

RSU #38 Board of Directors
Maranacook Community Middle School & via Zoom
March 23, 2022
Minutes of Meeting

Members Present: Vice Chair David Twitchell, Keltie Beaudoin, Kim Bowie, Tyler Dunn (remote), Patty Gordon, David Guillemette, Rebecca Lambert (remote), Betty Morrell, Jade Parker, Shawn Roderick

Member Absent: Chair Cathy Jacobs, Melissa Tobin, Dane Wing

Administration Present: Superintendent Jay Charette, Principals Jeff Boston, Tina Brackley, Janet Delmar, Abbie Hartford, and Kristen Levesque, Interim Principal Michael Harris, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Karen Smith, Special Education Director Ryan Meserve, Technology Director Diane MacGregor, Adult and Community Education Director Steve Vose, Finance Director Mandy Fitzgerald, Facilities/Transportation Director Shaun Drinkwater

1. Call to Order: Vice Chair Twitchell called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
This business meeting is being held both in person and virtually, through zoom in compliance with RSU #38 policy BED Remote Participation in School Board Meetings. The meeting is being recorded and will be posted on the maranacook.org YouTube channel.
The “microphones” of the viewing audience will be muted except during the identified portions of public comments. If you would like to speak during any public comment section of the agenda, please use the chat feature to signal to Mrs. MacGregor and she will communicate with the Board Vice Chair. In-person speakers please sign up on the clipboard by the door. All individuals that wish to speak, whether in person or virtual, please identify yourself with first and last name and the town you live in. Please note that individuals that do not live in our member communities may or may not be granted permission to speak at the discretion of the Vice Chair. Speakers are asked to limit individual comments to 2 minutes and if someone speaks ahead of you that has a similar view please reference the comment. All votes will be taken by Roll Call.
2. Pledge of Allegiance:
3. Additions/Adjustments to the Agenda by Board and/or Superintendent
Patty Gordon asked about the energy audit mentioned at the last meeting, stating she has heard from a community member who could possibly help the district. Superintendent Charette responded that the Facilities Committee met this week and are revisiting the options for solar energy.
Patty Gordon brought up the idea shared by Chair Jacobs about inviting a teacher (or more) and a community member to be on the Communications Committee. The Board members in attendance were in agreement.
Superintendent Charette requested the addition of Item 4d, Consideration of Use of Bond Proceeds for Facilities Projects.
An update was provided on the power and water issues over the last 2 weeks on the Maranacook campus.
4. Budget Workshop:
 - a. Budget Updates
Superintendent Charette reviewed the changes to the draft budget since last week. The third draft is down \$1,079,382.60 from the first draft. He still has about 5 outstanding areas where he thinks he can make some adjustments on positions, computer leases, online subscriptions, and electrical costs. The biggest question is around the discussion of Elementary Guidance and Social Work.

b. Citizens comments regarding budget

Tara Wick, elementary counselor for Mt. Vernon and Wayne Elementary Schools addressed the board regarding the Social Worker position in lieu of the counselor that was hired in December, adding that elementary counselor Becky Vining is on the same page. They are not against having a social worker. The district hired an elementary school counselor in December and they are just getting some momentum with that position and are having a hard time giving that up. Specific reasons noted: 1) it takes time to find someone that fits into the team and works well with us and the children. We are feeling some relief; the needs are more than ever and they are very complex. Since the new counselor came on board I can see 10 additional kids in both of my schools. The numbers are similar for Becky. 2) We think that we can do what the schools need but we need time to figure it out. It would be nice to continue on this track and not have one or the other. 3) It is all about making relationships; we have a person the kids are already attaching to; the investment is already paying off. In a perfect world we would have both; we need both positions. Encourage the Board to consider that, but at least keep the counselor.

c. Budget deliberations, follow-up and decision making

Discussion ensued about the roles of a social worker and a school counselor. Question was asked about whether the district has looked into any grant funds that may be available for this. Could the services from Kennebec Behavioral Health be expanded?

Superintendent Charette responded he does not know of any grants that are available for school districts, but the Department of Education understands how important this is for schools and if an opportunity arises we will look into it. Regarding Kennebec Behavioral Health, they are having difficulty meeting the needs because they do not have the staff. He added that other districts are using the Social Worker model.

Question was asked about the difference in the cost. The difference in cost is about \$20,000. For both positions, the cost would be \$125,000 - \$130,000. Currently the social worker position is in the budget at \$75,000.

Discussion ensued about the bonds that are made with students and the importance of having a consistent touch point for the students.

Question was asked about the ESSER 3 Funds. Superintendent Charette stated we have until 2024 to expend the funds. The grant could be rewritten to fund part of the counselor position.

The general consensus was to look into rewriting the ESSER 3 fund and see what the cost comes up to with both positions in the budget. The Superintendent will have the figure for the April 6th meeting.

Questions were asked about the request for the high school textbooks. Superintendent Charette reported that he asked the staff to do further research on their requests and they came back with the updated requests.

d. Consideration of Use of Bond Proceeds for Facilities Projects

MOTION by Morrell, second by Gordon to approve the recommendation of the Facilities/Transportation Committee and finance the listed projects, at the costs listed, from the RSU 38 Facilities Bond for a total of \$81,000.

Roll Call Vote: MOTION carried: unanimous

5. Adjournment – **MOTION** and second to adjourn 7:37p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
James Charette, Superintendent of Schools
D. Foster, Recorder