

**Monadnock Regional School District
School Board/Budget Committee Joint Meeting
November 21, 2020
Monadnock Regional Middle/High School**

School Board Member: Scott Peters, Kristen Noonan, Colleen Toomey, Lisa Steadman, Winstone Wright, Betty Tatro, Dan LeClair and Michelle Connor.

Budget Committee Members: Doug Bersaw, Wayne Lechluder, Adam Hopkins, Dan Coffman, Meghan Foley, Edward Sheldon, JoAnne Daris and Jillian Exel.

Administration Present: L. Witte, Superintendent, J. Rathbun, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, C. Woods, Director of Student Services and J. Morin, Business Administrator.

1. Public Comments: There were no public comments.

2. Administration Presentation 2021/22: L. Witte started by presenting the enrollment number referred to as the BOY which is 1644 students. She then gave a historical view in the budget books. She explained the number is lower than last year. There were some folks who chose to do homeschool. About half of the students who chose to do homeschool had just moved into the district or were never enrolled before possible preschoolers or Kindergarten. There will be an end of the year count to calculate adequacy for next year. She provided an Adequacy Chart. In FY20 there was an increase in the Stabilization Fund due to the grant funded at 100% and full day Kindergarten was also funded. In FY21 there were additional funds, a one-time grant in the amount of 1.4 million. This grant will be gone next year. The district will expect to receive \$9,908,159.81 in 2021/22. L. Witte explained the free and reduced lunch numbers affect the amount of adequacy the district will receive. This past year and currently all students have been receiving free lunch. It is important for the parents to fill out the forms. There are 237 fewer students signed up for free and reduced lunch. We will receive \$550,000.00 less due to the forms not being filled out. L. Witte will be reaching out to the elected officials. She feels there will be a remedy.

The actual unallocated funds balance is 1.5 million dollars for 2019-2020. The reason for the balance is due to a savings in athletics, transportation, special education and building operations. Those were all items affected due to COVID. The non-COVID items are salary, benefits, insurance, legal fees, special ed. and the difference with another phone provider. The district had received \$423,834.00 from the CARES ACT due to

COVID. This is a grant application and the spending must be approved by the State. The district also received \$316,600.00 from SPSRF. This amount of money must be spent by December 30 and the amount is based on the number of students multiplied by \$200.00 each. L. Witte explained they will be able to shift funds in order to spend the amount by Dec. 30, 2020. She provided a chart to show where the funds were spent due to COVID.

L. Witte explained the budget drivers for the 2021/22 proposed budget. The GMR has increased by 4.5%, NHRS has increased by 2.9% for non-certified teachers and 3.22% for teachers, contractual obligations and transportation. She explained last year the Board had asked for academic stipends and extracurricular stipends which were not funded. The SRO was funded. There were counselors funded for last year and she would like to keep them in the proposed budget. They have made a tremendous impact on the students. L. Witte explained the reinstatement of the Assistant Superintendent is being proposed. Currently, J. Rathbun's position is 60% paid by the district and 40% paid by Title One. She does not feel we can continue the split. It could create a problem regarding the grant. They would suggest 40% from the proposed budget and the funds from the HR position which had not been filled. She has provided a job description for the Assistant Superintendent. She would also like to add a .5 Civics teacher, restructured and cost neutral. The proposed budget amount is \$32,317,677.00. The committees reviewed the proposed warrant articles. The engineering and design in the amount of \$300,000.00, the Middle/High School and Gilsum air circulators in the amount of \$840,000.00 and 3 contracts.

3, Questions from the School Board: There were no questions from the School Board.

4. Questions from the Budget Committee: W. Lechliden asked if the lawsuit currently going on is the same as the Claremont Decision and he would question the amount of time spent on it. L. Witte said it is a global issue regarding the funding formula. It is not the same argument. L. Witte explained the increase in year 2 of the Specialists contract is \$22,823 and in year 3 it is an increase of \$20,767.00. The increase in year 2 of the MESSA contract is \$93,229.00. W. Lechliden would like to know of anything spent over \$5000.00 from March 2020-June 30,2020. J. Morin explained we had continued to pay for the transportation contract and special ed out of district. She will forward that information to W. Lechliden.

L. Witte explained the proposed budget and the warrants have an increase from last year in the amount of \$122,169.00 which is 3.6%. D. Coffman asked about the reduction in \$550,000.00 in adequacy. L. Witte explained we need to fill out the free and reduced forms. This is due to the waiver, because of COVID. Throughout the State

districts are trying to get families to fill out the forms. L.Witte explained the adequacy we will receive is reflected in the 9.9 million.

L.Witte explained a lot of what was spent were 1 time items. We are in good shape regarding technology. We had purchased additional cameras, additional desks and dividers. We are in pretty good shape with the PPE equipment. L. Witte did explain if we go full remote the teachers will still be at the schools. She explained CARES and the SPSRF grant will not be in the default. J. Morin said the default will not include any one time expenditures.

D. Coffman asked if the bargaining units had any demands related to COVID. L. Witte explained working conditions. She explained we worked with the Unit attorney on what if a member gets COVID and how will they be compensated. L. Witte said we have not provided hazard pay. D. Coffman felt that the MRMSHS should have additional guidance counselors to help students with their plans after graduation.

D. Bersaw asked about the \$840,000.00 for Gilsum and MRMHS. S. Peters explained it is for air circulators. This will bring us in compliance and to update aged equipment. D. Bersaw would suggest the free and reduced forms be aggressively pursued to be filled out by the families. It was explained the Board recently voted to continue with the hybrid model until we go full or forced by the government to go full remote. S.Peters explained the Board will reevaluate the hybrid model in January and throughout the year. L. Witte explained we have a decision matrix to help us decide hybrid, full or remote.

W. Lechluder questioned the increase from \$600.00 to \$800.00 in supplies for the Specialists in their proposed contract. He also asked about child rearing leave. L. Witte explained the benefits regarding child rearing in the MDEA contract.

D. Coffman would like the total of the 3 contracts. It was explained in the contracts they are allowed to carry over their sick time. In the Specialists contract they are allowed to carry over 100 days, MDEA can carry over 110 days and MESSA can carry over 90 days. D. Coffman asked how can they think it is okay to carry over 3 months and force a payment in the current year. L. Steadman explained there is a reason regarding retirement. D. Coffman commented the NHRS paid out more money falsely last year in salaries. S.Peters commented that the Board asked the Budget Committee for input on the contracts. Ed Sheldon commented there is value to collect days, what if you get sick and need the income.

School Board Adjourn their meeting: MOTION: W. Wright MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 11:21 AM. SECOND: K. Noonan VOTE: 8.66/0/0/4.334. Motion passes.

- 5. Budget Committee Continue their Meeting:**
- 6. Items for the next agenda:**
 - 1. Default Budget**
 - 2. 3 Contracts**

3. **Proposed Budget Number**
4. **Warrant Articles**

Some members of the committee would like information on the approved operating budgets for the past 5 years, as well as the default for the past 5 years, the approved warrant articles for the past 5 years, actual State Aid for the past 5 years, actual spending versus proposed for the past 5 years, taxes raised locally for the past 5 years and the enrollment count for the past 5 years in an easy to look at sheet.

M. Foley asked L. Witte if she would email her presentation.

7. **Next Meeting: MOTION:** D. Bersaw **MOVED** to schedule the next Budget Committee meeting for December 16, 2020 at 7:00 PM. **SECOND:** D. Coffman **VOTE:** W. Lechlinder-abstain the remaining members-yes. **Motion passes. The Budget Committee has scheduled their next meeting for December 16, 2020.**

8. **Motion to adjourn: MOTION:** D. Bersaw **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 11:34 AM. **SECOND:** D. Coffman **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
MRSD Recording Secretary