

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT NO. 38
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Remote Meeting via Zoom
April 15, 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, 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 Item #2. 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: none

3. Citizens’ Comments:

Carter McPhedran student body president, and member of the class of 2020, addressed the Board regarding the Class of 2020 graduation. He read a letter prepared by some members of the class of 2020, regarding graduation. They understand that the decision was made to hold graduation on June 14 as a virtual commencement. A group of seniors came together with their desires and requested a proactive collaboration with the decision makers. They would like to strive to as close of a ceremony as possible. Although Dr. Conway did send a survey to students and their families seeking feedback regarding senior class celebrations and graduation, they feel the decision has been made. They have two main questions: why is the graduation date fixed, and how can the class get access to the monies their parents raised?

Superintendent Charette responded this is something that should be worked out with administration at the high school and the senior class advisors. This is already on Dr. Conway’s

agenda and he is looking to move forward on graduation, taking into consideration the results from the survey. Mr. Charette shared his personal feeling that he did advocate to try to stay with the June 14th date because anytime you start to roll these things back, especially in these uncertain times, the likelihood of being able to follow through diminishes. Look at what we can offer as a celebration for the students. Dr. Conway indicated that he would reach out to the senior class in making graduation decisions.

John Harker, resident of Mt. Vernon read a letter where he thanked everyone for the work being done during this time. He shared his observations and stated that he hopes teachers can connect with each student individually, at least once a week; that teachers are given more freedom to test new methods, new curriculums, and have an environment to summarize this research in order to improve for next year, and that the RSU will develop a parent feedback loop. Mr. Harker recommended finding, in the budget, funds for all teachers for the summer months to develop new learning methods for online learning for the fall.

3. Additions/Adjustments to the Agenda by Board and/or Superintendent: none

4. Action/Discussion/Informational Items:

a. Approval of Minutes of April 1, 2020

MOTION by Brotherlin, second by Morrell to approve the Minutes of April 1, 2020 as presented. Roll Call Vote: **Motion Carried** unanimous

b. Acceptance of donations

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

Roll Call Vote: **Motion Carried** unanimous

c. Acceptance of teacher resignation effective June 30, 2020, High School, Andrew Barnes

MOTION by Brotherlin, second by Morrell to accept the resignation of Andrew Barnes effective June 30, 2020. Roll Call Vote: **Motion Carried** unanimous

d. Acceptance of bid, High School Locker project

MOTION by Brotherlin, second by Wright to accept the bid from Material Handling Sales (MHS) of Yarmouth, for the High School lockers as presented, in the amount of \$57,214.00 as recommended. Roll Call Vote: **Motion Carried** unanimous

e. Acceptance of bid, District Security Locks project

MOTION by Brotherlin, second by Morrell to accept the bid from Johnson Controls Fire Protection LP, for the District security locks project as presented, in the amount of \$99,997.00 as recommended. Roll Call Vote: **Motion Carried** unanimous

f. Discussion/Consideration of proposal to commit bond funds for lighting project

Superintendent Charette reported the Facilities Committee discussed the lighting project on the track and recommend using bond proceeds to upgrade the lights to LEDs at an estimated cost of \$74,500. It is projected the ABS would be ready to upgrade the track to eight lanes in five years. The lights would need to be moved once the ABS is ready to upgrade the track, but they will be appropriate to use with the new track. We are no longer able to purchase replacement lights for the current lights. The first step is for the Board to authorize going out to bid for the track lighting project. The recommendation will be brought to the Board for approval.

MOTION by Brotherlin, second by Morrell to go out to bid for the track lighting project as recommended by the Facilities Committee.

Question - has anyone reached out to efficiency Maine? Superintendent Charette responded that they have not, but he will check to see if there are any funds for outside track lighting. Roll Call Vote: **Motion Carried** unanimous

g. Discussion/Consideration to commit bond funds for the concrete slab at Bus Garage

Chair Carr stated that he recommends taking the cost of the concrete slab at the Bus Garage out of the budget and move it to the bond to help reduce the budget. The cost is estimated at \$18,000. The concrete slab was requested by the bus mechanic and is recommended due to safety concerns. This was presented to the Board during budget presentations, and, at the time, the Board discussed whether to move the cost to the bond.

Question – what other projects are being considered for the bond? Will adding the concrete slab from the bond take the place of other projects under consideration?

Superintendent Charette responded no other designations have been made at this time. According to the March 10 bond summary sheet there is approximately \$890,000 remaining in the bond. Projects under consideration by the Facilities Committee include the Industrial Arts dust collector and the exhaust hood. The Committee also discussed funding a project on the sports side as well as the arts side; something that is visible to the public other than facilities maintenance. The lighting project approved above would be the sports project.

MOTION by Brotherlin, second by Wright to use \$18,000 from bond proceeds to install the concrete slab at the bus garage, removing the \$18,000 expense from the FY21 draft budget. Roll Call Vote: **Motion Carried** unanimous

h. Discussion on school closure

Superintendent Charette reported on the current state of school closure.

Remote learning will continue until the end of year. The school will be opened for staff on April 27 and 28 so they can come to school to prepare documents and have curbside pick-up of school materials on April 28.

Current end of year would be June 17, but discussions have started with the Staff Association as well as the Administrative Team to bring a proposal to the Board for a student end date before the 17th. Plans are to bring a proposal for the Board to consider at the May 6 meeting. Superintendent Charette noted that the door is still open to come back to school, if we get guidance that it is safe to do so.

Food service will now be reimbursed for meals during April vacation and we will be serving during that time. He recognized the food service staff for the outstanding work they are doing during this period. He reminded the Board that there is no food service director and Jen Hall and Penny Weibel stepped up to help before the pandemic hit. They all deserve to be recognized.

Question – are we doing any professional development with teachers to facilitate this new type of teaching and learning? Yes, grade level meetings are being held and there are professional development opportunities, especially at the K-5 levels, thanks to Nancy Harriman and Diane MacGregor's leadership as well as our 2 coaches.

i. Informational – Facilities Committee Minutes of March 10, 2020

Amendment to the Facilities Committee minutes - Rebecca Lambert was in attendance.

Question – have you heard about COVID 19 dollars for schools? Superintendent Charette expects to receive information on this any time now, and he understands there will be a minor application process. He will move forward once it is available - perhaps using it to fund some summer learning.

5. Budget Workshop

a. Updates

Superintendent Charette reported they are still working on the budget. The Fifth Draft of the General Fund Summary Budget is at a 2.71% increase, a total of \$504,511.99, over FY20. The changes made since the last report reflects adjusting the BC/BS insurance cost, removing the Mt. Vernon roof project, figuring in a tractor trade-in, and a minor salary reduction for a total of \$138,000. The Fifth Draft of Preliminary ED279, shows the revenue areas – increasing the balance forward to \$800,000. At this point the towns' local dollar contribution is \$182,000 less than last year. The Fifth Draft Local Dollar Calculation depicts the breakdown across the district and the towns.

b. Deliberations, follow-up and decision making

Question – regarding the balance forward being \$200,000 more; what if it was at zero? Finance Manager Williams responded the \$800,000 left over from this year and using it as revenue for next year's budget. She will work to anticipate what will be left over and use that as a revenue stream for the towns the following year.

c. Revise Budget Vote Dates

Superintendent Charette reported that he reached out to the Town Managers/Select Boards regarding the Governor's action to move the Primary Voting day from June 9 to July 14. Although not all town offices have made an official decision, regarding their budget meetings at this time, the Superintendent asked the Board to consider the following changes be made for the RSU #38 budget approval, Annual Budget Meeting and Referendum Vote.

May 6 or May 20 – Board vote on proposed budget

June 17 – Annual Budget meeting (replacing May 13 meeting)

July 17 – Budget Validation Referendum vote (same as State Primary vote)

This schedule will allow more time to fine tune the proposed FY21 budget.

Question – are there other budget numbers to change? Superintendent Charette responded there are no other big cost centers. The next large cost centers would be positions, but he is not ready to do that at this time. The next step is to look at line items in the budget, which he will do along with administrators and managers.

1. Propose changing the May 13 meeting to May 20th.

2. May 20 – vote on FY21 budget to bring to Annual Meeting.

3. Change Annual Meeting from May 13 to June 17.

4. Change Budget Validation Referendum from June 9 to July 14.

There were no disagreements with this proposal. Changes will be made to the calendar and the information will be shared with town officials and community members.

6. Adjournment: **MOTION** and second to adjourn at 7:39 p.m.

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