

Town of Mason, New Hampshire
Mason School District
Minutes of the 2014 Deliberative Session
February 01, 2014

The First Session, The Deliberative Session, of the Mason School District was held in the Mason Elementary School Multi – Purpose Room at 13 Darling Hill Road Mason, New Hampshire on February 01, 2014.

At 0856h Moderator Catherine Schwenk asked School Board Members to take their place at the head table. All voters and nonvoters were asked to wear appropriate credentials and to be seated after signing in with the Supervisors of the Checklist located at the back table. Nonvoters were asked to be seated to the Moderator's left in front row.

There were twenty-two voters and 3 nonvoters present.

Moderator Schwenk recognized the efforts of the many individuals to prepare for this meeting. Preparation is a coordinated effort of many individuals, including School District Personnel, Supervisors of the Checklist, Physical Plant Staff, Police, Fire and Emergency Personnel.

Moderator Schwenk reviewed safety procedures calling attention to the Emergency Exits as one entered the Multi-Purpose Room, the Exit Door to the Moderator's left, and up the stairs to the kitchen and out the Exit Doors.

There were no requests for Interpretative Services.

Roll Call and Introductions:

Chairperson Stephanie Syre-Hager – Present
Vice Chairperson Jeannine Phalon – Present
School Board Member Rob Doyle – Present
School Board Member Bob Hemmer – Absent
School Board Member Chris Guiry – Absent
School Board Secretary and District Clerk Becky Partridge – Present
Superintendent of Schools James McCormick – Present
MRI Consultant Mike O'Neill - Present
Business Services Brenda Wiley – Present
School District Counsel Allison Minutelli – Present

Procedure:

When directing a question or comment please use the microphone in front of the head table. All questions will be directed to the Moderator. Once recognized please state your name. All amendments / substantive motions are to be made in writing and signed by the maker and seconder. Paper and pen can be found at the head table. For a ballot vote, five voters may make a written request prior to a voice vote per RSA 40:4a, all five must be present at the meeting and print and sign their name.

Call to Order:

Moderator Schwenk called the First Session, The Deliberative Session of the School District Meeting to order at 0900h. **Moderator Schwenk:** By the powers vested in me by the State of New Hampshire I now call to order the First Session, The Deliberative Session of the Mason School District.

Opening Exercises:

Pledge of Allegiance To The Flag Of The United States Of America.

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The first business in order was the reading of the warrant. There was no objection to waiving the reading of the warrant.

On Motion of Chairperson Syre-Hager, duly seconded, it was VOTED that the following individuals be permitted to speak, as needed, on School District affairs: Superintendent of Schools James McCormick, MRI Consultant Mike O'Neill, and School District Counsel Allison Minutelli.

Moderator Schwenk informed the public that Article 1 is the election of School District Officers which will be held at the Mason Town Hall on March 11, 2014 from 11 am to 7 pm.

On Motion of Chairperson Syre-Hager duly seconded, it was VOTED to place on the official ballot Article 2, to accept the reports of agents, auditors, committees, or officers chosen as printed in the Annual Mason School District Report.

Discussion: Mr. Millbrandt asked if these reports indicate the number of students by grade. Mr. McCormick responded that they will.

On Motion of School Board Member Doyle, duly seconded, it was VOTED to place on the official ballot Article 3.

Shall The Mason School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant, or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purpose set forth therein, totaling Two Million Nine Hundred Fifty Seven Thousand One Hundred Thirty Nine Dollars (\$2,957,139.00)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Two Million Nine Hundred Fifty Seven Thousand Six Hundred and One Dollar (\$2,957,601.00) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Mason School District, or by law, or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13 X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. Majority Vote Required (School Board recommends this Warrant Article)

Discussion: School Board Member Doyle noted that this budget is fiscally responsible while meeting the needs of the students. It is noted that this budget will decrease the tax rate. Mr. Milbrandt inquired whether this decrease was due to the number of students to Milford. School Board Member Doyle responded that there were negotiations with the Superintendent regarding his contract which is part of the decrease. Mr O'Neill stated that although there are two fewer students there is an increase of 4% per student to Milford per contract.

Mr. Milbrandt asked if there were specifics to the \$10,000 in computer equipment. Mr. McCormick stated that per suggestions of the Technology Committee there will be upgrading and replacement of hardware and software. For example, the Star Boards will be replaced as they are outdated and some do not work. Mr. Milbrandt inquired about the Night Custodian position that is being proposed. Mr. McCormick stated that when this building was built the intention would be that it would be a community building. In order to maintain the security and cleanliness of the building while still having it available to the community there needs to be a Night Custodian on an "as needed basis." While there is a fee for non-community organizations, the building may be used free of charge by community organizations that are sponsored by the Recreation Committee, hold insurance, and are approved by the Superintendent.

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Mr. Phalon asked how many nights is the building being utilized now. Mr. McCormick stated that only occasionally due to the fact that he has to find volunteers from the staff to come open and close the building.

Citizen: Asked whether the recycling program generates any revenue. Mr. McCormick stated that to date the paper recycling has brought in about \$240. The district is investigating the possibility of cardboard recycling as well. All money that is a result of recycling is used to off set the costs of field trips.

Mr. Ziminsky asked for clarification on the decrease in budget. He calculated that there was a \$7,000 decrease in debt services so although it may appear that there is a decrease in the spending of the school it actually is due to the reduction in debt services. Mr. McCormick stated that yes there is a reduction in debt services however there are larger increases in tuition, transportation, and certain benefits that the district has no control over. Taking into account those items there is still a decrease in spending.

Mr. Hauri stated that he would like to see more information on the school in the future such as number of students, curriculum, and programs that are voluntary verses those that are required so there can be a better feel of what is discretionary spending.

Mr. Fletcher stated that he would like to go through the budget item by item. Mike O'Neill stood to answer questions and review budget highlights.

Page 1:

>Tuition (out of district): Although there is a 4% increase in tuition rate there is a decrease in students so that is why there is only an overall increase of 1.39%.

>How many students: 83 Milford, 94 Elementary

>How many teachers: 0.5 preschool, 0.5 Kindergarten, one per grade for 1-5, Music, Art, Gym, Technology, P/T, O/T, Speech.

>Increase by 5.53% in Education Programs (In District) however inflation is 1.5 to 2% - why the difference. Major difference is not the pay raise but the increase in health insurance. At this time it is 85 / 15.

Page 2:

>Decrease in Student Services due to reduction in service level needs.

Page 3:

>Decrease in Guidance Services due to reduction in service level needs.

Page 4:

>Reading Specialist decrease due to restructuring for those services provided.

Page 5:

>Superintendent Services: Travel has increased. Mr. McCormick stated that he negotiated a decrease in pay as he believes the district is doing very well and the need for Superintendent services at the level it has been is no longer required. However there are meetings that he still must attend and travel is necessary. He noted that his rate per hour is one of the lowest in the state.

Pages 6-7: none.

Page 8:

>Line 5229 – 512 Salary Substitute: Line for trained substitute when cook is out.

>Cost to educate students: on average in 2013 it cost \$15,944 for elementary age student

On Motion of Chairperson Stephanie Syre-Hager, duly seconded, it was VOTED to place on the official ballot Article 4.

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Shall we rescind the provisions of RSA 40:13 (known as SB2), as adopted by the Mason School District on 9-March 2010, so that the official ballot will no longer be used for voting on all questions, but only for the election of officers and certain other questions for which the official ballot is required by state law. (3/5 majority vote required, this is a Petition Warrant Article)

Discussion: Pat Letourneau stated that this meeting is the reason why SB2 must be rescinded. There are not enough people at this meeting to spend the amount of money that is proposed. By keeping SB2 in place and having so little turn out there is no way for residents to know where their money is specifically going.

Deb Morrison stated having a child in the district she is extremely happy and would like to thank the Board and Superintendent.

Summary (per request):

>Proposed budget - Two Million Nine Hundred Fifty Seven Thousand One Hundred Thirty Nine Dollars (\$2,957,139.00)

>Voters (not including those that have to be here) twenty-two total, approximately twelve attended that were not performing a duty.

>Time: 0900h to 0956 – less than one hour

Mr. Fletcher stated that the system is broken.

On Motion by Nancy Richards there will be individual votes on the motions to place the articles on the ballot, duly seconded

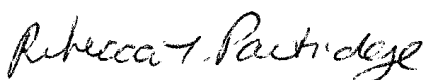
>Article 2 – Reports. Unanimously passed

>Article 3 – Budget: Unanimously passed

>Article 4 – Rescind SB2: Aye – majority, motion carries.

On Motion of Nancy Richards, duly seconded, the meeting adjourned Sine Dai at 0956h.

Respectfully Submitted,



Becky Partridge
School District Clerk