

**Monadnock Regional School District & SAU 93**  
**School Board Meeting Minutes**  
**January 28, 2019**  
**Monadnock MS/HS, Swanzey, NH**

**Board Members Present:** Neil Moriarty, Lisa Steadman, Eric Stanley, Rob Colbert, Cheryl McDaniel-Thomas, Winston Wright, Scott Peters and Karen Wheeler.

**Members Absent:** Nicholas Mosher, Betty Tatro, Brian Bohannon, Karen Buono and Kristen Noonan.

**Administration Present:** L. Witte, Superintendent and J. Swanson, Business Administrator.

**Also Present:** L. Aivaliotis, Recording Secretary

1. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no public comments.

2. **MATTERS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION:**

a. **Default Budget Warrant Article: MOTION:** S. Peters **MOVED** to support and place the following article on the 2019-2020 ballot: Shall we rescind the provisions of RSA 40:14-b, as adopted by the Monadnock Regional School District on March 8, 2005, so that the default budget will be determined by the governing body instead of the Budget Committee? If Warrant Article 8 passes this article will be null and void. **SECOND:** R. Colbert. **DISCUSSION:** E. Stanley commented a function of the Budget Committee is to prepare a proposed default number. L. Witte explained this duty was given to the Budget Committee and this motion will give the task back to the Board. She explained there are some Districts that have Budget Committees that are advisory only. L. Witte said this came out of a conversation and recommendation from the attorney if the Board would like to entertain this motion. N. Moriarty commented two people outside of the District have done this article. L. Witte said this was in addition to the letter to the Budget Committee from the attorney and that the language of the article is cut and paste from the state statute. E. Stanley said it is silly to have the Budget Committee do their proposed budget number and not the default. N. Moriarty stated in 2005 the voters voted to have the Budget Committee do the default and now we are taking it away. N. Moriarty said this was his article. He had 25 signatures to get it on the ballot in 2005. He prepared the 2005 article because he felt things were being slid into the default by the administration. He also said this was not discussed at the Public Hearing. J. Swanson explained this is not a monetary article and did not need to be discussed at the Public Hearing. There is a debate on one time purchases versus recurring purchases. It is not a new item. E. Stanley commented we have had this textbook debate for a long time. The Budget Committee has had a lot of say regarding the ballot. He understands the reasoning and does not disagree. We need to find another solution. We need to be careful. It had been an ugly issue in previous years. L. Witte stated the attorney has delivered the letter to the Budget Committee and has suggested this article. This is part of the attorney's suggestions. L. Steadman explained we need to make sure the default number is correct. If this is placed on the ballot it would become Article Eight. L.

Witte explained the letter was delivered to the Chair of the Budget Committee, he responded on Sunday and then communication back and forth with the administration. The Budget Committee is scheduled to meet tomorrow. If the Budget Committee were to come up with a different number prior to the ballot being printed it would be okay to change the number. If the number is not corrected the District can take legal recourse, further action. E. Stanley asked if this article goes on the ballot are we shooting ourselves in the foot regarding the Budget Committee. L. Steadman said it would be more of an incentive to correct the default number per RSA. It was stated the Budget Committee can change the default number prior to the ballots being printed. L. Witte explained the default number was disclosed at the Public Hearing but with no rationale which is required per statute. R. Colbert commented it sounds like there is a legal challenge either way. S. Peters commented the Budget Committee is aware they are on notice and that is why they are holding a meeting tomorrow. He would agree with E. Stanley. This decision does not feel timely. We need to give them time to respond. We will have a year to work with them. **VOTE:** 0/7.308/.998/4.694. **Motion fails.** E. Stanley does not want the minutes to reflect he does not support the administration.

R. Colbert asked if L. Witte found out who pays the Budget Committees legal fees. N. Moriarty said regarding an issue years before the School Board paid the Budget Committees legal fees. He would hate to tell the public that the Board has a 2 million dollar surplus but they will have to pay the fee.

### **3. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION & DISCUSSION:**

**a. Default Budget Calculation:** L. Witte explained there have been emails and phone calls regarding the default. L. Steadman asked if the current default number stays can we have an emergency injunction. L. Witte said there are several discrepancies such as the insurance increase, lane changes, lease contracts, transportation and lane changes for a few. She said the lane changes are part of the contractual obligation. It is not a wage increase. There is the debate over one time expenses and there were decreases the administration found. L. Steadman asked W. Lechliden, Budget Committee Chair the intention of their meeting tomorrow. He said to put the facts together.

**b. Petitioned Warrant Article 8:** K. Wheeler commented the Board does not typically take a stand on petitioned warrant articles. L. Steadman said it is tradition but we can have an opinion. J. Swanson said the warrant and budget has to be finalized today.

**c. Delegate Assembly Recap:** L. Steadman explained she had attended the Delegate Assembly this past Saturday. Resolution #2 was in regards to bringing guns in the schools on voting day with a permit, Resolution #11 was the NHSBA in opposition regarding NH Retirement and Resolution #12 was to restore local power to the school assignment-manifest education. The NHSBA will support Resolution #12. She attended 2 sessions on Student Mental Health for all students. She also heard from the NHSB of the Year. We are doing some of the same things and it is encouraging. She spoke to W. Philips a NHSBA attorney and he explained you are not required to come out of non-public to vote. You can vote in non-public session.

R. Colbert asked where the end of the year surplus goes. J. Swanson explained it goes back to the taxpayers. L. Witte explained the current year appropriation is the statute starting point in regards to the Default.

**4. SETTING NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA:** N. Moriarty would like to submit something to the NHSBA to see if they agree with our process and if the Budget Committee can change their number. L. Steadman explained she asked W. Philips if the Default number could be changed and he said it could be prior to the ballots being printed. N. Moriarty also wanted to know when the Board should have submitted to get the Budget Committees responsibility of the Default withdrawn.

N. Moriarty would like the administration to provide the cover sheet he has previously received. L. Witte explained it is prepared in a different format. S. Peters would support the administration to present any information in their own form.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There are no public comments.

**6. ADJOURNMENT: MOTION:** R. Colbert **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 PM.  
**SECOND:** S. Peters. **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis