

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT NO. 38 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Maranacook Community High School
March 4, 2015, 6:30 p.m.
Minutes of Meeting

Members Present: Chairman David Greenham, Vice Chair Melissa O’Neal, John Blouin, Gary Carr, Pia Holmes, Trish Jackson, Shawn Roderick, Bonnie Simcock, Terri Watson
Members Absent: Michael Apolito, Russ Evans (excused), Steve Hayes, one vacant position (Wayne)
Student Reps: Molly Whittington, Molly Searway, Colleen Wright
Administrators: Superintendent Donna Wolfrom, Principals Jeff Boston, Dwayne Conway, Janet Delmar and Cathy Jacobs, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Nancy Harriman, Technology Director Diane MacGregor, Adult and Community Education Director Steve Vose, Special Education Director Ryan Meserve, Finance Manager Brigette Williams, Literacy Coach Barbara Bourgoine

1. Call to order: Chair Greenham called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
2. Student Recognition – Abigail Westberry, State Champion, Maine Forensic Association:
Speech and Debate Coach Amy Trunnell introduced Abby Westberry as the State Champion in Extemporaneous Speaking and Original Oratory. Abby competed with 300 other students from the State of Maine.
3. Consent Agenda:
 - a. Approval of Minutes of February 25, 2015
 - b. Approval of Out-of-State Travel, Model UN Conference, Boston MA, May 15-16, 2015
MOTION by Carr, second by Blouin to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.
Motion Carried: unanimous
4. Student Representatives Reports:

Middle School representative Molly Whittington reported on the various team projects; she reported that the students raised \$1,500 at the Dance-A-Thon that was recently held. These funds will be used towards Mr. Scarpone’s class attending the Festival of Bands & Choirs in May.

High School representatives Molly Searway and Colleen Wright reported on activities at the high school and recent accomplishments of the winter sports teams.
5. Citizens’ Comments: none
6. Additions/Adjustments to the Agenda by Board and/or Superintendent: none
7. Joint Meeting with Local Select Boards re: FY 16 School Budget

Chair Greenham welcomed the members of the town select boards to the meeting. The following select board members were present: Manchester – Bob Gasper, Tom Oliver; Mt. Vernon – Sherene Gilman, Paul Crockett; Readfield – Allen Curtis, Greg Durgin, Val Pomerleau, Sue Reay; Wayne – Aaron Chrostowsky (Town Manager), Peter Ault, Gary Kenney, Don Welsh.

 - a. Review of FY ’16 Budget

Technology Director Diane MacGregor provided an overview of the District’s budget web page, showing how to navigate between the district’s home page and the budget information.

Superintendent Wolfrom reviewed the budget to date, noting that the current draft budget stands at 5% over the FY 15 budget. Some of the items driving the increase in the Mt. Vernon line include an additional classroom teacher at Mt. Vernon Elementary due to increased enrollment; the increase in the transportation line is due to the inclusion of a Universal Pre-K, providing

transportation for all Pre-K students. The Superintendent reviewed the summary of budget increases and decreases lists and the Revenue projection sheet. Other information provided in folders include student enrollment by town and the proposed maintenance projects. We are still awaiting the health insurance rate for next year.

b. Questions and Comments from Select Boards

Concerns were raised about the increase in mill rates and how the towns will be able to provide the services needed with such an increase in the school budget.

Superintendent Wolfrom responded to questions about the interventionist positions. They are specialists for students who have not met their benchmarks and need additional support. Further discussion ensued about the other additional positions being proposed. Request was made for the Board to look at the additional position requests further.

Question about the status of the behavioral specialist for the middle school and the discussion of making it a district-wide position instead of only the middle school. Right now there is a behavior specialist 4 days/week in special education, district wide. The proposal increases the behavior specialist one day a week for regulation education consultation. The proposed middle school position is still in the budget as originally presented. Administration is also looking into increasing services from Kennebec Behavioral Health.

Question about the cost for the 2 additional bus runs for Pre-K. The \$68,000 is for 2 double runs and includes 6-7 hrs./day for the drivers' salaries and benefits. Chair Greenham added that last year there was a lot of discussion about Pre-K because it wasn't an equitable system in the district and this recommendation came out of Committee work.

Chair Greenham provided a summary on the recent negotiations. The Negotiations Committee negotiated 4 different contracts during the course of this year; professional staff, support staff, bus drivers and central office support staff. The biggest goal was to reduce costs. They did that by freezing everyone for a year and reducing the health care share of the district. There are still some remnants of combining all the various contracts that existed when we became an RSU, but progress is being made.

Discussion ensued about the draft revenue sheet. Important information to note is that the State EPS Allocation for next year, based on the Preliminary ED279, is down \$49,979. In addition, the amount the towns are required to raise based on valuation is up \$354,031. If the required amount is not raised by the towns, the State EPS allocation will be reduced. These are amounts that the school district and the towns have no control over. The more the citizens can be educated about this the better they will understand that there is a large portion of the budget which the school board has no control over. Superintendent Wolfrom added that the district is pretty much at EPS, but we have 4 different elementary schools and the message was very clear that the citizens want to keep their elementary schools. Finance Manager Brigette Williams added that the big spread in local contribution among the towns is mostly driven by valuation. The state mandates the required local dollar match. The rest of the formula is written into the district's consolidation plan.

John Blouin reported on an assessment he did on real estate in the towns. Properties are being sold at above their assessed value, which adds to the wealth of the communities.

It was suggested to use the front page of the District's Annual Report to describe the State EPS Allocation and required local dollar match in layman's terms. Chair Greenham offered to devote his letter to the citizens to this subject and asked the Select Boards for their assistance. He will draft the letter and send it to the select boards for their input.

Shawn Roderick asked the Select Boards to encourage people who go to their meetings to come to the School Board meetings. People need to keep in mind that if they want services they have to pay for them.

b. Updates from previous meeting

Superintendent Wolfrom reported that in addition to the items previously reviewed, the following updates are included in the folders: health center budget, food service budget comparison, and overtime sheet. The adult education subsidy has not come in yet.

d. Questions and Comments from RSU Board

P.Holmes asked for clarification on what the board's charge is, what is the long range plan of the board? Every time we talk about becoming more efficient a group of citizens doesn't want it. What is the function of the board? Where are we going with this? These are not questions to answer tonight but need to have some conversation on this.

Chair Greenham responded that if he were to characterize it, he would suggest this budget is particularly focused on the dual combination of reaching kids who are falling through the cracks and then also addressing the Pre-K inequity in the district. It would seem that those are two pretty significant focused goals.

Superintendent Wolfrom added that the Administrative Team reviews the Strategic Plan of the District when developing the budget.

e. Citizens Comments

David Hepfner, Readfield resident addressed the Board regarding the negative impact the budget has had in the community in the last 4 years. Businesses have closed, no one is coming to Readfield to open business. He made suggestions to reduce the budget by increasing student/teacher ratios, raising activity fees, and imposing parking fees for students who drive vehicles to school.

8. Action/Discussion/Informational Items:

a. Policy Second Readings: EFC, Free and Reduced Price School Lunches; EGAD, Copyright Compliance; GBI (GBEBC), Gifts and Solicitations to Staff

Superintendent Wolfrom reported that the Policy Committee met and reviewed the above policies after the first readings by the Board. No additional comments were submitted for consideration. The Policy Committee recommends adoption of the policies as written.

MOTION by Watson, second by Simcock to approve Policy EFC, Free and Reduced Price School Lunches as presented. **Motion Carried:** unanimous

MOTION by Carr, second by O'Neal to approve Policy EGAD, Copyright Compliance as presented. **Motion Carried:** unanimous

MOTION by Carr, second by O'Neal to approve Policy GBI (replacing current policy GBEBC), Gifts and Solicitations to Staff as presented. **Motion Carried:** unanimous

b. Policy First Readings: GCQC – Resignation of School Employees; GDQD – Discipline and Discharge for Non-Union Employees (MSMA Policy GDF)

Superintendent Wolfrom reported that Policies GCQC and GDQD were reviewed at the February Policy Committee meeting and recommended for first reading. Any questions/comments should be forwarded to the Superintendent's Office prior to the next Policy Committee meeting on March 16.

9. Informational Items:

Chair Greenham, noted that the Board has heard from all the sections of the budget and have heard from the select boards. The A-Team needs the Board's guidance. He asked members to think about whether this is the budget they want to put forward or if there is a number we want them to get to.

10. Adjournment: **MOTION** and second to adjourn at 8:50 p.m.

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