

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
March 28, 2017(corrected)
Monadnock Regional MS/HS, Swanzey, NH

Members Present: Wayne Lechluder, Dan Coffman, Wendy Martel, Doug Bersaw, Tom Matson, Brian Bohannon, Kristen Goodenough, Tom Parker, Wayne LaCoste, Adam Hopkins and Chris Fortson,

Absent: School Board Representative, Unassigned Roxbury Rep. and Gilsum Rep.

Also present: J. Fortson, Business Manager and L. Aivaliotis Recording Secretary.

I. Swear in New /Reelected members: M. Cloutier swore in the new and reelected Budget Committee Members.

J. Fortson opened the meeting.

II. Welcome Introduce Members: The Budget Committee Members introduced themselves.

III. Elect Chairperson: MOTION: B. Bohannon **MOVED** to nominate W. Lechluder as the Budget Committee Chair. **SECOND:** K. Goodenough. **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

IV. Elect Vice Chairperson: MOTION: K. Goodenough **MOVED** to nominate D. Coffman as the Budget Committee Vice Chair. **SECOND:** B. Bohannon. *T. Matson arrives.* **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

1. Public Comments: There were no Public Comments.

2. Approval of the January 12, 2017 Budget Committee Minutes: MOTION: T. Matson **MOVED** to accept the January 12, 2017 Budget Committee Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** K. Goodenough **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present except C. Fortson will abstain. **Motion passes.**

3. Approval of the February 4, 2017 Budget Committee Minutes: MOTION: T. Matson **MOVED** to accept the February 4, 2017 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** D. Coffman. **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present except C. Fortson and K. Goodenough abstain. **Motion passes.**

4. Overview of the Budgeting Process:

a. Committee Responsibilities: W. Lechluder explained the responsibility of this committee is to set the number for the Operating Budget and the Default Budget. Those numbers

will be presented at the Public Hearing. After this committee listens to the comments and suggestions at the Public Hearing the committee will vote on the Operating Budget number to be placed on the ballot. This committee will meet with the administration and School Board to hear the needs of the District during this process. W. Lechliden said the voters spoke loud and clear. Article One was raised at the Deliberative and that is why Article Two failed. W. Lechliden was asked by L. Steadman if the Budget Committee was still interested in a member sitting on the Negotiating Committee. It was commented both sides have to agree. He said there are 3 separate contracts to negotiate. He would suggest 3 separate committees to negotiate the contracts or to ask the Board to hire professional help with one core negotiating group.

The committee asked about a District Plan. J. Fortson said there is a plan but decisions are being turned around. MTC needs to be done. We have a plan to have an engineer look at the Troy School and Cutler and to bring that information back to the new Ad Hoc Committee. B. Bohannon said it is not fair to say there is no plan. There is a plan for MTC. T. Matson said it was a one year plan for MTC. He mentioned the changing of the formula. J. Fortson explained they cut 1 million dollars in the budget. T. Matson commented you went up in the budget. J. Fortson explained you cannot use the funds in your budget for MTC it is illegal after MTC was voted down. W. Martel commented 2 and ½ years ago NESDEC recommended consolidation of the District. It was commented that Fitzwilliam pays more per student, has larger classrooms and if the formula is changed Fitzwilliam will have to pull out. W. LaCoste said something is going to pop. He said what happened at the Deliberative was disgusting and the turnout was embarrassing. D. Bersaw was at the Deliberative Session and felt sorry for the Budget Committee, they had worked hard. The voters were not educated. The towns and the Select Boards need to educate the voters. The Board needs to work with the Selectmen. W. Lechliden asked how to educate the voters. The process is intimidating. T. Matson said it is frustrating. He said J. Fortson had made a recommendation to the Board to consolidate as well as the Budget Committee, the Finance Committee and D. LaPointe. The School Board voted to keep Gilsum open and it is the poorest performing school in the District and most expensive per student. It was commented that the Town of Troy's voters were told to vote no on all ballot items. D. Coffman commented there were a majority of Union folks at the Deliberative Session. If more Swanzey people showed up to vote on MTC it would have passed and we would have a lower budget. Gilsum people raised the budget to keep Gilsum open. It was commented that it makes financial sense to close Gilsum. The School Board has too many ties to the teachers. The town people and some School Board Members are ignorant if they do not realize the poor school system does not attract people to Swanzey. K. Goodenough said the district needs to do a better communication campaign. The voters have no idea what they are voting on. W. Lechliden commented 348 kids at MTC were sacrificed for 5 teachers at the MS/HS. W. Martel asked about the responsibility of this committee. At times we discuss School Board items. We need to know our responsibilities. We get distracted. W. Lechliden said we feel the School Board is not cutting it and hope they start to do productive work. D. Bersaw said he will meet with the Selectmen from his town and inform them on what happened at this meeting. T. Matson commented on the work before the Board regarding the change in formula, 3 contracts and the new Ad Hoc Committee and the fact they will not get it done.

b. Budget oversight throughout the year: W. Lechliden said this is our role and it has been going pretty well up to this year. The voters had been listening to us.

c. Learning Session: W. Lechliden handed out information on cost per pupil, student/teacher ratio, Special Education and the MRSD past budget amounts. The committee reviewed the information. J. Fortson explained Special Ed. costs will increase this year. Information was passed out on the average salary for the teachers. W. Lechliden commented our staff has a rich salary package. The information passed out does not include any benefits. K. Goodenough said it is important to see the total of the benefits. B. Bohannon said it is important to decide what conversation we want to engage with the School Board and which we want to drive. We need to chose a situation and get on line.

d. Support/Not Support of Warrant Articles: W. Lechliden said we need a low budget and we need to support MTC. W. Lechliden would like information on the Interventionists. He said the student teacher ratio is not so bad according to the State website. B. Bohannon would like to revisit cost per pupil by school. We are keeping Gilsum open with poor test scores. There are 58-60 students at the Gilsum School and about 2/3 or less of the students are from Gilsum.

5. Budget Oversight:

a. MRSD Monthly Expense Report: J. Fortson presented the Monthly Expense Report to the committee. This information shows a 3 year history and was cut at the end of February. At this point we are spending ahead of last year but she is not really concerned yet. Fitzwilliam is overspent because they needed additional paraprofessionals. The committee discussed the assistant principal in Troy/Emerson going full time.

b. What major transfers occurred since the last meeting? J. Fortson will be bringing a transfer for L. Stevens, Assistant Principal Troy/Emerson and a transfer for J. Calnan who went to Emerson so the funds will need to move from the MS/HS. D. Coffman asked about the full time assistant principal at Troy/Emerson and asked if there would still be a lead teacher. J. Fortson said yes. W. Lechliden and W. LaCoste asked about the interventionist. B. Bohannon would like to have a job description for the interventionist and the role of the assistant principal at Emerson/Troy.

c. What major expenses are anticipated for next month? There are no major expenses at this time.

6. Review of the prior budget cycle process:

a. Right/wrong/change: K. Goodenough said communication on any campaign is important. It was commented the CRC did not put out the plain language sheet. Education Matters came out after the vote. W. LaCoste commented this was intentional. J. Fortson commented the plain language explanation should be a joint effort by the administration, Budget Committee and Board. K. Goodenough is willing to help with a campaign. She asked if a member of this committee could sit on the Finance Committee. W. Lechliden said we need to be careful and separate the two committees.

J. Fortson will provide information on the process of the budget to the tax bill at the April meeting.

It was commented that MTC, 3 contracts and the operating budget are article that will be discussed for the 2018-2019 warrant.

J. Fortson passed out the requested High School scheduling process information. She reviewed the information with the committee.

W. Lechliden asked if there are any teachers not being renewed. J. Fortson said the Certified Staff will be nominated in April. She is not sure if there are any staff not being renewed.

7. School Board Liaison Report:

a. Facilities/Finance: No update.

8. Administration Report:

a. Curriculum: No update.

9. Budget Committee Schedule: The next meeting is on April 25, 2017. J. Fortson will explain the process of the budget to the tax bill.

10. Any other item the committee wishes to discuss: J. Fortson explained after the failure of the ACES article D. Ayotte has applied for a grant. There may be a need to increase the cost of the program for the families in Swanzy and Troy or possibly close the program.

D. Coffman feels that the Board needs to change their agenda. There are major issues to discuss, the Capital Improvement Plan, The new Ad Hoc Committee and the 3 contracts. He also has a concern with the fact the administration does not feel a full time AD is necessary. He commented about the Gilsum School and asked why we are keeping it open. He sees disorganization of coaches and lack of coaching. There is no recruiting for new coaches. T. Matson has a hard time having a non-teaching position in the mix.

11. Superintendent Comments: The Superintendent is not present.

12. Chairperson Comments: W. Lechliden does not have additional comments.

13. Public Comments: There are no public comments.

14. Adjourn: MOTION: K. Goodenough **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 PM.
SECOND: T. Matson. **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
MRSD Recording Secretary