

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
School Board Meeting Minutes
(Approved Minutes)
October 21, 2014
Monadnock MS/HS, Swanzey, NH

Members Present: Pat Bauries, Betty Tatro, Richard Thackston, Barry Faulkner, Eric Stanley, Winston Wright, Phyllis Peterson, Mike Blair and James Carnie

Absent: Robert Smith, Lisa Steadman, Ed Jacod and unassigned seats from Roxbury.

Administration present: L. Corriveau, Superintendent, K. Craig, Assistant Superintendent, T. Kennett, Director of Student Services and J. Fortson, Business Manager.

Also present: L. Aivaliotis, Recording secretary

R. Thackston opened the meeting at 7:15PM.

“The goal of the Monadnock Regional Board is to be the Best School District in the State.

1. **Public Comments:** W. Hasbrouck asked the Board to change their mind on closing the Gilsum School. He asked the Board to reverse the decision and allow the STEAM idea to develop for 2-4 years.

Kate DeMasi of Gilsum read a letter her son wrote asking to keep the Gilsum School open.

Lindsey Ellis read a letter to the Board encouraging them to keep the Gilsum School open. She explained the Gilsum Committee is holding a meeting tomorrow to find ways to increase enrollment, write grants and solicit donations.

Karen Wheeler of Gilsum was shocked by the vote. She read the minutes and an elementary committee was formed, E. Jacod had asked for 1 year to keep the Gilsum School open and then the Board voted to close the school. It was not on the agenda. She would ask for a cost analysis on what the savings would be.

Melissa Diven commented the Board meetings are either run by Roberts Rules or they are not. You cannot use Roberts Rule only some of the time. She would like to have a petitioned warrant to overturn the vote in March. She said the STEAM Program is the best program for her child. She would like the Board to reconsider.

P. Bauries of Swanzey voted to keep the school open. She was shocked by the motion because we had not had an in depth decision on STEAM. It needs at least a year to prove itself before we make a decision. The motion by the School Board was made behind the scenes and was not on the agenda. A motion to put something on the agenda requires a 2/3

vote by the Board. There is no plan for the students attending the STEAM program if the Gilsum School were to close. While she was attending a Facilities Committee Meeting it was mentioned to close Troy and move the students to Emerson because of the number of repairs and dollars that would have to go into the school. She would ask the Board to reconsider until all the information on cost and student placement is complete. We are the Board of Education and we have an obligation to educate our students.

J. Carnie is very disappointed in the manner in which the vote took place. We have a Policy Committee and there is Policy BEDB which requires an item to be placed on the agenda and requires a 2/3 vote. This item was voted on under Board Chair Report. This is a travesty of procedures of the School Board. Why adopt policy when we do not follow them?

Jen Burroughs of Swanzey a paraprofessional at Cutler commented on a recommendation to reduce the health care benefits of the paraprofessionals. She said her salary is in the category of poverty level. She loves her job. She would ask the Board not to take her benefits away.

2. Consent Agenda:

MOTION: P. Peterson **MOVED** to accept the October 7, 2014 Public Meeting Minutes as amended. **SECOND:** W. Wright **DISCUSSION:** The Board made corrections to the minutes. **VOTE:** 7.791/0.2.120/3.090. **Motion passes.**

3. Student Government Report: There is no student government report.

4. BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT: J. Fortson informed the Board they will be able to pick up their budget books on Friday. R. Thackston asked J. Fortson for some sense of the operating costs of Gilsum. J. Fortson explained she is not prepared but will look in the past years budgets. In the year 2012-2013 the cost was \$867,000.00, in 2013-2014 the cost was \$643,489.00 and in 2014-2015 the cost is \$599,136.00. These amounts do not include any of the insurance, ADA, life, worker's comp, and travel among other things. They are in the District account.

5. ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT REPORT: K. Craig reported Emerson was honored in Concord for being a school that reduced the gap between regular ed. students and special ed. students. She reported on the Work Shop day and thanked the lead teachers. The juniors took the PSAT on October 15, 2014 and the School Board had approved the cost, thank you Board. She handed out the Newsletter from Jeremy Rathburn.

6. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT:

6a. Correspondence and Announcements: L. Corriveau commented it is a pleasure to work with such a professional as K. Craig. She has his same vision. He thanked her for the good work. L. Corriveau reported they had a meeting with the administration of Keene in which the commissioner attended. They would like to work together. We cannot expect more money from the State for the next 7 years said the commissioner. There is excitement in Gilsum for the STEAM program. The model should continue. On October 23, 2014 there is a STEAM Demonstration. The Monadnock/Keene Committee asked each District to bring

back a list for the DRA, a list of items that would make it easier for the 2 Districts to work together. L. Corriveau read the items they came up with. He encouraged the Board to get out and politically address the legislative body regarding these issues. Many Superintendents are retiring and Monadnock is not unique. The NHIAA laws need to be updated. K. Craig commented the Dept. of Ed. and DRA follow the law but we need to discuss this with the legislature. The collaboration we have with Keene State College student teachers is going well. Our teacher candidates need to be prepared to teach.

6b. Other Issues of Importance: There are no other issues at this time.

- 7. BOARD CHAIR REPORT:** R. Thackston suggested the Gilsum parents write a petition warrant article regarding the Gilsum School. It is a straight forward way to address the School Board. You need to get 25 registered voters to sign the petition and then it can be placed on the ballot. He does believe the Gilsum School is a good program and excellent quality work by the staff and students. The School Board felt they were called upon by the voters to close the Gilsum School. He did comment he is from Troy who has the highest tax rate in the State of NH.

8. SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:

8a. Education & Policy: M. Blair reported the committee met on October 14, 2014. The meeting subject revolved around the Gilsum School. He made it clear that the building and the STEAM Academy are two different issues. We want the academy to grow but we cannot change the vote of the Board of the previous meeting. M. Blair reported he met with the YEA staff at KSC. He informed the committee he will be a mentor in the program. He said KSC is very interested in having students from Monadnock. There is an informational meeting on Thursday. The committee will review the Master schedule at their next meeting. Regarding the homework policy any issues should be directed to the principal or Superintendent. The committee reviewed the Search of Students Policy and the amendment. The next meeting will be on October 28, 2014 at 5:00 PM.

8b. Finance/Facilities: L. Steadman is not present tonight. The committee will report at the next meeting.

8c. Budget Committee: B. Tatro reported the committee has not met. They will be meeting on October 28, 2014 at 7:00 PM.

8d. Community Relations Committee: M. Blair reported he had scheduled a meeting for tonight but they did not have a quorum. He would like to revisit what the CRC is and the mission. He would look at the Board to identify and evaluate the role of the CRC and do we need this committee. The committee has changed a number of times. P. Bauries asked if the CRC is responsible for the green sheet.

8e. Sports Committee: E. Stanley reported the committee has not met. They will be meeting on October 27, 2014 at 5:00 PM.

9. Old Business:

9a. Minutes from June, July and August: The secretary explained D. Cairns had commented on discrepancies in the minutes. She made the corrections and/or answered his questions which were sent to the SAU. P. Bauries will meet with L. Corriveau to go over this issue. The Board discussed the issue of the unapproved minutes among other website issues. M. Blair commented it would take about \$20,000.00 to fix the website. J. Carnie commented some of the minutes are not in on a timely fashion. He said when P. Bauries did the Education and Finance Minutes they were done in a timely manner. R. Thackston commented he is not hearing that they are not at the SAU. The issue is the website.

9b. Administrative Assistant for Athletic Director and Assistant AD/Associate Principal: R. Smith brought up this issue and he is not present tonight.

9c. Other Old Business as may come before the Board: The next meeting is on Wednesday November 5, 2014 at Cutler.

The Board received a fundraiser calendar from L. Corriveau.

10. NEW BUSINESS:

10a. Motions from Education & Policy Committee: MOTION: M. Blair **MOVED** on behalf of the Education & Policy Committee to recommend to the full Board to form a STEAM Academy AD HOC Committee which will consist of 1 administrator, 3 School Board, 3 building staff, 3 parents and 2 citizens. **SECOND:** E. Stanley. **DISCUSSION:** B. Tatro would suggest the 3 staff be from anywhere in the District not specific to Gilsum. **VOTE:** 9.910/0/0/3.090. **Motion passes.** The committee would ask the Board Chair to appoint the members. R. Thackston will ask those willing to serve.

Policy EBC-Crisis Prevention and Response is being brought to the Board for the first reading. The committee will ask the Board to adopt the policy at the next meeting. J. Carnie asked if the Policy Committee reviewed the legal references.

Policy JIH-R Search of Students is being brought to the Board for the first reading. M. Blair informed the Board the KPD, SPD and the State Police are reviewing this policy. The wording and the language follows what they would like to see in the policy. This policy is being used in the Hudson School District. P. Bauries asked if this was for Swanzey only. K. Craig explained the search dogs came to Emerson. L. Corriveau would have to research that question. B. Tatro asked if the attorney was going to review the policy. B. Faulkner commented there is a probable cause issue. You need to have probable cause to search. What are we teaching our children? **MOTION:** P. Peterson. **MOVED** to table the motion on Policy JIH-R Search of Students until M. Blair and the Policy Committee have feedback from the proper authorities. **SECOND:** P. Bauries. **VOTE:** 7.667/1.121/1.121/3.090. **Motion passes.**

MOTION: M. Blair **MOVED** on behalf of the Policy Committee to accept Policy IK-Earning of High School Credit as presented. **SECOND:** P. Peterson. **VOTE:** 9.910/0/0/3.090. **Motion passes.**

R. Thackston will send the policy dealing with suspicion of illegal substances to J. O'Shaughnessy for review.

10b. Motions from Finance & Facilities Committee: There are no motions from the Finance/Facilities Committee.

10c. Action on the Manifest: MOTION: B. Faulkner **MOVED** to accept the manifest in the amounts of \$1,406,210.80. **SECOND:** W. Wright **VOTE:** 9.910/0/0/3.090. **Motion passes.**

10d. Other New Business as may come before the Board: J. Fortson informed the Board she has received the apportionment from DRA. She should be able to set the tax rates without any hold ups.

It was asked if anyone would like to reconsider the vote on the Gilsum School. **MOTION:** W. Wright. **MOVED** to reconsider the vote on the closing of the Gilsum School. **SECOND:** P. Peterson. **DISCUSSION:** It was commented there have been many conversations about low enrollment and the cost of the Gilsum School. The Budget Committee has also discussed this issue. It is not a new concept. It has been on the agenda of the Finance Committee and the Education Committee and the Board has discussed this many times. It is a challenging discussion. The motion was made blindsided but not a surprise. P. Bauries commented the Superintendent was directed to bring options. We still do not have the information we need. We cannot vote without knowing the ramifications. P. Peterson commented there is positive energy from the Gilsum residence and they are willing to help with the cost of the school. Your children are doing well in the STEAM program come up with ideas. B. Faulkner is in favor of reconsideration of the motion. The parents, teachers and staff are heavily invested in STEAM. We need to partner with these people to come up with a solution. J. Carnie asked to see how the citizens of Richmond see this. If there was a huge savings he would go along with closing the school. Gilsum is a newer school and we need to look at all aspects. He is against the way the motion was brought forward. We need to know the figures. Is the STEAM Academy performing? E. Jacod had asked for a year to see how the school was performing. It has been 25 days, if it is not performing after a year than close it. We did not have the information. We have bigger costs than the Gilsum School. L. Corriveau commented that we have difficult issues. We are conducting a study with NESDEC which will be done and presented in November. These decisions need time and community input. The problem is the shrinking enrollment. M. Blair does not disagree with any of the comments but the voters voted to close the Gilsum School. They are directing the School Board to do these decisions. We need to get the information to the voters. The voters need to vote. R. Thackston commented he was very disappointed at the voter turnout. B. Faulkner would disagree the vote was not well informed. We are elected to make smart decisions but the voters expect us to make the right decision we have a responsibility to do the right thing. We need to start over. W. Wright commented the procedure was questionable. Does the Board want to reconsider? M. Blair commented a majority of the people said to close the school. The voting process was not flawed. People were informed before the vote. It was a petitioned article. Do not believe the voting process was ineffective. R. Thackston

commented the real issue is what we want to do with the School District. He will not vote to reconsider. He suggested Gilsum have a petitioned article and they make their case. Let the District build a budget without Gilsum School in it but put the STEAM Program in the budget. If the Board overturns the vote you will not have commitment from the District. J. Carnie said the issue is in the manner in which this came about. This was a two part motion. There should be a warrant article or an alternative option. They need complete information. What is the savings to close the Gilsum School? We need to give them more than 25 days. J. Carnie informed the Board the motion we are discussing should have been a motion to rescind not reconsider. **R. Thackston declares the motion out of order. MOTION: J. Carnie MOVED** to rescind the closing of the Gilsum School motion. **SECOND: W. Wright. VOTE: 6.669/3.241/0/3.090. Motion passes.**

M. Blair asked about the AD-HOC Committee for the physical plant of Gilsum. R. Thackston commented it is out of order and he is not forming a committee.

11. SETTING NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA:

- 1. Administrative Assistant for AD/Assist. Principal (Finance Committee)**
- 2. Policies forwarded**

12. Public Comments: Melissa Divens commented the Gilsum School is in the budget for the next school year. She asked if the 2 million dollar surplus could be used. J. Fortson said the surplus is returned to the taxpayers.

K. Wheeler thanked the Board for the Gilsum vote. She informed the Board the parent committee in Gilsum is proactive in raising funds and increasing enrollment. She would ask the Board to consider forming the previous elementary school committee. R. Thackston explained that committee formed into the Education/Policy Committee.

J. Fortson suggested the CRC work with Monadnock United.

E. Stanley leaves the meeting.

13. 10:13 PM Motion to enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person:

MOTION: P. Bauries **MOVED** to enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). **SECOND:** P. Peterson. **VOTE:** B. Tatro, P. Baurie, W. Wright, B. Faulkner, R. Thackston, P. Peterson, M. Blair and J. Carnie. 8.789/0/0/4.211. **Motion passes.**

14. 10:20 PM Motion to enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (b) Hiring of a Public Employee: MOTION: P. Bauries **MOVED** to enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (b). **SECOND:** B. Tatro. **VOTE:** B. Tatro, P. Bauries, W. Wright, B. Faulkner, R. Thackston, P. Peterson, M. Blair and J. Carnie. 8.789/0/0/4.211. **Motion passes.**

15. Return to Public Session: R. Thackston informed the Board of an issue that occurred at the Husky House. L. Patnode and R. Thackston have taken care of the issue.

16. Motion to adjourn: MOTION: J. Carnie **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 PM.
SECOND: M. Blair **VOTE:** 8.789/0/0/4.211. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording secretary