

**REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT NO. 38
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Maranacook Community High School
April 8, 2015
Minutes of Meeting**

Members present: Chair David Greenham, Michael Apolito, Gary Carr, Steve Hayes (arrived 6:48), Pia Holmes, Trish Jackson, Shawn Roderick (arrived 6:38), Bonnie Simcock, Terri Watson

Members excused: Vice Chair Melissa O’Neal, John Blouin, two vacant positions (Mt. Vernon, Wayne)

Administrators: Superintendent Donna Wolfrom, Principals Jeff Boston, Dwayne Conway, Janet Delmar and Cathy Jacobs, Technology Director Diane MacGregor, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Nancy Harriman, Special Education Director Ryan Meserve, Finance Manager Brigitte Williams

1. Call to order: Chair Greenham called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.
2. Consent Agenda:
 - a. Approval of Minutes of April 1, 2015
 - b. Approval of Out-of-State Travel – Mt. Vernon Elementary Fifth Grade, Boston, MA 06/11/15
 - c. Acceptance of teacher resignation effective 08/30/15, Katharine Ayer, Manchester Art
MOTION by Carr, second by Holmes to accept the consent agenda as presented, noting the acceptance of Katharine Ayer’s resignation with regret.
Motion Carried: 7 in favor, 0 opposed.
3. Citizens’ Comments: none
4. Additions/adjustments: none
5. Action/Discussion/Informational Items: none
6. Budget Workshop:
 - a. Updates:

Superintendent Wolfrom reported on the following budget updates in folders:

 - Budget timeline – reminder to board of important dates
 - Anthem/Blue Cross rates came in this week and the district will see a 1.85% decrease. This results in a drop of \$97,400 in the requested budget.
 - Charter School tuition – after contacting several other schools districts we have decided to drop the outgoing tuition line by \$23,700.
 - Seventh draft summary budget reflects these two decreases for a total of \$121,108 reducing the expenditure increase to 2.27%. (Shawn Roderick arrived during this report)
 - Revenue sheet was revised to reflect the reductions noted above which brings the additional local dollar increase down to \$3,126,462.
 - In total, the budget to budget increase is \$353,730

- Local Dollar Calculation sheet, seventh draft
- Budget reductions from original requests

b. Deliberations, follow-up and decision making

Chair Greenham noted that his hope is that the board will leave tonight with the budget they will vote on next week. He suggested hearing citizen comments and respond to board members questions and suggestions.

c. Citizens comments regarding budget

John Harker, Mt. Vernon resident addressed the Board, following up on his original written request to the board on February 25th regarding food services. He asked the board to allocate \$60,000 in the budget to provide free breakfast for all elementary grade students. He estimates the "Breakfast in the Classroom Program" would cost \$150,000, but that the district could be reimbursed for almost \$90,000. He referred to studies that prove that students who have breakfast are more successful in the classroom. The program could be done for less if the board considered a pilot project in one of the elementary schools (Mt. Vernon). He also asked that the Board look closely at the management of the food service program and the nutrition curriculum. (Written comments submitted.)

Mr. Harker donated two books for the high school media center: Death by Food Pyramid by Denise Minger and Nutrition What Every Parent Needs to Know by the American Academy of Pediatrics. He also distributed articles relating to the Breakfast in the Classroom program.

Discussion followed regarding the estimated cost of a pilot program as well as concerns that although this is very important it hasn't risen to the top of the concerns of community members or administrators to be included in the budget. Mr. Harker added that he thinks RSU 38 could be a model program for this. Chair Greenham noted that the hope is that at some point we will develop support for this kind of program, but a little more ground swell is needed. Unless we know that we are a point of readiness to implement a program like this he doesn't think it is money well spent. Perhaps next fall during harvest season there can be more discussion. Mr. Harker added that his request is not a late arrival, having come to the board 3 years in a row and not heard anything.

Other comments/questions on budget as it currently exists.

Comment - Difficulty following the revenue and expenditure losses and increases from document to document. Finance Manager Williams will complete an analysis and develop a single major changes sheet showing other reductions in the current budget as well as the new requests.

Comment – important for people to understand that the staff is working hard to make savings and are not just looking for more.

GCarr asked about the \$5,000 that was eliminated from the request sheet for technology noting that he thought that was a high priority. D.MacGregor responded that the elimination was a compromise. She knew that every budget was taking a hit and the district really needs the additional support person in the budget, so she reviewed her budget and took out some ipads and different line item supplies so she could keep the support person.

TWatson asked if this is the time to suggest adding something to the budget, adding that last week the board voted down the request to add a grade 2 teacher to the Manchester Elementary School budget. Since it is one of the larger schools and they have a part time principal she would ask the board to consider adding one educational technician to the Manchester Elementary School. She believes it would be appropriate and not excessive for a school that size to have two educational technicians.

MOTION by Watson to add \$30,000 to the budget to provide for an educational technician at Manchester Elementary School to provide a safer and better learning environment. Second by Holmes.

Discussion followed regarding the hard decisions the board is making in terms of requests from citizens, requests from administrators at the same time keeping in mind the tax increases citizens are facing. The administrators made their recommendations and this was not part of their request. Discussion ensued about the volunteer program of the district. Superintendent Wolfrom added that we would like to spend more time training volunteers, but there just isn't enough time. Years ago the volunteer coordinator was removed from the budget.

Motion Failed: 3 in favor, 6 opposed (Apolito, Jackson, Hayes, Greenham, Roderick, Carr)

Question – other than the number of Pre-K enrollees, are there any other remaining unknowns for this coming budget that are likely to change these numbers? B. Williams responded, not on the expenditure side, but everything is still up in the air on the revenue side. This budget represents a 2.27% increase on the expenditure side and a local dollar increase of 5%.

Question about the \$24,000 included for the health center. D. Wolfrom noted we haven't heard anything different. If it turns out the \$24,000 is not needed and it stays in the budget, it would be a school board decision in terms of what to do with it. The Board could vote to hold it for future years, vote to use it somewhere else, or let it roll over in the carryover.

Chair Greenham asked if it is safe to assume this is the budget you are content to send to the voters? No one spoke against the budget as presented.

7. Adjournment: **MOTION** and second to adjourn at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna H. Wolfrom, Superintendent/Secretary
Recorded by: D. Foster