

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT #38 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Maranacook Community High School
March 13, 2019, 6:30 p.m.
Minutes of Meeting

Members Present: Chair Gary Carr, Vice Chair Wendy Brotherlin, Patty Gordon, Cathy Jacobs, Betty Morrell, Jeremy Pare, Kaleb Pushard, Shawn Roderick, Crystal Sullivan, Melissa Tobin, David Twitchell, Alexander Wright

Member Absent: Adam Woodford

Administrators: Superintendent James Charette, Principals Janet Delmar, Abbie Hartford, and Kristen Levesque, Assistant Principal Tina Brackley, Director of Curriculum, Assessment & Instruction Nancy Harriman, Technology Director Diane MacGregor, Special Education Director Ryan Meserve, Finance Manager Brigette Williams, Adult and Community Education Director Steve Vose

1. Call to order: Chair Carr called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
2. Recognition Ceremony – Girls’ Alpine and Boys’ Nordic Ski Teams, State of Maine Class B Champions
The Girls’ Alpine and Boys’ Nordic Ski Team members were presented with certificates for their accomplishments of earning State Class B Champions. Both teams were also awarded The Good Sportsmanship Awards in each of their sports.
3. Report from RHR Smith & Co.
Auditor Bill Hall reported on the RSU #38 financial audit for the year ending June 30, 2018. He reported on the various funds of the school district, noting that there were no concerns with the financial information provided. He invited the Board to contact him with questions regarding the Audit. The audit is posted on the RSU #38 website.
4. Citizens’ Comments (items not on the budget): none
5. Joint Meeting with Local Select Boards re: FY20 School Budget
 - a. Review of FY20 Budget
Superintendent Charette welcomed the Select Board members and Town Managers to the meeting thanking them for attending.
Town representatives present were: Manchester – Tom Oliver; Mount Vernon – Paul Crockett, Trish Jackson; Readfield – Bruce Bourgoine, Kathryn Woodsum, Dennis Price, Christine Sammons, Eric Dyer; Wayne – Lloyd Irland, Aaron Chrostowsky.
Superintendent Charette reviewed the First Draft General Fund Summary budget noting that this summary does not represent any cuts at this time. The summary includes all the requests that have been made by the various departments of the school district. It represents an increase of \$1,572,502.54, or 8.78% over FY19. Page 2 and 3 outlines the summary of budget changes listing the new requests, as well as a listing of budget decreases.
 - b. Updates since previous meeting
Superintendent Charette shared a Prioritized Budget, Version 1, which is the first attempt of whittling down some of the requests based on meetings with Administrators and Managers. The items in yellow are items expected to be moved to the 20/21 year, and it is expected there will be items moved to the 21/22 budget year.

Concern was raised about moving the high school keyless entry to FY21, noting that it is a safety issue.

c. Questions and Comments from Members of the Select Boards - below

d. Questions and Comments from RSU Board

Bruce Bourgoine commented that the Bond referendum was passed in January, but it was a very close vote with low voter turnout. This should serve as notice to be careful with the rest of the budget. Regarding the maintenance projects - why is the \$105,000 item for bleachers and the \$84,000 middle school roof not included in the bond? Superintendent Charette responded that those 2 items were not brought to his attention until after the bond. The middle school roof work is considered maintenance as the request is to restore the rubber between the joints in the roof. This is a recommendation from G&E Roofing; there is no leakage at this time. Finance Manager Williams added that in deciding what to include in the bond, the Facilities Committee reviewed the needs assessment provided by Oak Point and included the items most needed while trying to keep the bond amount under \$7 million, knowing that if the bond was too large it would not be approved by the voters. Decision was made to try to fit some of these projects in the regular budget. The bleachers were raised as a concern this past fall. The bleachers are the original bleachers to the building and are not ADA Compliant. They are grandfathered and there has been work done in the past, however, this past year we have received several calls regarding elderly people having trouble or fear of navigating the bleachers. We are looking at whether we need to make that purchase all at once or if we can bring it down. We are also considering lease purchase options.

Question was asked about the bond and debt service – is it built into this budget. Finance Manager Williams responded that the first interest payment is built into the FY20 budget. Mrs. Williams reviewed the debt that would be paid off in following years as well as the amount of the bond payments for those years.

FY20 - \$60,000 reduction for budgeted architect services, and increase of \$90,000 estimated for first interest payment on new bond;

FY21 - \$128,000 reduction for retirement of Siemens Phase I Energy project, and increase of \$562,000 for first principal payment and 2 interest payments on new bond;

FY22 – a net reduction of \$113,000 for the final payment on the Middle School (actual payment is \$425,000, but 86% is state funded), and \$554,000 for new bond payment;

FY23 - \$49,000 reduction for retirement of Siemens Phase II Energy project, and \$546,000 for new bond payment; and

FY24 - \$101,000 reduction for final payment on High School renovations, and \$536,000 for new bond payment. The bond is a 15-year bond.

The majority of the work included in the bond will be done this summer.

Question was asked about the school resource officer, noting that it was voted down several years ago. Request was made for more details, usually it's not just a FTE, is there a vehicle, other equipment, training, etc. What does it require to put that position in the schools? Are there possibilities to work with other communities?

Trish Jackson commented that it is upsetting that nothing has been cut; with the bond it was expected to see reductions in other areas. Suggested that the Board come up with a number to be cut.

Kathryn Woodsum spoke about her experience with having a school resource officer in the school district where she works, there are many positive experiences for students and staff. Suggestion was made to research whether there may be grants available.

Questions were asked about the revenue side of the budget. Superintendent Charette responded those number should be out next week. Request was made that in the future to have

the projected revenue figures available at the time when the joint meeting is held, even if the meeting needs to be delayed.

Discussion ensued about the costs to the individual towns, thoughts of perhaps pulling away from the RSU, and suggestion to develop a strategic plan to see some sort of vision beyond the next 10 years. Is it time to look at other options to having 4 elementary schools? The communities didn't want it back in 2011, but if a plan were in place showing a vision beyond the next 10 years there could be support in these investments in the infrastructure knowing there is a plan in place. Suggestion was made not to do this as a board; to include teachers, administrators, parents, municipal representation; have it a facilitated committee.

B.Morrell added that the Board has already discussed this in hopes of putting something together by the fall, 2019.

The Board was encouraged to get the increase below 5%. The towns are cutting and they have needs too, with roads and aging buildings. With the budget as presented it stands for an increase of 1 mill in taxes for some communities.

Request was made to look at the District Wide line in the summary budget to see if there are efficiencies that can be made.

Question about enrollment projections into next year? Enrollment is expected to remain the same. An enrollment project survey was conducted and enrollment is expect to remain stable for the next 20 years.

Question – there are several requests for additional teaching staff and enrollment is even, might there be efficiencies in other buildings to make up for the positions that are being requested.

The Select Boards and Town Managers were thanked for attending and providing input in the budget process.

S.Roderick asked that towns assist the Board in bringing up the topic of consolidation.

Question – do we make the lines of where students go to school a little fuzzier?

Question - what are you willing to give up to get the things you want?

Suggestions:

Look at amount of personnel to see if that could be impacted.

Look at Manchester and Readfield class configurations for next year with and without new positions.

Decrease percentage of increase to 5%; to half.

Question about fire panel items being moved to years 2 and 3. These are things that Oak Point recommended for us. The Maintenance Director has started working on them, he was hoping to get them done in the next year.

Question about negotiations. The Board agreed to an amount to set aside that allows the negotiations committee to negotiate in good faith.

What percentage are the Priority 1 items? 6.3%

Is there a way to look at the district-wide line? Mrs. Williams noted that all transportation is included in this line as well as maintenance and debt.

Is it unrealistic to move painting jobs to year 2 or 3?

Opportunities to pay for some things with grant money? Is that part being explored?

Foundation grants that are available to schools?

Look at sponsorship from businesses or organizations for the bleachers. The Awesome Bear Society (ABS) is looking at doing some things for the outside facilities and we don't want to compete with them. ABS will be presenting to the facilities committee next week and then to the Board.

More clarification on need for behavioral program at HS and if there's any possible way to consolidate the program with the middle school.

Note safety items on the sheets.

6. Additions/Adjustments to the Agenda by Board and/or Superintendent: none

7. Action/Discussion/Informational Items:

a. Approval of Minutes of March 6, 2019

MOTION by Brotherlin, second by Wright to approve the Minutes of March 6, 2019 as presented. **Motion Carried:** unanimous

b. Consideration of 2019-2020 School Calendar

MOTION by Brotherlin, second by Wright to consider the 2019-2020 school calendar as presented.

Discussion ensued. C.Jacobs asked if there has been any evaluation/assessment done on high school late start days. Superintendent Charette responded that he did have a conversation with Dr. Conway and he feels the work being done is important work. He has also heard from teachers that they are missing out on instruction time and the number of days have been decreased to one a month.

Question was asked as to how the late start days have been used this year and whether they have accomplished what they were intended to do.

MOTION by Morrell, second by Jacobs to table the vote on the school calendar until the above questions are answered.

K.Pushard asked if consideration has been given to have one spring break in March versus having one week in February and one in April. Superintendent Charette responded that by law, schools in the CATC region can only have up to 5 dissimilar days in their calendars. Right now we are at our 5-day maximum.

Regarding HS late start days, request was made to reconsider having a late-start day in November due to the month already being broken up.

Motion Carried: 11 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstained (Wright) to table the vote on the 2019-2020 school calendar.

8. Adjournment: Chair Carr adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
James Charette, Superintendent/Secretary
D. Foster, Recorder