

**Monadnock Regional School District
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
December 16, 2020
ZOOM Meeting, Swanzey, NH**

Members Present: Wayne Lechluder, Dan Coffman, Jillian Exel, Adam Hopkins, Meghan Foley, Edward Sheldon and Phyllis Peterson **Absent:** Wayne LaCoste, JoAnne Daris, Brian Bohannon, School Board rep., Richard HKS Thackston, Doug Bersaw, Open Seat Gilsum and Open Seat Roxbury

Administration Present: L. Witte, Superintendent and J. Morin, Business Administrator.

Also Present: L. Aivaliotis, Recording Secretary.

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

a) Approval of the October 27, 2020 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes: The committee will approve the October 27, 2020 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes at their next meeting.

b) Approval of the Joint SB/BC Meeting Minutes, November 21, 2020: These will be discussed at their next meeting.

2. Administration Report:

a) MRSD Monthly Expense Report: The Monthly Expense Report was emailed to the members. J.Morin explained the retirement has not been encumbered. We are working with the software company to do that. Next month the district account will increase and the individual schools will decrease due to the retirement.

b) What major transfers occurred since the last meeting? There were no transfers that occurred.

c) What major expenses are anticipated for next month? The Board approved the purchase of a minivan with the CARES Act Funds. The cost of the minivan was \$31,000.00.

d) Unallocated Fund Balance Detail: J.Morin explained the unallocated fund balance detail was in the slide show from the joint meeting.

e) March 1-June 30 expenses of \$5,000+: J. Morin explained she had to print multiple reports and it did not explain each item so she had to add side notes. She has given the information to the administration to review. They have not had time to review it yet. She does have a few that she has not identified. There are also student initials on the invoice. *M. Foley arrives*

3. Warrant Articles: The Budget Committee reviewed the warrant articles. E. Sheldon asked why the contracts were not in the budget. L. Witte explained it is a result of a lawsuit. All of the years of the contract are presented but only the first year is voted on in March. It is for transparency. The proposed budget is \$33,287,677 including the \$970,000.00. It was explained

that historically we have had \$800,000 to 1.7-million-dollar warrant articles each year for maintenance and renovations. With the elementary project we will not need to have elementary warrant articles each year. Over time it is a cost savings. It was asked how we get the word out to the voters about the elementary project. L. Witte commented on the fund balance and how it was associated to COVID, the GMR, NHRS and lane changes. The proposed budget comes under the default budget. E. Sheldon is skeptical. Do you think the voters will approve the bond and the articles if we cut the budget? E. Sheldon asked about the similar unallocated fund balances in the years 2016 and 2017. It was explained there was a change in administration and the business office. L. Witte would like to commend J. Morin, she has done the work on why we see the surplus. We had a very old system for monitoring the budget. We have a new system that helps us identify issues. She is happy with the progress. We are moving in the right direction, a reduction in the proposed would be detrimental. D. Coffman said the voters will actually look at the proposed and the articles. They will remember the surplus and believe it is a slush fund. If we do not spend it we should give it back to the voters. E. Sheldon asked how many people attend the Deliberative Session. D. Coffman said about 100 people. W. Lechlinder said we should reduce the surplus but have a buffer. You will not get a bond through with these voters. L. Witte explained the proposed budget is 1/10 higher than the 2021 budget. It includes drivers and uncontrollable costs. M. Foley suggested looking at what the towns will be looking for CIP projects.

4. Default Budget:

5. Contracts:

a) **Specialists:**

b) **MDEA:**

c) **MESSA:**

6. Proposed Budget:

a) **Administration Proposed \$32,317,677 (plus \$970,000 Food and Nutrition):** D.

Coffman explained the Public Hearing process. The Chair will open the hearing and read each article. Each person will have 3 minutes to comment on the article if they choose too. The Budget Committee will close the Public Hearing and vote on each monetary article. M. Foley asked about a previous practice where the administration presented 3 options for the proposed budget amount W. Lechlinder said normally we would have done that. L. Witte said we have done that multiple times. E. Sheldon said he is concerned with what the number in either option represents. A. Hopkins said we do not tell the School Board where to spend the funds. The information gets presented with a number that makes sense. L. Witte explained the proposed budget is worked on 18 months prior to this day. E. Sheldon said the unallocated fund balance explanation is really good information and should be explained to the voters at the deliberative session. W. Lechlinder said that is a good idea. L. Witte said it is in the slide show.

b) **Budget Committee Chart 2016-present:** The Budget Committee presented a 5 year look back on the BOY, voters approved budget, unallocated fund balance, State Aid, approved articles, taxes raised and actual spent. W. Lechlinder said this represents what he has

been explaining. It is ideal to reduce the proposed budget by 1.5 million, the amount of the warrant articles. The School Board wants a bond; it may be a problem on how the voters feel.

c) Budget Committee Proposal:

7. Budget Committee Schedule:

a) Public Hearing Thursday January 14:

b) Deliberative Session Saturday January 30: L. Witte said she will be updating the Board at their next meeting on the process for the Deliberative Session.

c) February Meeting needed? There may not be a need for the February meeting.

d) Voting Day Tuesday March 9:

8. School Board Liaison Report: The Board Liaison is not in attendance.

9. Superintendent's Comments: L. Witte said there will be a snow day tomorrow.

10. Chairperson Comments: A. Hopkins did not have additional comments.

11. Public Comments: W. Lechliden asked about the default number. J. Morin explained it was not in the packets but she will send it out. The administration is reviewing it.

12. Motion to adjourn: MOTION: D. Coffman **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 PM. **SECOND:** M. Foley **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis

MRSD Recording Secretary