

**Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)**  
**School Board Strategic Financial and FY15 Budget**  
**Strategy Session**  
**August 22, 2013**  
**Pappagallos Restaurant, Swanzey, NH**

**Members Present:** Mike Blair, Mike Morrison, Pat Bauries, Dan Coffman, Lisa Steadman, Richard Thackston, Robert Smith, Winston Wright, Eric Stanley and Barry Faulkner. **Absent:** Elizabeth Johnson, Phyllis Peterson, Ed Jacod, James Carnie and unassigned Rep. from Sullivan.

**Also present:** L. Corriveau, Superintendent, K. Craig, Assistant Superintendent, T. Kennett, Dir. of Student Services, J. Fortson, Business Manager and L. Aivaliotis recording secretary.

**Public present:** N. Moriarty.

L. Corriveau opened the meeting at 5:00 PM. He explained the Board does not have time during their regular meeting to discuss certain issues. He would like to use this time to speak informally on some important budget issues. He passed out information to the Board and explained there are big questions that we need to ask the District. J. Fortson will give ideas about the budget and then a projected default looking ahead. L. Corriveau commented we as a Board need to discuss Gilsom. It is a nice little school but for only 37 students. It is expensive. We need guidance from the Board.

1. **FY 14 Budget Update:** J. Fortson informed the Board the current budget is well under our target. We just started releasing orders. We will be able to make payroll. The State payment has come in. She had visited all of the towns and all have paid up to date except Fitzwilliam.
2. **Projected Default FY 15 Budget:** J. Fortson explained all the staff salary as of today and specific items will roll forward. She has met with all the principals except for A. Noel. They have discussed the common goal of the group. J. Fortson can see an increase in the default of between \$400,000.00 and \$450,000.00 at this time. N. Moriarty commented the Budget Committee sets the default number. L. Corriveau informed the Board we need to watch the budget, it is tight. We need to tighten our belts. J. Fortson commented the principals at the elementary schools are aware. L. Corriveau commented if everything stays the same we have a \$450,000.00 increase at the gate and while we head to the budget building process. T. Kennett commented that he does not have any serious rabbits in his hat. He cannot cut his budget. He has reduced his budget from 10 million to 6.1 million.

L. Corriveau informed the Board the newsletter will be out on Labor Day weekend. He thanked the Board for their articles. He reported he had met with the teachers today and they are very motivated. They are very excited to start the new school year. The new staff is from all over. K. Craig explained there are 10-12 new teachers.

T. Kennett informed the Board he had 427 students in Special Education and now there are 324 students. It is almost National average. The cost per special ed. student is down by State average.

L. Corriveau commented that there are high level question and we want the Board to feel comfortable to discuss.

3. **Sullivan Withdrawal Review to Date:** It was commented that Sullivan signed the tuition agreement. P. Bauries informed the Board that Sullivan does not have the funds to pay for the building. Sullivan is thinking about a Special Meeting to get a bond vote. They have \$20,000.00 toward what they owe us. J. Fortson explained Sullivan owes us more than the building. R. Thackston commented Troy is having an increase in their taxes. We need to take legal action against Sullivan. J. Fortson explained we are short because of Sullivan. J. Fortson explained she will bill Sullivan for L. Corriveau's time with Sullivan and her time. R. Thackston suggested filing a petition in Supreme Court. J. Fortson is waiting to see if the Sullivan adequacy is in the check and if it is they will not get it back or the one to be received in October. P. Bauries explained Sullivan wants a key to the building to sell it. P. Bauries suggested sending a person from the District and charging an hourly fee to open the building. The Board will have to vote on charging interest. J. Fortson will ask the State on how much interest can legally be charged. L. Corriveau commented that some of the Sullivan parents want their students to stay. They have to go unless the School Board wants them to pay tuition.
4. **Gilsum Elementary School Enrollment/Costs:** L. Corriveau commented that it is not cost effective to keep the Gilsum School open. We need to readdress the situation. We need to have an extensive report. Transportation is an issue. There is room in Swanzey for the students. E. Stanley suggested asking another school to join to keep the school open. L. Corriveau suggested thinking out of the box. J. Fortson explained Gilsum pays into the district. R. Thackston suggested approaching the Gilsum Select Board. Ask the Select Board what they want to do. It was commented that Gilsum is part of the equation. It is going to be tough but the study needs to be done. R. Thackston commented we need to talk to the players.

L. Corriveau explained the administration had a discussion with Winchester. We were impressed but we have not heard from them. They are shopping around. L. Corriveau explained they did not talk money. They did say they would be willing to discuss money. J. Fortson said the Gilsum building is the most expensive at 1.5

million. It was commented to give the Winchester students a tuition cut. W. Wright commented it should not be cheaper than what Fitzwilliam is paying per student. That will not be good. R. Thackston would like to have a conversation with Winchester.

5. **Health Insurance Costs:** J. Fortson explained during negotiations the Board gave a flat fee for the insurance but they would have been better off with the 80% 20% split. This is a cost to the district. Some of the employees received 100% coverage and some received money back. J. Fortson commented that she is very upset and frustrated. She commented it is a lot of work for the staff. We need to figure out a solution. L. Corriveau asked how to fix it and J. Fortson said to go back to the 80% 20% split. She said go to negotiations and explain what it has done to the District. E. Stanley commented we have handled negotiations the same way for years he would like the administration to start the negotiations. P. Bauries commented we do not have much leverage. J. Fortson would like to be on the negotiating team. Specialists and administrative contracts need to be added to the default. L. Corriveau explained they had a conversation with the Union president and we have a good relationship. The Board discussed the principal's contracts. L. Corriveau commented we need a fair system but we need to put it in the new budget. We need to work on the matrix.
6. **Technology Initiatives:** L. Corriveau commented this is a major district initiative. Where do we go from here? M. Blair commented we may have the funds in the budget and may not have to take it from the surplus. E. Stanley commented we are only talking about the computers we need to discuss the staffing issues. R. Thackston spoke of the increase in taxes for the Town of Troy and Fitzwilliam.
7. **Athletic Programming:** M. Blair commented that we have a process. We have an issue where a student wants to play but cannot because they have an outstanding lunch balance. D. Coffman suggested filling out the free lunch forms. R. Thackston commented we have a policy. We need to let the policy go. The policy says at the discretion of the administration. K. Craig commented there needs to be one administrator to answer to. L. Corriveau commented the principals know the families and students the best. M. Blair commented the policy is not correct. The Board voted on changes and they were not made. T. Kennett suggested letting the voters vote on the deficit. He said if he was the principal he would say yes. K. Craig commented it needs to be consistent. P. Bauries commented the policy needs to be clarified and item 3 needs to be omitted than brought back to the Board corrected. **MOTION:** E. Stanley **MOVED** to enter into non-public session under RSA 91A:3 II ( c ) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect the reputation of any person. **SECOND:** M. Morrison. **DISCUSSION:** W. Wright commented we are not on campus and this is not an official meeting. M. Blair commented the policy states a District building and the Board has authorized this meeting. The Board discussed this motion and would like to

continue the meeting regarding the items on the agenda first. **E. Stanley and M. Morrison withdraw their motion for the moment.**

- 8. Wilcox Building:** It was explained the Facilities Committee has met and is gathering information to decide what to do regarding the Wilcox building. They do not have the number for the insurance amount as of yet. J. Fortson does have a list of what needs to be done. J. Fortson gathered the information asked by the Board from the approved motion except for the appraisal. P. Bauries commented the appraisal should not be done yet. E. Stanley commented the appraisal was part of the motion. L. Corriveau commented this is a big issue and a political issue.
- 9. School Security and the SSO position:** L. Corriveau explained the SSO article was a petitioned article in the amount of \$57,000.00. The question is do we put this as another warrant article or in the budget.
- 10. Class size:** P. Bauries commented the numbers are going up. L. Corriveau asked that the Board wait for the opening day. T. Kennett commented there are 15 Special Ed. students in the kindergarten District wide and 2 special ed. kindergarten students have their own aide. L. Corriveau explained the numbers from the second day of school are more accurate. K. Craig explained during core instruction there will be a certified teacher in the classes. L. Corriveau explained the numbers district wide are going down but there is a bubble in the lower grades.
- 11. ACES 93 and SMART Programs:** T. Kennett explained this is a grant not a line item. He said the District has received a lot funds from the grants. It is not likely that we will receive a lot again. How will we fund this program? There are ideas on how to fund this. Perhaps bring in outside resources, increase the cost to the parents or put it in the budget as a line item. The summer and the school amounts will be separate.
- 12. Other:** L. Corriveau thanked the Board and N. Moriarty for attending the meeting. He has learned there are very complex issues as we enter the budget season. We need to come up with a budget to handle these issues. This is the most complex SAU. We are performing but not at where we should. This is the turn-around year. These issues are not easy. Thank you and he appreciates your patience. P. Bauries thanked the School Board and the administration for all the hard work being done. These issues need to be resolved. P. Bauries thanked N. Moriarty of the Budget Committee. **R. Smith arrives.**
- 13. Public Comments:** N. Moriarty commented on the large refund back to the District from LGC to reduce taxes. He said the District should go after the Winchester students to increase revenue. Do not purchase physical books for grades 6-10 go with electronic books, switch back to the junior high concept not the middle school, in spite of costs per student the district is hiring new staff, put back pay to play, start hiring part time teachers, start teaching college level 101

not advanced high school courses, recruit volunteer and have someone come up with cost saving ideas.

**14. Enter into Non-Public Session: MOTION:** E. Stanley **MOVED** to enter into non-public session under RSA 91 A:3 II ( c ) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect the reputation of any person: **SECOND:** M. Blair: **DISCUSSION:** P. Bauries informed the Board this was never opened as a public meeting. This is a workshop. M. Blair commented by P. Bauries taking control of the meeting it was a meeting. P. Bauries ruled it out of order. E. Stanley will wait for the next Board Meeting to go into non-public.

**15. Adjourn:** The meeting ended at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis  
Recording secretary