

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT #38 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Maranacook Community High School Student Center
September 20, 2017
Minutes of Meeting

Members Present: Chair Betty Morrell, Vice Chair Gary Carr, Wendy Brotherlin, Jon Caron, Cathy Jacob, Kaleb Pushard, Shawn Roderick, Thomas Sneed, David Twitchell, Adam Woodford, Alexander Wright

Member Excused: Melissa O'Neal, Lucas Rumler

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, Adult Education Director Steve Vose, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Nancy Harriman

1. Call to order: Chair Morrell called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
2. Presentations:
 - a. Normandy Trip

High School Teacher Shane Gower and Senior Maddy Taylor presented on their recent trip to Washington DC and Normandy France. They were one of 15 student-teacher groups from across the country selected to take part in the Normandy: Sacrifice for Freedom Program. They reviewed the selection process, and shared stories and a video on their trip to Normandy, France where Maddy eulogized 2nd Lieutenant Carl Alexander of Pittsfield Maine.
 - b. Website Update

Technology Director Diane MacGregor provided the Board with a review of the Maranacook Area Schools website, pointing out where school information is kept as well as school board and budget documents. She asked board members to contact her with any suggestions or questions.
 - c. District Facilities Update

Maintenance/Transportation Director Shaun Drinkwater provided the Board with an overview of the facilities projects that have been completed over the summer as well as some projects that are still in process. He reported that the two underground tank removal projects at Mt. Vernon and Readfield Elementary Schools went very well and there was no contamination at either site. Also, the old diesel tank at the Superintendent's Office has also been removed without any contamination. Portland Pump Company is currently installing the new above-ground diesel tank at the Superintendent's Office.

Questions:

Carbon dioxide monitors for Manchester Elementary; is there any way to see the levels? Mr. Drinkwater responded the monitors are going through Efficiency Maine; they have been shipped; and he is hoping to get them here this week and installed the following week.

What about the classroom that had an odor. This has been taken care of; no specific source found.

Any feedback from staff about any noticeable difference. No comments received.
3. Citizens comments:

Readfield resident and High School teacher Steve DeAngelis addressed the Board about his concern regarding the staff turnover rate for the school district. Although he believes the teachers starting their second year without a contract contributes to this, he feels there are other issues that are contributing to the high turnover rate. Mr. DeAngelis shared his statistics on teacher resignations over the past 3 years by school. He asked that the Board look into why this district has such a large turnover rate, inviting board members to visit the schools and talk to teachers, visit classrooms. He also asked that the Board consider revising the policy that pertains to board members visiting the schools.

4. Additions/adjustments to the Agenda by Board and/or Superintendent

Chair Morrell reported that there will not be an Executive Session. The Board negotiations team just received the fact finding report today and they need to hold a meeting to review the findings before they can report out to the entire board. There will be an Executive Session at the October 4 meeting. No other additions/adjustments were recommended.

5. Action/Discussion/Informational Items

a. Approval of Minutes of September 6, 2017

MOTION by Carr, second by Caron to approve the minutes of September 6, 2017 as presented.

Motion Carried: 10 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention (Roderick)

b. Consideration of School Bus Lease Proposal

Superintendent Wolfrom reported two financial institutions submitted bids for the school bus lease purchase. She recommends awarding the bid to Gorham Leasing Group as presented in the packet.

MOTION by Carr, second by Jacobs to award the school bus lease purchase to Gorham Leasing Group. **Motion Carried:** unanimous

c. Review of Board Committee Assignments

Chair Morrell reported the Board Committee assignments were provided in the board packet. Any questions should go to Donna Wolfrom. Superintendent Wolfrom added that last year's negotiations team will remain in place until the teacher negotiations is completed; then the new committee will take over.

d. Appointment of MSBA Delegate and Alternate

Superintendent Wolfrom reported that each year the Board nominates a voting delegate and an alternate to the Maine School Boards (MSBA) Delegate Assembly. This meeting is held during the Maine School Management Association's fall conference which is October 26-27, at the Augusta Civic Center. The Board will be provided with draft resolutions that the Delegate Assembly will be voting on. The Board will review and discuss these resolutions and inform the delegate how they wish him/her to vote. The delegate and the alternate should be members of the board who are available to attend the meeting on October 26th.

Vice Chair Carr indicated that he is available to attend and has served in this capacity in the past. Wendy Brotherlin indicated that she is available to attend.

Jon Carr nominated Gary Carr as the RSU #38 Delegate to the MSBA Delegate Assembly. Tom Sneed seconded the nomination. All in favor: unanimous

Gary Carr nominated Wendy Brotherlin as the Alternate to the MSBA Delegate Assembly.

Alexander Wright seconded the nomination. All in favor: unanimous.

Question was asked about the amount of dues the district pays to belong to MSMA and what the district gets for this membership.

e. Consideration of School Tours

Chair Morrell reported that she received a request from Alexander Wright about the possibility of setting up school tours. One recommendation was to hold school board meetings at each of the schools over the next few meetings to give the board a chance to tour each of the schools and then hold the board meeting immediately following the tour.

Questions:

What will be the purpose of the tours? If the purpose is to meet with teachers this would not cover that.

A. Wright distributed a copy of his response to Chair Morrell's questions. He reported that one of the goals is to help educate the board, to see the buildings and meet the teachers.

Discussion ensued regarding Policy BHC/GBD. Is it really beneficial for the Superintendent to know when board members want to visit the schools? What would be the downside of changing the policy?

How would the Board go about answering the question of what is thought to be the reason for turnover and how does the board get this information?

Superintendent Wolfrom responded that there has not been a problem with the policy in the past. Teachers are very busy during the day and some may feel uncomfortable if they know board

members are touring the schools while school is in session; they may feel they need to speak with board members and they have very busy schedules. She added that they talked about inviting board members to a workshop day, but those days are packed with work that needs to be done. We could invite staff to come at night, but we cannot tell them they have to come. Chair Morrell added that when meetings take place at schools, typically there are teachers from that school who attend.

How would the board go about answering the question of what is thought to be the reason for turnover and how do we go about getting that information? That would be the Superintendent's job to investigate that and to report back. Supt. Wolfrom noted that Kate Taylor invites staff for exit interviews but some chose not to take part. The Superintendent doesn't get this information unless Ms. Taylor sees something that the Superintendent needs to address. A handout is included in the board packets that outlines the resignations over the past three years and reasons reported for those resignations.

How do we get current teachers' perspective; do we conduct retention interviews; do we ask teachers what would get you to stay; what do we need to do differently?

Concern was raised about having school tours and having board members going through the school during the school day; this would interrupt the school day; not comfortable as a board member or a parent. There are appropriate ways to research this information.

The Superintendent is the person to collect the data about why people are leaving. Teachers should not feel uncomfortable when the board is in the building. What if board members were there to talk with teachers but not during the school day; this would be a different forum than visiting schools.

Does HR do some sort of retention work with employees? Supt. Wolfrom responded that we have not done that to date.

Suggestion – schedule school visits and tours prior to a regularly scheduled meeting at each of the schools, inviting teachers to be there and showcase their class if they want; “meet the schools”; leave it up to administration to deal with whatever comes next.

MOTION by A.Wright, second by A.Woodford to hold upcoming school board meetings at the individual schools with school tours scheduled prior to the meeting. **Motion Carried:** unanimous
Superintendent Wolfrom will share the schedule with teachers and invite them to attend.

f. Update on Architect RFQs and request for questions to ask in interviews

Vice Chair Carr reported that the bids for the architect RFQs were opened on September 8. Four proposals were submitted and the Facilities Committee plans to interview all 4 firms. It was suggested that the Facilities Committee ask about the possibility of building a new elementary school for the district. Request was made for any board members who have ideas about questions to ask the firms during the interviews to email them to Donna Foster.

g. Acceptance of teacher resignation, Jillian Laflamme, MES

MOTION by Carr, second by Jacobs to accept the resignation of Jillian Laflamme.

Question - where do we stand as far as a replacement for this classroom? Superintendent Wolfrom responded that she received the resignation Sunday evening and is currently working on filling the position; it is a top priority.

Motion Carried: unanimous

h. Approval of First Probationary Contract, Anya-Mae Davidson, Nurse-Special Education

MOTION by Carr, second by Twitchell to approve the first probationary contract for Anya-Mae Davidson as presented. **Motion Carried:** unanimous

6. Executive Session: no executive session held
7. Adjournment: **MOTION** and second to adjourn at 7:54 p.m.

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