it would cost to engage the kids. He would like to discuss the cost. W. LaCoste said he will be joining the Board Meeting. He asked why we are slow in the return to school. We have other schools in session around us. Why the 4 days of school? M. Diven said the issue has to do with spacing. She said there are a lot of issues to be worked out according to what was said at the last School Board Meeting.

c. Unallocated Fund Balance 2020 projection: L. Witte explained it is too soon in regards to an amount for the unallocated fund balance.

i. School Board retention of fund balance plan: L. Witte explained the process to the committee. She said the funds can only be spent for emergencies and by the approval of the Dept. of Revenue. A. Hopkins asked if the funds can be carried over. L. Witte explained it does not carry from year to year.

D. Coffman asked about staff not working during COVID. L. Witte said there were provisions in place. On the whole it was not an issue. She may have something at the next meeting or an insight. **L. Witte and J. Morin leave the meeting.**

6. Review of the prior budget cycle process:

a. Deliberative Session review:

b. Voting results:

i. Budget: A. Hopkins reviewed the warrant articles from the past election. The budget passed. M. Diven felt there was a misunderstanding on what a yes vote and a no vote meant. A. Hopkins explained the warrants were written in Plain English. M. Diven said she will bring it up to the Board and the CRC. A. Hopkins said the RSA dictates how the articles are written. The Budget Committee did not support the HVAC at Gilsum and MRMHS. The article failed. There was a recount with the article still failing. He said the recount process went well thanks to L. Sutton and W. Hutwelker. The engineering and design article passed and was supported by the Board and the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee supported the article

as long as Article One stayed the same. E. Sheldon asked S.Peters the next phase of the process. S. Peters said the application to the State will be submitted in June 2022. There will be listening sessions, a response from the State in December of 2022, a warrant for a bond in the Spring of 2022 and break ground in 2023. W. Lechluder said we need to continue to build with the communication.

ii. Contracts: L. Steadman asked if the Board had received the information from the white board. It was commented that the Board and the Budget Committee could not agree on all of the contracts. The voters like it when the Board and the Budget Committee agree. We need to be together on the bond. A. Hopkins would suggest the Board ask for the bare minimum in regards to other warrant articles. D. Coffman commented in 2023 there will be at least one contract to vote on.

iii. Other article:

7. Budget Committee Schedule: March 30, 2021

8. Superintendent's Comments: L. Witte is not present.

9. School Board Liaison Comments: S.Peters will be the School Board Liaison to the Budget Committee. He said the Extra-Curricular Committee has been reactivated and there is now a Legislative Ad hoc Committee.

10. Chairperson Comments: There were no additional comments.

11. Setting Next Meeting Agenda:

a. Budget Committee Goals:

i. Contract Input for School Board

ii. Letter from School Board

iii. Minutes

iv. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

12. Public Comments: There were no public comments.

13. A. Hopkins ended the meeting at 8:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis

Recording Secretary