

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
December 21, 2016 (Not Yet Approved)
Monadnock Regional MS/HS, Swanzey, NH

Members Present: Wayne Lechluder, Dan Coffman, Wendy Martel, Neil Moriarty, Tom Matson, Brian Bohannon, Kristen Goodenough, Tom Parker, Wayne LaCoste, Adam Hopkins, and Cheryl McDaniel-Thomas, School Board Rep.,

Absent: Bonnie Black, Unassigned Roxbury Rep. and Gilsum Rep.

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

W. Lechluder introduced W. LaCote as the new Swanzey Budget Committee Member appointed by the Swanzey Selectmen. W. LaCoste introduced himself to the Board. **MOTION:** T. Mattson **MOVED** to accept the appointment of W. LaCoste as the new Swanzey Budget Committee Member as appointed by the Swanzey Selectmen. **SECOND:** T. Parker. **VOTE:** 9.409/0/1.189/3.403. **Motion passes.**

1. Public Comments: M. Diven commented on the warrant articles two years ago regarding Gilsum. She explained they both passed and were put in by petition. She explained the person who told Gilsum about Gilsum becoming a charter school is no longer in the District and gave them misinformation. Gilsum again is being looked at to close after three years. Save money without closing Gilsum. *W. Martel arrives.*

C. Royal has a 1st grader at Gilsum and he is very happy. Closing Gilsum is a problem. It is the only K-3 STEAM School in NH. Closing it is a horrible idea. Pilot STEAM across the District and everyone can benefit. It should be used as a model.

2. Approval of the November 16, 2016 Budget Committee Minutes: **MOTION:** W. Martel **MOVED** to accept the November 16, 2016 Budget Committee Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** T. Matson **VOTE:** N. Moriarty- abstain, remaining members present-yes. **Motion passes.**

3. Business Manager Report:

a. Monthly Expense Report: J. Fortson passed out the Monthly Expense Report. She explained the changes on the format of the report. She is concerned with the District Accounts. These are the accounts in which the out of district placement bills come in. We are close to where we have been.

b. Major Transfers: There are no major transfers.

c. Anticipated Transfers: There are no anticipated transfers.

4. MTC Warrant Articles: J. Fortson reported there will be a walk through next Tuesday in hope to get enough people to bid the work for this summer. She will email the amount spent to date on the MTC renovations to the Budget Committee. J. Fortson explained they will pay upfront for the windows, boilers and other items in March and April.

5. Default Budget Update: N. Moriarty reported the Default Committee has finished and has a number. K. Goodenough stated the number is \$31,776,272.00 then you have to add in the \$970,000.00 for Food Service and the total is \$32,746,272.00. The total increase is about \$760,971.00. W. Lechlinder commented we may see a \$40,000.00 increase due to lane changes.

MOTION: N. Moriarty **MOVED** to set the Default Budget in the amount of \$32,746,272.00 which includes Food Service. **SECOND:** T. Parker **VOTE:** 11.779/0/0/2.221. **Motion passes.**

6. 2017-2018 Budget Direction:

a. Overview of the 9 Administrative options: W. Lechlinder explained the Budget Committee has received 9 budget proposals. He said the Budget Committee does not have to look at them too closely because we are responsible for the bottom line. The full Board directed the administration to come back with 3 levels of cuts: A proposed budget at the Default number, a proposed budget at the Default/Level and a Level funded budget. (None of these proposals are recommendations from the administration.)The Finance Committee asked the administration for more level budgets. The administration came up with 9 versions with the same proposed budget amount. L. Witte reviewed the proposed Level budgets in detail. W. Lechlinder asked how many students are at Gilsum and where are they from. L. Witte said there are 60 students, 40 from Gilsum and 20 from other towns in the District. N. Moriarty commented 44 students took online classes it should be more. T. Mattson suggested eliminating the regular afternoon bus and only run the late buses. L. Witte said we are not legally obligated to transport kindergarten students or 9-12 grade students. We have discussed this but the administration is not in favor of it. T. Matson asked if there is a recommendation for a grant writer and someone to go after the money. L. Witte said the Board would recommend. B. Bohannon would like to remind the committee there are 9 recommendations with the same amount. It is not our charge to question. The School Board makes the decisions. We discuss the bottom line. It is not our business to challenge the Superintendent. T. Matson asked about 1.5 million off the Default or the current budget. L. Witte commented the original proposal was to meet the needs of the students. We have been out of compliance in Spec. Ed. for 9 years. We need an Elementary Special Ed. Coordinator. A STEAM Facilitator is also needed. We need to have teachers here to help students. W. Martel asked why the position was vacant for all these years. L. Witte explained there have been 4 different Dir. of Student Services. Last year based on the need we placed one in the MS/HS.

b. Gilsum:

c. Operating Budget/Vision: W. Lechlinder asked how we are going to move forward in the District. Look at the elementary schools, close Gilsum or close another elementary school. We need to push the School Board to move forward and make decisions. N. Moriarty said everything you suggested we cannot do, it is the School Board's responsibility. W. Martel talked about the NESDEC report and then it was gone. C. McDaniel-Thomas explained the Board voted to form a committee and to bring the NESDEC Report back. W. Lechlinder said it is too late. N. Moriarty said one School Board cannot tell another School Board what to do. T. Matson

suggested asking J. Fortson for a projection and working that into the budget. N. Moriarty suggested working with Southwest Regional Planning. K. Goodenough said we need to start moving forward and would hope to have a seat on that committee. D. Coffman commented regarding Level C and Level F options he would not want to get rid of after school activities. He would rather increase class size then not have a full time AD. He said 35% of the kids have participated in athletics over the last couple of years. Cutting the activities is not good for our kids. N. Moriarty asked if you increase the AD what would you cut. N. Moriarty asked about the per pupil cost. J. Fortson would include the transportation and have to divide out the District account. T. Parker suggested coming up with a bottom line number. Our job is to come up with a number and let the voters decide. W. Lechlinder commented we are at a point where we cannot cut anymore. We have multi-grade classes and consolidation of schools.

d. Breakfast/Lunch Proposal: T. Matson commented J. Fortson had stated that the number in the warrant was not adequate and it is not enough. It is not recommended by J Fortson or discussed with the Food Service Manager. J. Fortson informed the committee that the School Board removed the MS/HS free breakfast warrant article. T. Matson said to listen to the professionals.

7. Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement overview:

a. Questions/Comments: L. Witte explained there was arbitration in Nov. the formal briefs are due on January 6 with a decision due at the end of January beginning of February. She said it is advisory arbitration and the Board can respond after.

T. Matson asked if the numbers in the contracts can change. J. Fortson said the numbers cannot change but the wording can.

b. Cost: J. Fortson explained this contract is between the Board and the MDEA. It should be explained by the Board. N. Moriarty asked if there was a second opinion on the wording of the contract. It was explained the attorney for the Board was Anna Cole. Anna Cole has a Labor and Education Background. The committee asked questions regarding the contract. J. Fortson explained the reasons for the different lane changes. L. Witte explained in section 8.7 there will be less than 5 teachers who receive the stipend. D. Coffman asked if a teacher teaches a multi-grade class is there training. L. Witte said Title 2A are funds to provide training. They do receive a stipend for multi grade classrooms. L. Witte explained the employee evaluation process and it is rigorous. It was explained there are 26 opt outs for a total amount of \$80,000.00-\$100,000.00.

8. School Board Liaison Report: C. McDaniel-Thomas commented the Board has had discussion with J. Fortson and L. Witte regarding the elementary breakfast warrant. The Board is divided and the numbers are not accurate. The numbers could still be adjusted. There is still a conversation on this issue.

8. Superintendent Comments: Happy holidays

9. Chairperson Comments: There are no comments from the chair.

10. Budget Committee Schedule: The next meeting is scheduled December 28, 2016. The Public Hearing is on January 12, 2017, Budget Committee Meeting is on January 24, 2017 and the Deliberative Session is on Feb. 4, 2017.

11. Public Comments: There were no Public Comments.

12. Motion to adjourn: MOTION: T. Parker **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 PM.
SECOND: T. Matson **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
MRSD Recording Secretary