

**Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)**  
**School Board Meeting Minutes**  
**November 12, 2024**  
**Monadnock Regional Middle/High School, Swanzey, NH**

**School Board Members Present:** Scott Peters, Cheryl McDaniel-Thomas, Lisa Steadman, Betty Tatro, Kristen Noonan, Jeff Cesaitis, Hannah Blood, Brian Bohannon and Edmond LaPlante.

**Absent:** Gina Carraro, Dan LeClair, Eric Stanley and Jennifer Strimbeck.

**Administration Present:** J. Rathbun, Superintendent, Lisa Spencer, Assistant Superintendent and J. Morin, Business Administrator.

**1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER at 7:00 PM:** L.Steadman called the meeting to order.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no public comments.

**3. #celebrate MRSD:** J. Rathbun spoke of the friendly competition among the teachers and schools. Gilsum won the Halloween Competition with their Mad Scientist theme and costumes. They are having a lot of fun. He is very proud of the teachers. He also informed the Board that Trentin Stevens, Maxwell Steadman and Josh Rabassa each took Gold Medals in their division at the Special Olympics Bowling Tournament. The Monadnock Football Team will be going to the Semi-finals next week. The Varsity Cheerleading Squad are the Division II State Champions for the third year. There are a lot of good things happening. J. Cesaitis said that he has seen the Invitational Youth Basketball and he said it is fantastic. He also spoke highly of Jim Hill the coach. **MOTION:** K. Noonan **MOVED** to approve swag for the Bowling Champions and the Varsity Cheerleading Squad. **SECOND:**J. Cesaitis. **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes. S.Peters arrives and takes over the meeting.**

**4. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION & DISCUSSION**

**a. Standing agenda:**

**i. Student Government Report:** There is no representative present.

**ii. Superintendent Goals Update:** J. Rathbun is in the first round of the administration evaluations, visits and measurable goals. The Evaluation Committee which consists of teachers, nurses and counselors will be writing the new evaluation process soon.

**1. Building Project Update:** J. Rathbun reported that the Building Project is taking shape. They are starting to pour the deck. The project is on schedule and on budget. The softball field is going great, the dugouts, the announcement building and the scoreboard are complete. Emerson is going great. They are well into demolition. There are trees that have to come down. Walls are coming down as well. The Board will be inviting K. Barker and Andrew to the December 3, 2024 Joint Board/Budget Committee Meeting. There is a well issue at Emerson. They will try and drill the well but if there is no water they will use storage tanks. The

wells at MTC are both dry. The good news is that MRMHS has enough to supply MTC, they will need additional storage tanks.

**iii. Board Meeting Calendar & Goals:** K. Noonan reported that the Policy Committee will not have a meeting this month. The Board had to move their meeting which fell on the Policy Committee's scheduled time.

**iv. School Resource Officer (Status Update):** J. Rathbun explained there is no update on the SRO situation. The Swanzey Police Department asked if the District could fund a full-time police officer. He is not sure that we can. This will be a standing agenda item. L. Steadman would like to know who can establish jurisdiction, private security? J. Rathbun believes a Board had this discussion. He will look back to find the information instead of asking legal counsel. **H. Blood arrives.** B. Tatro had spoken to Frank the SSO and he seemed to think things were going ok. J. Cesaitis said he would disagree. The SRO gives peace of mind. It adds authority. J. Morin said that she met with the town administrator and they are actively looking for new police officers. B. Bohannon suggested the towns contribute to the SRO through their town budgets. K. Noonan commented she is not sure the towns would agree.

**v. Staffing Update:** J. Rathbun will be bringing a nomination for a MRMHS nurse during a non-public session. Nothing else has changed. We are being very aggressive. The advertisements for staff are on multiple job boards. Special Education positions have been filled through contracted services. The jobs that are open are specialty jobs like Tech Ed. It is very hard to fill.

**b. Update on Multi-Age Classroom Study:** This discussion will take place at the first meeting in January.

**c. 1st Read Policies:**

**i. JLCEA/KFD/GBGBA: Use of Automated External Defibrillators:**

**ii. JLCJA: Emergency Plan for Sports-Related Injuries & Additional**

**Protocols for Athletic Participation:**

**iii. JLP: Parental Notification of and Involvement in Student Welfare:** K.

Noonan explained that the policies being presented came out in the Fall Bulletin. The policies are a little longer and require more time.

## **5. MATTERS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION:**

**a. Draft Budget Presentation & Approval:** The Board was presented with a pie chart which explain the budget drivers. J. Rathbun explained that the direction of the Board was for the administration to come back with a proposed budget with no more than a 1.5% increase which is \$566,000. The budget drivers come to \$1,695,426. J. Morin went through the budget and was able to make cuts which left an increase of \$1,449,676. She also explained that this increase does not include the Board's wish list, 2 permanent substitutes and an increase in stipends for an additional amount of \$140,000. J. Rathbun is asking the Board if they would like the administration to do the work of making \$900,000 in cuts which would reduce staff. J. Morin did mention that the NH Retirement went down less than 1%. As it stands the proposed budget

would be a 3.84% increase unless the Board would like the administration to do the reductions to get to the 1.5% increase. K. Noonan was going to make a motion to instruct the administration to present a proposed budget with a 3.84% increase without cutting positions but it was not necessary. J. Morin explained last year the proposed budget increase was higher due to the 1.5 million for the renovation payment, the CARES positions moving into the budget and a 1 million dollar increase in health insurance. S. Peters would suggest a preview slide deck for the Joint Meeting for previous years.

**b. Warrant Articles:** The Board reviewed the recommendations from the Finance/Facilities Committee for upcoming warrant articles: Special Education Expendable Trust deposit \$1.00, Building Maintenance Expendable Trust deposit \$1.00, Building and Grounds Expendable Trust deposit \$200,000.00, Vehicle Expendable Trust deposit \$25,000.00 and a Warrant Article in the amount of up to \$120,000.00 to repair the roof over the boy's locker room and the connecting section. The Board had a conversation regarding the Cutler School Building. If the school is vacant it must be offered to a Charter School. J. Rathbun explained that they are going to seek legal advice from J. O'Shaughnessy. J. Morin explained that the interest on the bond is more than what is stated in the original warrant. J. Rathbun will seek advice from the attorney for this issue as well. S.Peters would ask for a sample warrant article from another district for Cutler or advice from the attorney. Article One will be the proposed budget, Article 2 will be the MDEA Contract, the Roof Article then the Expendable Trusts will be in order of importance to the Board. The Cutler Article and the Interest Article might be on the ballot as well. The last article is the acceptance of the reports.

**c. Sole Source Request-MRMHS Auditorium Project:** J.Rathbun explained that the sound and lighting in the auditorium is in need of upgrades. The cost is \$76,000 plus change. The Trustees of the Trust Fund have approved the spending. The administration has someone who will be able to do the work and the administration is asking the Board for approval. C. McDaniel-Thomas would like to have 3 quotes. J. Rathbun explained that we did not want to overspend the trust funds, it would be more efficient and the person knows the systems. J. Rathbun will get 3 quotes. S.Peters said that there are not a lot of companies in the area who do this work. C.McDaniel-Thomas said we need to make a good faith effort.

**d. Approve the Consent Agenda**

**i. October 15, 2024 Minutes:**

**ii. Manifest: \$ 2,061,231.11**

**iii. Transfers: MOTION:** C. McDaniel-Thomas **MOVED** to accept the October 15, 2024 Public, the Non-Public Meeting Minutes, to approve the budget transfer requested by J.Morin in the amount of \$296,000 from partial year vacant positions at MRMHS and Emerson benefit and salary lines to cover increased expenses in OOD Tuition lines, Related Services lines and Transportation lines and the manifest in the amount of \$2,061,213.11

**SECOND: J.Cesaitis VOTE: 9.829/0/0/3.171 Motion passes.**

**6. SETTING NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA:**

- a. **November 19, 2024 Board Meeting**
  - i. **NHSASS, Q1, iReady 3-8**
  - ii. **School Counseling Follow-up**
- b. **December 3, 2024**
  - i. **Joint Meeting with Budget Committee**

**7. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no public comments.

**8. 8:05 PM Non-Public Session RSA 91-A:3 II (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee: MOTION:** K. Noonan **MOVED** to enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee. **SECOND:** J. Cesaitis. **VOTE:** 9.829/0/0/3.171. **Motion passes.**

**9. 8:15 PM Non-Public Session RSA 91-A:3 II ( c ) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely adversely affect the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. MOTION:** K. Noonan **MOVED** to enter into Non-Public Session RSA 91-A:3 II ( c ) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely adversely affect the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. **SECOND:** H. Blood **VOTE:** 10.668/0/0/2.332. **Motion passes.**

**10. MOTION TO ADJOURN: MOTION:** K. Noonan **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM. **SECOND:** J. Cesaitis. **VOTE:** 9.829/0/0/3.171. **Motion passes.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Laura L. Aivaliotis**  
**Recording Secretary**

**VOTING KEY:Yes/No/Abstain/Absent**