

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT NO. 38
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Maranacook Community High School
February 25, 2015
Minutes of Meeting

Members present: Chair David Greenham, John Blouin, Gary Carr, Russ Evans, Steve Hayes, Trish Jackson, Shawn Roderick, Bonnie Simcock, Terri Watson
Members excused: Vice Chair Melissa O’Neal, Michael Apolito, Pia Holmes, one vacant position (Wayne)
Administrators: Superintendent Donna Wolfrom, Principals Jeff Boston, Dwayne Conway, Janet Delmar and Cathy Jacobs, Technology Director Diane MacGregor, Adult and Community Education Director Steve Vose, Special Education Director Ryan Meserve, Finance Manager Brigitte Williams

1. Call to order: Chair Greenham called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.
2. Presentations:
 - a. Walkthrough of District Budget Web Page
Diane MacGregor, Technology Director, provided a tour of the District budget web page, noting improvements made since last year. She also showcased the Superintendent’s Blog page prior to making it available to the public. The blog is a way of increasing the two-way conversation on the budget.
Request was made to investigate the cost of “counters” so we know how many people are accessing the information on the budget page. It was also requested to provide paper copies of the Superintendent’s budget updates at the town offices and post offices for those who do not access the budget information on the web site.
 - b. Health Center Funding Update
Rebecca Reynolds, Health Center Director provided an overview of the health center history and services provided to students. At this time the Governor’s proposed budget would reduce the revenue for the health center by \$24,000. She will be taking a group of students to the State House on Monday to testify in favor of keeping the funding intact for student health centers. She asked for the school board support, and asked that they consider allocating an additional \$24,000 in next year’s budget in the event that the health center loses state funding.
Senior Quinn Murray spoke about her experience with the health center.
3. Consent Agenda:
 - a. Approval of Minutes of February 4, 2015
MOTION by Carr, second by Watson to approve the minutes of February 4, 2015 as presented. **Motion Carried:** 7 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstentions (Evans, Simcock)
 - b. Acceptance of Donations
MOTION by Carr, second by Evans to accept the donation from Kennebec Savings Bank as presented. **Motion Carried:** 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention (Simcock)
4. Citizens’ Comments: none
5. Additions/Adjustments to the Agenda by Board and/or Superintendent: none
6. Action/Discussion/Informational Items:
 - a. Acceptance of Resignation due to Retirement – Patricia Stanton, MCHS
MOTION by Carr, second by Hayes to accept the resignation of Patricia Stanton with gratitude, appreciation for her very kind heart and regret. **Motion Carried:** unanimous

7. Budget Workshop:

a. Updates since last workshop

Superintendent Wolfrom reported that since the last meeting the District opened bids for oil and diesel and they came in lower than budgeted; of the three buses we requested, the State approved one and have put two on a waiting list. A decision was made to reduce the request by one bus, and therefore one bus was removed from the budget. We do get reimbursed by the State for the buses but not until the next fiscal year. The Facilities Committee of the board met and reviewed the projects proposed for next year. They decided the cost of the parking lot lights and security cameras should be put into a lease purchase agreement. In total, these changes resulted in a reduction of the previously proposed budget by \$188,309. The budget increase, as proposed, is \$765,706, which is just under 5% of last year's budget. The State has distributed the Preliminary ED279, and those figures are included in the draft revenue sheet, along with other revenue projections (green sheet). The ED279 outlines what school districts can expect to receive for subsidy from the State. The property tax revenue section of the revenue sheet shows an increase in property tax revenue estimated at \$964,824 should the proposed budget remain as presented. Updated budget increase and budget reduction sheets were also provided.

Other updates include new program sheets for special education administration and staffing for an increase in time for a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), as discussed at previous budget meetings. These items are included in the proposed budget.

b. Co and Extra Curricular

Al MacGregor, Student Services Director for the high school and middle school provided an overview of the activities provided to students in both schools. All activities are assessed an activity fee with the exception of the math teams, and programs paid totally by families (Lacrosse, Freshman Basketball). Ice Hockey and Football are partially paid by parents in addition to being assessed activity fees. Sixty percent of high school students and 50% of middle school students participate in activities. The Co and Extra-Curricular budget represents 2.5% of the total budget; statewide the percentage is 2%.

Discussion followed in terms of billing the Awesome Bear Society (ABS) for the food they use from the Food Service Program and the handling of participation checks. It's been reported that ABS is not being billed for food products and parents' checks are not being deposited. Diane MacGregor added, that a system has been developed through PowerSchool where the funds collected are catalogued, so parents can see that the fee(s) has been paid if they look at their student(s) lunch transactions (at the bottom of the page). This allows us to better track the payments and allows parents to see what has been turned in. It is a work in progress and many improvements have been made this year. Brigitte will speak with the Food Services Director regarding the billing of food to ABS.

c. Operations & Maintenance

Paul Criss, Maintenance/Transportation Director reviewed the projects included in the Maintenance budget. Many of the projects listed are considered safety issues. As Superintendent Wolfrom reported earlier, the Facilities Committee is recommending that the parking lot lighting and security cameras be funded through a lease purchase agreement. Superintendent Wolfrom added that Paul and Dwayne Conway have worked on a 5-year plan and that plan has been shared with the Facilities Committee.

d. Transportation

Paul Criss noted that in addition to what Superintendent Wolfrom mentioned earlier, the transportation budget includes 2 additional bus routes/drivers for Pre-K transportation, should the board approve a District Universal Pre-K program including transportation for all Pre-K programs. The transportation garage is also in need of a compressor.

e. Miscellaneous Cost Centers/Accounts (Adult Education, Food Service, Health, Professional Development/Curriculum, Systems Administration, Debt Service)

Adult Education, Steve Vose, Adult Education Director provided an overview of the Adult Education program. The adult education program is a separate warrant article in the budget. The enrollment for educational program is at 7 students and the enrichment program is at approximately 1026 students. The adult education program is not seeking any additional funding for the next year, they are relying on grants and are working on soliciting donations to purchase a dump truck from the State Surplus Property auction so that they can continue to offer the CDL program.

Food Service, Superintendent Wolfrom reported the food service program is not seeking increased funding. Since FY14 the local funding of the budget has been \$100,000. This amount, in addition to the state share has kept the budget in the black. The historical free/reduced percentages were provided at the last meeting, showing an increase in students qualifying for the program.

Questions/comments – It would be helpful to have the associated revenues noted on the summary budget sheets.

If we are seeing an increase in families qualifying for free/reduced meals, shouldn't we see a reduction in the budget request? Salaries/benefits as well as food costs are increasing, the increase in students qualifying for free/reduced meals helps to offset the increased costs. How many kids do we feed, and what are the associated costs? Show what we are accomplishing with the \$100,000.

Health – Superintendent Wolfrom reported the increase represents the increase in nursing time as reported at a previous meeting as well as increased salaries/benefits.

Professional Development/Curriculum – Nancy Harriman, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment reported on the curriculum, district assessment, and professional development budgets. The District curriculum budget includes the salaries for math coaches, half of the literacy coaches, and half of Nancy's salary, as well as summer science curriculum training. The District assessment budget covers the other half of Nancy's salary as well as assessment at the district level – NWEA, standardized assessment for the middle school and high school students in world language assessment. There has been some shifting of resources in the professional development budget due to the new evaluation systems and contracted stipends for staff.

Comment – it would be helpful to have a section on the return on our investment in terms of the math and literacy coaches and the curriculum coordinator's position.

Systems Administration – Superintendent Wolfrom reported this portion of the budget covers the Superintendent's Office and School Board. The office needs a new server and the remainder is for salaries/benefits.

Comment – should go on record and say what the administrative budget is in comparison to the total budget.

f. Citizens comments regarding budget

Chair Greenham shared written testimony provided by John Harker of Mt. Vernon. Mr. Harker could not attend this evening but asked that his testimony be provided to the board for consideration.

g. Board discussion

Questions/comments – In terms of the increase in the local share, how much of the increase is due to what we are asking for? Discussion ensued regarding the increase in the budget and the required local match and the importance of clearly explaining this to the citizens.

MOTION by Watson to add \$24,000 to a designated reserve account for the health center, second by Simcock.

Discussion – R.Evans noted that making it a designated reserve makes it very difficult. It would need to be voted on separately at the annual meeting and we would need a separate line item vote to release the funds.

AMENDMENT TO MOTION by Evans to read, to add \$24,000 to the budget with the expectation that it would be used to cover the \$24,000 expected shortfall in the Health Center budget for FY 16. The amendment was seconded by Simcock.

Further discussion ensued. Concern was raised that it is still early to be adding these funds to the budget. What happens if we get the \$24,000? It could be carried forward or the Board could vote to take it out.

Motion Carried: 7 in favor, 2 opposed (Greenham, Roderick)

Chair Greenham reminded board members that next week's meeting is the joint budget workshop with the select board members from our four communities.

G.Carr asked if the board could be provided with what the district pays for overtime at the next meeting.

8. Adjournment: **MOTION** and second to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

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