

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
October 25, 2016
Monadnock Regional MS/HS, Swanzey, NH

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

Absent: Adam Hopkins, Tom Parker, Bonnie, Black, Unassigned Roxbury Rep. and Gilsum Rep.

Also present: L. Witte, Superintendent, C. Woods, Director of Student Services, J. Fortson, Business Manager and L. Aivaliotis Recording Secretary.

1. Public Comments: There were no public comments.

2. Approval of the September 27, 2016 Budget Committee Minutes: MOTION: N. Moriarty **MOVED** to accept the September 27, 2016 Budget Committee Minutes as amended. **SECOND:** W. Martel **VOTE:** 8.135/0/.2159/5.649. **Motion passes.**

3. Business Manager Report:

a. Monthly Expense Report: J. Fortson passed out the Monthly Expense Report. She explained the numbers will be in the positive when the grants come in. The amount budgeted for Wilcox is for fuel and snow removal. She is not sure of the cost. T. Matson asked if they need to budget the same amount for the proposed budget regarding Wilcox. She explained in the proposed budget there is a reduction for energy and propane. The tax collections from the towns were due on October 10. The only towns that paid were Swanzey and Roxbury. The Wilcox building is used for Title One, ACES 93 offices, Ready for Kindergarten and storage. T. Matson commented if we vote to not fund Wilcox, it will close. L. Witte explained this building is where the Title One administrative assistant meets with families. She said this is a School Board issue. J. Fortson suggested the Budget Committee do their homework before selling the building. J. Fortson explained she would like to change the format of the Monthly Expense Report.

J. Fortson explained there is \$342,884.00 remaining from the health insurance pool.

b. Major Transfers: J. Fortson reported there was a transfer from the Food Service Equipment line in the amount of \$1899.99 for a vision testing machine for the District.

c. Anticipated Transfers: There are no anticipated transfers.

4. MTC Warrant Articles: J. Fortson reported the Warrant Article for Phase 1 has a zero balance. There is a hold of 10% for hold back until the renovations are complete. The funds are encumbered but not expended. She explained the District has received \$16,800.00 from PSNH for an energy reduction at MTC.

5. Default Budget Committee Update: It was explained the Default Committee has not met.

6. 2017-2018 Budget Direction:

a. “Dashboard”: W. Lechluder will meet with K. Goodenough to work on the Dashboard. T. Matson commented the spreadsheet information that went to the selectmen and the treasurer regarding the apportionment would be helpful to the Budget Committee. T. Matson asked why we are not reacting to declining enrollment.

It was explained the SAU increases are in the budget as a pool and they are performance based and calculated by an evaluation.

K. Goodenough asked for an update on the free breakfast for all students. It was explained the School Board proposed free breakfast for the elementary students and the MSHS students. The administration discussed any additional costs associated with this proposal. N. Moriarty said the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Board have a conflict of interest on that proposal and it should be a petitioned warrant article. B. Bohannon asked if this is available will all students take it. T. Matson said this is to address the 46% of students in the District who live in poverty. W. Lechluder is not in agreement with this. D. Coffman said we have not had dialogue with the towns on who owns the responsibility. The towns should pay. He will speak on Nov. 5 and at the Deliberative Session regarding this issue.

D. Coffman has not heard any information regarding the Board Workshop. L. Witte explained M. Blair is sending out the invites.

7. Negotiating Committee recommendation: L. Witte explained the Negotiating Committee is making progress. W. Wright said we are working back and forth with the teachers regarding the health numbers. We are all bargaining in good faith. N. Moriarty again gave his list of negotiating recommendations to the Budget Committee. He commented on the paid lunches for the employees and how it slipped by the attorney. He said the 6 classes should be a piece of the teaching day. Buy down the sick days, do not increase personnel days, know the exact people for funeral days, have a one year contract as well as other suggestions.

8. School Board Liaison: C. McDaniel-Thomas explained the Board and the administration are in the process of developing the budget. The NHRS is up, the Health insurance is up, the GMR is up and the Adequacy Aid funds are down. J. Fortson passed out the information on the increase of the health insurance. L. Witte explained Statewide it is at 13.9% and our rate is 11.3%. The rates are driven by utilization. The employees are using their health care correctly and the added programs correctly. J. Fortson explained the carrier has a Biometric screening for the employees. This program is free and if you participate you will receive \$50.00.

9. Administration Report:

a. Cathy Woods: C. Woods passed out information to the Budget Committee regarding Special Education in the District. She explained to the committee what she has learned in her 4 months as Director of Student Services. She explained the number of disabilities a student may have. She explained how the team determines the placement of a student. She reviewed the information regarding students by disabilities. The number of Students with Disabilities mirrors the State numbers. There are

355 students with disabilities out of the 1670 students in the MRSD. It is not an over identification problem. Some students are placed out of district because we are not able to provide them with what they need. She listed the out of district placements for the committee. A parent may ask to send their child to a charter school and the District will need to provide the needed services. C. Woods spoke about the State Performance Plan. She explained there are 20 indicators and regarding #11, #12 and #13 we as a District are out of compliance and have been for the past 9 years. We have been working to correct this. W. Martel commented the enrollment has decreased but the number of students with disabilities has increased. C. Woods said there are a number of factors such as trauma based, chemical based among others. N. Moriarty asked about the students who go to the Resource Room most of the day and are counted in the regular classroom. C. Woods explained they are regular ed. students first. B. Bohannon commented there are students that leave the classroom to go to Intervention. N. Moriarty said the school is inflating the numbers.

b. Number of High School Classes with <10 students: An information packet was passed out to the committee. They reviewed the information and asked questions.

c. October Enrollment Numbers: The official enrollment number on October was 1667 students. The State will still certify the number. L. Witte provided a historical view for the committee. She provided the number of students in each classroom and the number of students with an IEP in each classroom. L. Witte explained the numbers at Emerson are higher due to students enrolling after school started. The administration decided to add support staff instead of a teacher because we are in a Default Budget. W. Martel asked about shifting a teacher from MTC to Emerson. L. Witte said that would disrupt the students. We are looking at the numbers. Our class size numbers are below the State's recommendation and we are trying to adhere to that.

Information was given regarding the Preschool Program. The Preschool Program was designed around students with IEPs. It is not alarming that the Preschool has 50% regular ed. and 50% of students with disabilities. It is a typical design.

L. Witte provided information on how the scheduling process works. By the time we created this sheet 7 courses were cut by the administration and guidance. J. Fortson explained all of the classes trigger the 6th class stipend. B. Bohannon asked if there is any way to collaborate with Keene. L. Witte will be meeting on Nov. 29, 2016 with the Keene Superintendent and others to discuss ways of potential cost share.

W. Lechlinder said it is his observation that the schedule was not designed around the Monadnock students going to the CCC. L. Witte said the bell schedule matches KHS. C. McDaniel-Thomas said the travel is an issue. D. Coffman commented we can offer more to the advanced students than we are. He discussed the combining of the students from different grades into one class due to the numbers and asked if that is best for the students. L. Witte explained the last ten pages of the packet are all the MS/HS teachers except for the Special Ed. teachers. K. Goodenough thanked L. Witte for the information. She said L. Witte had done a great job.

d. Attendance of Early Morning Program: L. Witte explained D. Ayotte would be able to provide the information and the answers regarding this program.

e. Cost to the District utilizing the 80/20 formula and the least expensive plan: J. Fortson explained she has not had time to gather the information. She is working on the budget.

f. Breakdown of Sources of the 1.2 Million Dollar Surplus: L. Witte will provide the breakdown of sources at the Saturday Meeting.

10. Other: B. Bohannon commented that the STEAM Ad hoc Committee misled the voters. They were given a 5 year commitment for research and to spread STEAM across the District. The committee has not met since May. The voters were misled. They said there was potential for a Charter School. L. Witte commented a meeting was scheduled but they did not have a quorum. Are we going to commit those funds to Gilsum? He would like to ask the Board to reconsider the Gilsum School. **MOTION:** B. Bohannon **MOVED** to close the Gilsum School and ask the Board to reconsider the vote on keeping Gilsum open and to expand the STEAM Program throughout the District. **SECOND:** T. Matson. **DISCUSSION:** T. Matson said to close the Gilsum School. B. Bohannon said it is due to the cost per pupil not STEAM. It was sold to the District on a lie and there is no increase of measurable results. It was commented to reduce the budget by up to \$750,000.00. J. Fortson said she does not have the cost until there is an educational plan. B. Bohannon said there is no charter status, no updates and the committee has not met. Closing the school is not out of line.

T. Matson would like the Board and the towns to work together regarding a 50-50 formula. This would help Troy and others. W. Martel said it would not help Fitzwilliam.

11. Superintendent Comments: There are no additional comments from the Superintendent.

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

13. Budget Committee Schedule: The next meeting is on November 5, 2016 at 1:00 PM.

14. Public Comments: There are no Public Comments.

15. Motion to adjourn: **MOTION:** N. Moriarty **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 PM. **SECOND:** T. Matson **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
MRSD Recording Secretary