

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
September 27, 2016
Monadnock Regional MS/HS, Swanzey, NH

Members Present: Wayne Lechlinder, Tom Parker, Dan Coffman, Wendy Martel, Bonnie Black, Neil Moriarty, Tom Parker, Tom Matson, Brian Bohannon, Kristen Goodenough and Adam Hopkins.

Absent: Cheryl McDaniel-Thomas, School Board Rep., Unassigned Roxbury Rep. and Gilsum Rep.

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

1. Public Comments: P. Bauries asked for the August 23, 2016 Budget Committee Minutes to be corrected regarding what she stated.

2. Approval of the August 23, 2016 Budget Committee Minutes: MOTION: T. Matson **MOVED** to accept the August 23, 2016 Budget Committee Minutes as amended. **SECOND:** T. Parker **VOTE:** 10.375/0/0/3.625. **Motion passes.**

3. Business Manager Report:

a. Monthly Expense Report: J. Fortson passed out the Monthly Expense Report. J. Fortson explained all the salaries and wages have been encumbered. During the year she will toggle with it. The system is old. If an employee is to leave during the year the payment will stop but it does not encumber. **D. Coffman arrives.** J. Fortson explained why MTC and Fitzwilliam's budgets are low. It is due to shifts of families moving into the District and their students needing additional paraprofessionals. J. Fortson said the official enrollment number will be available on October 1, 2016. The salaries and benefits total 20-21 million dollars in the budget.

b. Major Transfers: J. Fortson reported there are no major transfers.

c. Anticipated Transfers: J. Fortson explained she may need to reallocate the salaries and wages to make it correct. This requires only approval from the Board.

J. Fortson explained there is \$900,000.00 left from the 1.1 million dollar warrant for the renovations to MTC. The bids are going out. She explained those funds will not be collected until June 2017. The towns pay monthly there is not a lot of cash left around.

4. Appointment of the Default Budget Committee: The Default Committee members will be N. Moriarty, T. Parker, D. Coffman, B. Blake and K. Goodenough.

5. 2017-2018 Budget Direction:

a. "Dashboard": K. Goodenough presented her information to the committee. This information will be useful at the joint meeting and the regular meetings. K. Goodenough explained she was asked to bring an example, have a discussion to see what we need on the chart and to use this information at each meeting. It was suggested to have additional information such as out of district placements, dropout rate and the graduation rate to begin with.

Regarding the 2017-2018 Budget W. Lechlinder would suggest keeping things flat while working on MTC. T. Matson asked the administration where they see things going. L. Witte explained the strong points being implemented in the District such as the highly qualified teachers, instructional coaches in Math and ELA, guided reading, implementation of the new Math program. She explained the Science Committee met and they are working on the K-12 Curriculum. It takes time to develop and implement. L. Witte explained NH Listens, a group of community members focusing on children K-5, Raising NH is an informational film focusing on struggling families that impact if kids are ready to learn and ESSA, Every Student Succeeds Act to the committee. She said last year at budget time they had asked for additional support regarding drug and alcohol abuse. It is not getting any better. There are a lot of family situations and it is a threat. She said the NH Retirement rates are rising as well as the insurance rates. We have no control but it is a concern we need to pay attention to. T. Matson did not see any involvement of the School Board at the viewing of Raising NH last week. L. Witte said some of the members attended a different viewing. All of the Districts will offer a viewing of Raising NH. D. Coffman would like some kind of mechanism to see how many kids each month are involved in a drug situation. L. Witte explained we track all incidents and we need to report to the Dept. of Education. The guidance counselors take really good records. We have a paper trail to support. We are catching things and have support. A threat needs to be heard and enable to deal with it effectively. K. Goodenough said we need to know what is on the radar. L. Witte explained the district is in an agreement with MAPS but it is not an additional service.

N. Moriarty asked about the Fast Forward Program. It was explained it has been replaced by other programs. Students with Disabilities are pulled out of the regular classrooms at times and placed in a resource room. N. Moriarty questioned the amount of students in a classroom if the students are pulled out to go into a Resource Room. L. Witte said the students are not out of the classroom all day. They are assigned to a classroom.

B. Black commented with Drug and Alcohol issues on the rise do you have an idea of what you might need in the budget. L. Witte is not sure of the budget implications.

It was asked what is being done for the students who need enrichment. L. Witte commented teachers at the elementary level know how to give more challenging tasks. At the MS/HS level there are AP classes and opportunities on line. We do feel we can do better.

T. Matson said we need to recognize the drug and alcohol problems of the students and staff.

6. Negotiating Committee recommendation: N. Moriarty read the information he presented at the Board Meeting regarding his thoughts on negotiations. T. Matson commented there should be some input from the Budget Committee and the Board. He would suggest 80%-20% split on the health insurance of the least expensive plan. T. Parker would suggest only one plan. D. Coffman would not agree with one plan. It will be cheaper for the District with more options. B. Black would agree with more than one plan. T. Matson said we are the employer and it is our choice.

It was commented to figure out ways to encourage good behavior, incentives for perfect attendance with the staff. Pay for the unused days at the end of the year it is cheaper than the \$150,000.00 for substitutes. W. Lechlinder would suggest shrinking the amount of personal days. D. Coffman commented we want teachers teaching. Members of the committee gave suggests but it was commented everything needs to be negotiated. W. Wright commented it sounds as if the Budget Committee will not support the contract unless the Union agrees on 80%-20%.

7. Administration Report:

a. Cost to the district of providing Breakfast/Lunch to the students: L. Witte reported the cost for free breakfast and lunch to all students in the District is \$488,163.00. It was asked if we go this way will we still see Federal Reimbursement. It was commented we are still doing the research. J. Fortson explained it will reduce the \$970,000.00 we receive from the Federal Government. L. Witte explained T. Matson asked for the information for Troy and the Board suggested the entire District. T. Matson said research shows a well fed student is a better learner. He said it is worth the \$13,000.00 to offset the \$50,000.00 for additional learning help. Allow Troy to be the pilot program to measure the learning results. L. Witte would agree well fed students are better learners among other things. D. Coffman does not believe everyone will take advantage of this program. It was commented maybe the towns could pay for the program. This is a question for T. Walsh.

b. Out of District Students with Disabilities Placements: L. Witte reported there are 28 students placed out of district. There are 14 total locations. There are 3-6 residential placements at a cost of about \$100,000.00 each. The number of students is higher than last year. There are also 2 students placed by the courts. The district is responsible for SWD from the age of 3 to 21. D. Coffman commented we have an economic issue. How do we take action at the State? L. Witte explained on October 10, 2016 Impact Monadnock will be discussing these issues.

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 on October 25, 2016 at 7:00 PM. The committee will discuss Special Education with C. Woods, the 1.2 million dollar surplus, the October 1 official enrollment number and other issues.

11. Public Comments: P. Bauries commented if she is interested in certain issues she would go online and read the minutes or attend specific meetings. She is disappointed that so much time has been spent on education and not on the budget concerns. The expense report does not show the remaining balance from the health pool. She said she had read an unfair labor claim from the Union after the teachers had received 100% of their health care and now are going after the remaining balance. Does the Budget committee know the funds could be used to fund the breakfast and the lunch proposal? The Board has a new policy, gag order and the members cannot discuss certain issues outside of the meeting. She would encourage the Budget Committee members to make sure the voters in each town are aware of the MDEA suit. She commented on the cost of NH Retirement and health care going up. She would like to see the cost of out of district placements at a future meeting. She would ask the Budget Committee to have enough informational sheets for everyone in the audience. She is happy to hear about the joint meeting.

12. Motion to adjourn: MOTION: N. Moriarty **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 9:31 PM. **SECOND:** T. Parker **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
MRSD Recording Secretary