

**REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT NO. 38**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**Remote Meeting via Zoom**  
**April 1, 2020, 6:30 p.m.**  
**Minutes of Meeting**

Members Present: Chair Gary Carr, Vice Chair Wendy Brotherlin, Kim Bowie, Patty Gordon, Cathy Jacobs, Rebecca Lambert, Betty Morrell, Shawn Roderick, David Twitchell, Alexander Wright

Member Absent: Melissa Tobin, (two vacant positions)

Administrators: Superintendent James Charette, Special Education Director Ryan Meserve, Principals Jeff Boston, Dwayne Conway, Janet Delmar, Abbie Hartford, Kristen Levesque, Assistant Principal Tina Brackley, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Nancy Harriman, Technology Director Diane MacGregor, Finance Manager Brigette Williams

1. Call to Order: Chair Carr called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Superintendent Charette announced that in accordance with An Act to Implement Provisions Necessary to the Health, Welfare and Safety of the Citizens of Maine, in Response to the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency, as enacted, the RSU #38 Board meeting will be held via Zoom. It will be recorded and posted on Maranacook.org YouTube channel.

Due to the change in the format of this Board of Directors meeting, please be aware that during the course of this meeting the “microphones” of the viewing audience will be muted except during the identified portions of public comments which are Items #3 and #5b. If members of the public have questions or comments that fall outside the appropriate public participation times, please call the Superintendent’s Office or email the superintendent or any board member and answers will be provided as soon as possible.

Attendance and all votes of the Board will be conducted through roll call. When your name is called please cast your vote with the 3 available options of yes (approve), no (disapprove) or abstain.

2. Additions/Adjustments to the Agenda by Board and/or Superintendent:

Superintendent Charette requested the following additions to the agenda:

4g. Discussion regarding offering food service during April 20 vacation week

4h. Discussion regarding sub-committee meetings during the month of April

5c. Discussion/vote to authorize the use of bond funds for the Mt. Vernon Elementary School roof repair

Chair Carr asked about a discussion at the last Facilities Committee meeting to present the Board with a proposal to use bond funds for the lights projects. Superintendent Charette will review the minutes and report at the April 15 meeting.

3. Citizens’ Comments:

Manchester resident Dawn Kliphan asked about the possibility of using bus routes to provide meals for students throughout the district. Superintendent Charette responded that at this time the district is providing meals through a waiver under the Summer Meal Program. Mt. Vernon is the distribution point because it is the only town in the District that qualifies

under the socio-economic status requirement. There are amendments being considered that would provide us with more flexibility and changes will be made as the rules change.

Senator Shenna Bellows added that changes on the delivery of meals may change.

4. Action/Discussion/Informational Items:

a. Approval of Minutes of March 11, 2020

**MOTION** by Brotherlin, second by Wright to approve the Minutes of March 11, 2020 as presented. Roll Call Vote: **Motion Carried** 7 in favor, 0 opposed, 3 abstained (Gordon, Morrell, Twitchell)

b. Acceptance of Donations

**MOTION** by Brotherlin, second by Wright to accept the donations as presented.

Roll Call Vote: **Motion Carried** - unanimous

Betty Morrell reported that she received an email from ABS asking if any of the teams wanted to donate a portion of their money toward the remote learning days or other areas the schools need money.

c. Acceptance of teacher resignation due to retirement, Michael Boyman, High School, effective June 30, 2020

**MOTION** by Brotherlin, second by Wright to accept the resignation of Mr. Boyman with regret and appreciation for his years of service.

Roll Call Vote: **Motion Carried** - unanimous

d. Acceptance of teacher resignation, MacKenzie Kelley, High School, effective June 30, 2020

**MOTION** by Brotherlin, second by Jacobs to accept the resignation of Ms. Kelley with regret. Roll Call Vote: **Motion Carried** - unanimous

e. Approval of Remote Learning Plan

**MOTION** by Brotherlin, second by Wright to approve the Remote Learning Plan.

Discussion ensued regarding the remote learning plan. Superintendent Charette explained that the plan was developed in conjunction with teaching staff. Administrators met and developed a basic outline and teachers met via Zoom to develop plans for each of the grade levels at the elementary schools and teams and departments for the middle and high schools. The plan is available on the website for parents, and those who do not access email were sent the information in the mail and in some instance they will be dropped off via bus.

Questions were raised regarding the programming for students attending the Capital Area Technical Center (CATC), online lessons for high school and middle school students, equity for all students including access to electronic learning, grading and teacher expectations.

Superintendent Charette responded they are waiting on direction from Augusta regarding the CATC students. He has been told that they are in the process of working through their plan. Once he receives information it will be passed along to students and their families.

Dr. Levesque spoke about the online lessons such as Google Hangout. There are a lot of teachers using hangouts and a lot of online learning, but it is not required. There are some challenges with the technology but staff and families are working through them as they arise.

Regarding programming equity, Superintendent Charette reported that the state understands that the equity piece is huge. We need to provide something and we need to provide it as equitably as possible, but they ask not to let the equity of the process stop us from providing learning.

Technology Director MacGregor added that all the District's Kajeet hotspots have gone out (15 in all) to families and more have been ordered. She noted that the Kajeets use cellular lines, so if a family doesn't have good cellular reception the Kajeets may not work well. There are daily data limits on the Kajeets, so if they are being used for streaming or if other family members are using the data the usefulness of the Kajeets for lessons may be limited. Some families are experiencing band width problems because parents are also working from home.

Dr. Conway added this is an incredibly stressful time for students and teachers and the district has transitioned to remote learning in a week. Regarding teacher expectations and whether students will fail if they do not attend online classes, Dr. Conway responded that cannot happen. More guidance will be shared around expectations and an explanation of Pass/Fail grades.

Technology Director MacGregor added the state is working to come up with access for grade school families. Parents have been polled to see what they need. We do not have one to one devices for K-5. We are working hard to gather all the information and start making decisions.

Superintendent Charette noted that at this time, the state is requesting approval of the remote learning plan. Once the Board approves the plan and the Minutes of the Meeting are forwarded to the Commissioner, the State will waive all the student days missed. The plan the Board voted on last year was for one pilot program day for snow days.

Mrs. MacGregor added that the packets made up for the students will take them through the end of April. If the remote learning is extended more lessons will be put together and distributed.

Comment was made, hoping the variety of work doesn't require a lot of parent involvement. Mr. Roderick added his experience with his children is that there is a mix. Some of the work students can do on their own and some they need guidance. He added that this is new territory for everyone, and suggested allowing staff and administration time to work things out. He expressed his thoughts on the food aspect and taking care to make sure kids are fed. He also asked about shifting some of the food distribution to other elementary schools.

Superintendent Charette reported that they will make changes to the remote learning plan as discussed and get them out to the Board and the public shortly.

Roll Call Vote: **Motion Carried** - unanimous

f. Update on COVID 19

Superintendent Charette walked the Board through the updates to date. Based on the advice and guidance from the Governor and DOE, all hourly employees are being paid per the Executive Order and we are following all the mandates, suggestions and protocols to make sure all our people continue to be paid. He will keep the Board informed as new orders are put in place.

g. Discussion - food service during April 20 vacation week

Superintendent Charette reported that the District is currently operating under the summer program guidelines which is totally reimbursed by the state. However, if we decide to provide meals during the week of April vacation, it will not be reimbursed by the state. For the state to cover providing meals during April vacation, the Board would need to cancel April vacation. He is not looking to cancel April vacation. If meals are served during April vacation, the estimated cost is \$2,324.00, which includes meals and labor. He asked whether the Board would like to go ahead and serve at our cost or say we are not serving during the April

vacation. His only concern is that it is a smaller crew of food services workers right now and they have been working very hard, this would mean they would not get a break.

**MOTION** by Morrell, second by Roderick to provide meals during April vacation and to take the money out of the budget. Roll Call Vote: **Motion Carried** - unanimous

h. Discussion on sub-committee meetings during month of April

Superintendent Charette reported there are 3 scheduled sub-committee meetings for April; Facilities, Curriculum, and Policy. He suggested that the Board hold off on the April 7 Facilities Committee and April 8 Curriculum Committee meetings. The Policy Committee is scheduled for April 28. All 3 sub-committees have meeting scheduled for May. It was agreed to cancel the April 7 Facilities and the April 8 Curriculum meetings. The April 28 Policy Committee will remain on the schedule.

5. Budget:

a. Updates

Chair Carr reported the budget is still \$643,197 over the current year. He does not believe voters will accept anything over a 0% increase, with unemployment currently at 32%; the Board needs to think about the impact on the towns; he believes this will be one of the hardest budgets to pass.

Superintendent Charette reported this is the Fourth Draft budget which is currently a 3.46% increase over the current year. It is down approximately \$248,301 from the Third Draft budget.

The Fourth Draft Revenue sheet depicts an increase in the carryover from \$600,000 to \$800,000 due to school closure. This is an estimate and is due to change depending on whether the closure extends beyond April 30. The additional \$200,000 has been put toward the balance forward which decreases the amounts being requested from the towns. With this change, the local share to the towns is lower by \$43,953 from FY20.

The Fourth Draft Local Dollar Calculation sheet shows what the breakdown looks like by town. The towns of Wayne and Readfield still show an increase in local contribution, but evaluations went up for both towns. It is expected that with additional cuts that are being looked into, that both towns could also show a negative local dollar contribution.

Additional decreases depicted in this draft budget include taking the repair of all roof projects but the Mt. Vernon Elementary roof, and the insurance increase was adjusted down from a 10% to a 6% increase. Today the insurance rate was received, and it will be a 3.78% increase, which should result in an additional \$50,000 decrease.

b. Citizens Comments: none

Superintendent Charette reiterated that any questions regarding the budget can be forwarded to him via email or telephone.

c. Deliberations, follow-up and decision making

Question – is the state EPS allocation fixed? Based on what we know it is fixed.

Question was raised about in-district students attending an elementary school within the District, but outside of their town of residence. Which school claims those students for subsidy. Students are counted for subsidy at the school they attend.

Question – are there any more major changes coming? In addition to the Mt. Vernon Elementary roof (\$70,000) and health insurance (\$50,000), positions are still being looked at. The other thing would be the balance forward that could have an impact on the budget local dollars.

Approved 04/15/20

**MOTION** by Brotherlin, second by Wright to approve the use of bond funds to repair the Mt. Vernon Elementary School roof. Roll Call Vote: **Motion Carried** - unanimous

The Board vote on the budget is scheduled for 2 weeks from tonight, with the Annual Budget Meeting scheduled for May 13. Whether we can hold this meeting will depend on if restrictions are lifted. If we don't have our meeting on the 13th it could affect the June 9th referendum. We are hearing from some towns that they are thinking about moving the date. For the referendum vote to be held at the same time as the towns' votes, all 4 towns will need to select the same date.

Senator Bellows added the Legislature pass L.D. 2167 and Part E states, in part, that notwithstanding the law due to a state of emergency declared by the Governor in accordance with Title 37-B, section 742 due to the outbreak of COVID-19 and 30 days following the termination of that state of emergency, a school board may delay a school budget meeting otherwise required to be held before July 1, 2020 to a date on or after July 1, 2020. If a school board elects to delay a school budget meeting under this section, the meeting must be held and the budget approved within 30 days of the date the commissioner notifies the school board of the amount allocated to the school administrative unit under Title 20-A, section 15689-B or the termination of the state of emergency declared by the Governor due to COVID-19. When a school budget meeting is delayed under this section, the school administrative unit may continue operation of the unit at the same budget levels as were approved for the previous year.

Administration was thanked for the work in getting the budget down to a 3.46% increase. Superintendent Charette reported that he feels they can get it lower. He will send out revisions to the Board as they happen. Come April 15, there should be more information on what is happening, and the Board can make a decision regarding the May 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Budget Meeting. The towns will be making decisions as well.

d. Report on Law regarding budget validation process if closures continue: (above)

6. Adjournment: **MOTION** and second to adjourn at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
James Charette, Superintendent/Secretary  
D. Foster, Recorder