

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
November 16, 2016
Monadnock Regional MS/HS, Swanzey, NH

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

Absent: Unassigned Roxbury Rep. and Gilsum Rep.

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

1. Public Comments: M. Diven is not sure of the numbers regarding the closing of Gilsum. She said 2 years ago we had 48 students at Gilsum and we now have 59. We have fulfilled one of our promises. The students at Gilsum are all from within the District. There is a waiting list. We were told 5 years but again this discussion is about reconsidering the Gilsum motion. She explained they were misled about the charter.

2. Approval of the October 25, 2016 Budget Committee Minutes: MOTION: N. Moriarty **MOVED** to accept the October 25, 2016 Budget Committee Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** T. Parker **VOTE:** 8.351/0/2.247/3.403. **Motion passes.**

MOTION: B. Black **MOVED** to accept the November 5, 2016 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** A. Hopkins. **VOTE:** 9.193/0/1.405/3.403. **Motion passes.**

3. Default Committee: N. Moriarty reported the committee met and will be asking J. Fortson for additional information. They would like to take all textbooks and new and used equipment out of the default budget. N. Moriarty will contact the principals regarding the consumables. The next Default Committee Meeting is scheduled for December 21, 2016 at 5:30 PM.

4. Business Manager Report:

a. Monthly Expense Report: J. Fortson passed out the Monthly Expense Report. She reviewed the information with the committee. T. Matson asked if the administration would reduce the budget due to the short falls in the towns. L. Witte said she is not proposing a 5% decrease. She will be reviewing the A Teams needs. We have not had an opportunity to address the issue at Emerson and Cutler regarding additional staff. J. Fortson explained how the proposed budget as well as other issues total the 3 million dollar increase. She said she cannot do anything else it is an educational issue. W. Lechluder commented we have a lot of elementary campuses and the School Board needs to do something. J. Fortson said we have items that we cannot control due to revenue and we have had to take hits in the budget. T. Matson said he has not seen any initiative from the School Board to address the increases.

b. Major Transfers: There are no major transfers.

c. Anticipated Transfers: There are no anticipated transfers.

5. MTC Warrant Articles: J. Fortson reported there has been no change in the MTC warrant article since last month.

6. Negotiating Presentation: S. Peters, B. Mitchell and M. Szymcik presented the proposed MDEA contract to the Budget Committee. S. Peters explained the committee started the process in June with the previous Tentative Agreement. The proposed MDEA contract is for 3 years. He explained the insurance plan is based on the driver. The first year of the contract the employee will pay 16% of the driver, then 17% and on the third year 18% of the driver. S. Peters explained staff, who retire early will receive \$5000.00 toward insurance on the lowest plan for a max of two years. There will only be 5 employees a year with a max of two years for each individual. This option will terminate at the end of the contract in 2020. The contract will increase the insurance opt out amount. M. Szymcik explained the \$5000.00 option will stay as long as the contract is in effect. It was explained the insurance impact is some employees are taking a loss. S. Peters reviewed the compensation regarding the 6th class stipends. The Union is willing to give up the 6th class stipend. The unused leave days buyout will be \$20.00 for each day. They will only be allowed to bank up 110 sick days. M. Szymcik said it would take an employee 10 years to get there. The MDEA will receive multi-grade stipends, overnight stipends and college tuition reimbursement. J. Fortson explained the tuition reimbursement is on a first come first serve basis. S. Peters explained the lanes and said they are trying to make the district look more competitive. The Health Care Pool is not in the new contract. There is no retroactive pay. The employees will go to the appropriate step but not get paid for the missed step. W. Lechlinder said he appreciates the contract in a timely manner.

7. 2017-2018 Budget Direction: The Budget Committee would like to know the costs associated with the Gilsum students moving to MTC from physical to staff. It was suggested to have Troy and Emerson merge. T. Matson is concerned with the MTC project. After the building aid ended there was a promise to keep to a 1 million dollar project. T. Parker commented on the project amount of 1.4 million with no State Aid. He suggested putting away \$500,000.00 each year for three years then begin the project. He would suggest a 10 year program regarding the schools and if it is a better solution to cut some of the schools that should be done. The enrollment is down but we have not reduced the budget. W. Lechlinder commented he had requested that D. LaPointe be at this meeting and he is not. He is concerned that the Adequacy is down and there is no game plan on how to address this. We need an action plan year and how to present. He has not heard from the Board. He is glad that there is a contract to read. N. Moriarty said the contract did not have a second legal opinion. There are millions of new words and we need someone else to look at it. J. Fortson said D. LaPointe went home sick today. He needs a footprint. He has been very clear regarding the 4 year plan for MTC. The School Board gave the Superintendent direction on 3 levels of cuts. D. Coffman is a fan of 1 million dollars for MTC. Improvements need to continue. T. Matson said we need to look at the local tax impact. He would like to reconsider leaving Gilsum open. W. Lechlinder asked where the cuts are coming from. T. Matson said we have professionals. We need a 3.5 million dollar cut. L. Witte said the \$750,000.00 conversation did come up. She will be presenting the 3 levels of cuts to see what the Board thinks. She said this is an opportunity. W. Lechlinder would suggest putting the kids at Emerson, Troy and Swanzey. T. Matson said a 10% decrease to start is 3.1 million dollars in reductions. N. Moriarty said each year there is an excessive

increase in the budget, the loss of State Aid and a teacher's contract. **MOTION:** T. Matson **MOVED** to ask the administration to decrease the proposed budget by 10% which is 3.1 million dollars and to show the Budget Committee what it will look like. **SECOND:** B. Bohannon. **DISCUSSION:** The committee would like to hear specifics regarding the cuts. It is a big number but we need to tighten our belts. C. McDaniel-Thomas explained at the School Board Meeting L. Witte said she is developing a Strategic Plan. The School Board has realized hash reality. Could we combine schools in time for this budget season? Take the big picture and put it in phases. B. Black said we are suppose to have an increase of students in 5 years. D. Coffman said we do not have objective information. He would like to see the 10% cuts in the budget. B. Black asked if we consolidate, where could we expand in the future. N. Moriarty said you cannot do it by January and you cannot tell another School Board what to do. **VOTE:** 10.382/.216/0/3.403. **Motion passes.**

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

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

10. Budget Committee Schedule: The next meeting is scheduled for December 21, 2016 at 7:00 PM.

11. Public Comments: D. Coffman thanked the Negotiating Team for the contract on time. He will be able to understand the contract and take notes. He was glad to hear from Negotiating Committee and the MDEA tonight. He would like to thank the Board.

W. Wright commented we have discussed the reductions but have not discussed an amount. We will be able to make cuts. He would suggest all 6th graders attend school at the MS/HS.

M. Diven commented again some are on a path of closing Gilsum. Should that happen, that is a community building are you willing to negotiate an answer.

12. Motion to adjourn: MOTION: N. Moriarty **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 9:19 PM. **SECOND:** D. Coffman **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
MRSD Recording Secretary