

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT NO. 38 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Maranacook Community High School
March 29, 2017, 6:30 p.m.
Minutes of Meeting

Present: Chair Terri Watson, Vice Chair Melissa O'Neal, Wendy Brotherlin, Gary Carr, Kelly Crotteau, Joan Farrar, Malcolm Hardy, Betty Morrell, Shawn Roderick, Lucas Rumler, Adam Woodford

Members Excused: Jon Caron, Trish Jackson

Administrators: Superintendent Donna Wolfrom, Principals Jeff Boston, Dwayne Conway, Janet Delmar, and Rick Hogan, Assistant Principal Kristen Levesque, Special Education Director Ryan Meserve, Technology Director Diane MacGregor, Finance Manager Brigette Williams, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Nancy Harriman, Adult Education Director Steve Vose

1. Call to order: Chair Watson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
2. Citizens' Comments: none
3. Additions/Adjustments to the Agenda by Board and/or Superintendent: none

4. Action/Discussion/Information Items:

a. Approval of Minutes from March 22, 2017

MOTION by Carr, second by Hardy to approve the minutes of March 22, 2017 as presented.

Motion Carried: unanimous

Superintendent Wolfrom announced that RSU #38 has been named one of the top 10 school districts to live in, in Maine, by Niche.com. RSU #38 was ranked #9. Our district offers many exciting opportunities for our students, and our staff members and administrators are some of the best in the state. This high ranking is confirmation of the staff's hard work and dedication to excellence. As announced by Nich.com, "The 2017 Best School Districts ranking is based on rigorous analysis of key statistics and millions of reviews from students and parents using data from the U.S. Department of Education. Ranking factors include state test scores, college readiness, graduation rates, SAT/ACT scores, teacher quality, public school district ratings, and more."

<https://www.niche.com/k12/rankings/public-school-districts/best-overall/methodology/>

5. Budget Workshop:

a. Updates:

Superintendent Wolfrom reported there is no new information to report in terms of revenue from the State or insurance premiums.

- Insurance rate information is expected the first week of April.
- A-Team met last week and reviewed the priority list; no changes are recommended. The Administrators feel strongly that the last 5 items in the center box should be kept. If necessary, they are willing to cut the first 4 items, for a total of \$42,614.
- We are still hearing that more money will be coming from the State, but we won't know that before June. The Education Committee voted 8:3 not to support the Governor's proposal to eliminate the allocation for systems administration as part of the K-12 portion of the state budget.

- Missy O’Neal provided the Board with a list of the Appropriations Committee members as well as the list of all the Joint Standing Committees for the Legislature.
 - A graph was provided in folders depicting instructional staff history for RSU 38.
 - Brigitte Williams reported regarding a question at the last meeting about workers’ compensation insurance and whether it may be worth putting it out to bid. She reported that the district would need to give the current provider, MSMA, a full year notice. There isn’t a fee to leave, but there is an actuarial cost which is based on claims, district size, and years with MSMA. Based on calculations we could be talking tens of thousands of dollars to leave MSMA. She also put out a request on a listserve for school financial managers to get an idea of what other districts’ rates are and what companies they deal with. Our rates are comparable to others and are a little lower in our administrator, professional, and clerical staff ratings.
 - Superintendent Wolfrom added that there is a link on the district’s web site for people to submit questions/comments about the budget. She has received her first comment from a citizen encouraging the Board to keep the World Language Position request in the budget for the middle school.
 - The Superintendent and Finance Manager presented to the Senior Café on Monday morning at the middle school. Due to poor weather there were only 4 people attending, but they had a great discussion.
 - Chair Watson added that she attended the Manchester Select Board meeting Tuesday night and they were very supportive of the work the Board is doing on the school budget. They indicated they were being kept up-to-date by the Town Manager based on the information sent to the town office by the Superintendent.
- b. Deliberations, follow-up and decision making:
- W.Brotherlin regarding the World Language teacher. Her understanding is that not every child takes world language and some students’ schedules don’t allow them to take a world language at all. Principal Hogan responded that part of the plan is to change the schedule and hopefully make World Language part of its own period. Staff will be taking a close look at that and what other middle schools are doing, so that students can take advantage of the world language program. Initial thoughts are the 6th grade will be a trial year to expose students to the different languages offered, and in 7th grade they would chose a language they would like to study. The hope is that the majority of middle students will have one world language credit when they enter the high school.
 - G.Carr regarding the computer system – is there enough funding to put a tutorial system in place for math and English to help parents at home. Superintendent responded there are some programs now that families can access. Technology Director MacGregor added there are lots of resources that teachers put out there to help parents, but we don’t have a program we pay for.
 - Discussion regarding the additional warrant article pertaining to how additional funds from the State will be handled. B.Williams reported that if the board votes to return additional funds to the towns, the State will tell us how much each town will get back; it is not a decision made by the Board. She expects the ratio would be about the same as it is now.
 - Chair Watson added that Trish Jackson was unable to attend the meeting but stated that she supports the budget as presented.
 - Discussion about other warrant article options for returning additional subsidy from the State to the towns. An example was made based on a newspaper article, regarding Augusta School Budget and how they kept their budget relatively low, and if additional money came in they

would use it for the programs they did not fund. It's a different way of looking at the budget process.

- Question about the presentation regarding the need for additional summer grounds crew; what was the problem last year? Concern is that some of the schools grounds were maintained by contract while others were maintained by existing staff and we rented their equipment from them. There was no consistency. Hiring temporary staff to work for the district during the summer months would enable the Maintenance Director to manage all of our grounds more consistently.

c. Board Questions: above

d. Citizens Comments Regarding budget:

- Barbara Bourgoine, staff member and citizen reported that she attended the Readfield Select Board meeting this week when they met with Representative Craig Hickman and Senator Shenna Bellows. They both assured the Select Board that the State is in a position to hopefully fund schools in a more positive light than they have in the past. The Select Board supports the warrant article returning funds to the town. Revenue sharing was also discussed.
- Bill Starrett, Readfield resident added that he thinks the budget should be approved as presented. Everyone has worked very hard to keep costs down and keep making the community attractive to families to move to.

e. Board discussion:

Chair Watson noted that the residents will have another opportunity to comment on the budget. Are there any thoughts from the Board on first 4 items in second box (Items to consider cutting (from top down))?

Principal Conway spoke regarding the \$2,200 for high school furniture. This a portion of the original request. It is important to replace furniture on a continuous basis; there are desks that students do not fit in and need to be replaced; need furniture that suits the students. He also spoke about the CNC Router, adding that he checked with surrounding high schools and they all have CNC Routers.

B.Morrell added that if the administration feels the items listed are necessary, they should be added to the non-negotiation list. Supt. Wolfrom reported the Administrative Team's decision was that they would like to keep all the items in the center box.

M.Hardy added that his trust level is very high and that he has a great deal of faith in the Superintendent and the Principals.

6. Executive Session to discuss negotiations between RSU #38 Board of Directors and Maranacook Area Staff Association pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(D)

MOTION by M.Hardy to enter Executive Session to discuss negotiations between RSU #38 Board of Directors and Maranacook Area Staff Association pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(D). Second by B.Morrell. **Motion Carried:** unanimous

The Board entered Executive Session at 7:08 p.m. and returned to public session at 8:05 p.m.

7. Adjournment: **MOTION** and second to adjourn at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna H. Wolfrom, Superintendent/Secretary
D. Foster, Recorder