

**Mascenic School Board Meeting Draft Minutes**  
**2/12/2015**  
**Curriculum/Instruction**

School Administrative Office, 16 School Street, Greenville, NH 03048

**1. Organization - 6:00 p.m.**

Attendance: Richard Wallace, Chairman, Jeff Salmonson, Jim Kingston, Earl Somero, Vice Chairman, Tara Sousa (arrived at 6:50 p.m.), David Jack, MRI Business Manager, Gary Somero, Facilities Director, Janice Longgood, Director of Student Services, Tom Kelly, MRHS Principal, Tom Starratt, BMS Principal, Marion Saari, HHS Principal, Matt Ballou, IT Director, Melissa Vinal, Curriculum Coach, Maureen DeGrenier, Notetaker, various community members.

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM  
Pledge of Allegiance

Welcome to attendees and invited attendees.

*School Board Meeting Norms: Start/end on time, follow the agenda and avoid tangents, refrain from side conversations, respect and hear from all voices and assume best intentions.*

Time Keeper - Earl Somero / Process Observer - Jeff Salmonson

Agenda Adjustments

1. Board needs to make a recommendation on the amended budget to be posted
2. Non-public minutes to open from past – new business
3. Request from colleague Tara Sousa who is attending another municipal meeting to move budget discussion after public comments

Date/Time Next Meeting: February 16, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

We will talk about snow date for the February 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Correspondence

N/A

Review/Approval of 12/17/14, 1/12/15, 1/20/15, 1/22/15. 1/29/15 Minutes

*Jeff Salmonson made a motion to approve the December 17, 2014 minutes. Earl Somero seconded the motion. No members opposed. Minutes approved.*

*Earl Somero made a motion to approve the 1/12/2015 minutes. Jeff Salmonson seconded the motion. No members opposed. Minutes approved.*

*Jim Kingston made a motion to approve the January 20, 2015 minutes as written. Jeff Salmonson seconded the motion. No members opposed. Minutes approved.*

Jim Kingston requested that on the January 22, 2015 minutes that the second page second paragraph referencing a higher tax rate. It should be corrected to state in top 8%. When you look at tax rate divided by number of students we are in the best 30%

Jim Kingston moved to approve the January 22, 2015 minutes as amended; Jeff Salmonson seconded the motion. No members opposed. Motion carries

Jim Kingston moved to table the January 29, 2015 minutes. Jeff Salmonson seconded the motion. No members opposed; motion carries.

## **2. Reports to the Board - to 6:30 p.m.**

1. Student of the Month Award -- Mascenic High School /Boynton Middle School /Highbridge Hill Elementary

Presentation of Student Achievement Awards

2. School Board Chair Report  
N/A

3. Superintendent - Ruthann Goguen

Superintendent Goguen thanked all who attended the Celebration of Learning. She also wanted to thank all the staff who helped in getting this wonderful celebration organized. She also would like to give a shout out to Gary & the custodial staff for keeping our schools safe with all the snow we have received.

The Administrative team has met non-stop, and the work done together has been hard. We have had many meaningful conversations. Focused on keeping student programming and staffing. I would like to thank my team. We have spent a lot of time together since January 31st. When we present the plan, please remember that no decisions are going to be made until March 11th.

The district has used 5 snow days. We have 5 additional emergency snow days. Any snow days will be added as make-up days to our calendar.

4. Student Services - Jan Longgood

Attended a Smarter Balanced meeting in Concord. State is not rolling this out as smoothly as could be; we are still waiting for information on our testing from the State. The March 20<sup>th</sup> in-service day will have some Smarter Balanced training for teachers.

5. High School Principal - Tom Kelly

Guidance Dept met with NH Manufacturing partnership to generate interest from students. Some former grads came in to speak to MRHS Seniors about college life. We are considering presenting this with other grade levels in the Fall so that students can design their strategies for aligning program of studies with college goals.

6. Middle School Principal - Tom Starratt

The BMS Boys' basketball team won the Tri-County Championship. Also, the BMS Cheerleaders won their championship.

7. Elementary School Principal - Marion Saari

Our Data team met today. I will report in my next School Board report on their findings.

Mr. Kingston commented that there is no technology report for this meeting. He asked Matt Ballou, IT Director, Are you set for Smarter Balanced testing? Mr. Ballou said as stated by others who attended the conference, we need clarification from the State, which I am requesting at this time.

**3. Unfinished Business - to 7:00 p.m.**

1. FY 16 Budget Discussion

Moved to end of agenda

2. Public Comment Discussion

Chairman Wallace mentioned that the Board would like to speak about the public comment section of our meeting.

Jeff Salmonson would like the meeting to remain a business meeting. We can take input from the public on items related to agenda, but need to keep it as a business meeting.

Earl Somero expressed that these are business meetings for the school board, and I would like to explore the public forum idea.

Jim Kingston said I think we are too restrictive right now. I understand we must get our business done. But our meetings are only one of the few opportunities the public has to address us as an entity. I think currently we are too restrictive in how we are handling public comment. Opening up public comment is a burden on the Chairman on controlling the comments. Not hearing the public is going against what we represent. We are representatives of the students and community members. We should be open to what the public proposes to us. There is nothing wrong with stating I don't know the answer to that or stating I cannot answer that or as a board we state we are not going to entertain that comment.

Keeping the current format and time frame; on topics in the agenda. Strike that from the agenda. When we are having a conversation about a topic where a member of the public has knowledge or expertise. We only hear one viewpoint. A broader range of spectrum let them inform us in our decision making. Jeff Salmonson commented that the intent is not to give the public the opportunity to comment on each topic. Jim Kingston stated that he would rather have 5 informed school board members to make a decision, and if there is someone who has applicable knowledge that informs me and makes me a better decision maker, than I would like to have that information.

Jeff Salmonson said you need to have one set of rules and it is difficult to moderate. Chairman Wallace said it would require me to come out of my natural character. I like the idea that we are having this conversation.

Chairman Wallace stated after the budget process, we would be able to have more input. If we had a regularly scheduled forum, then we could have more public comment. Mr. Somero said this is difficult to resolve this situation. We should check with other school boards and see how they handle this in their meetings so that we can come out with a successful solution.

Chairman Wallace stated that there is one other board member who has strong opinions that is not present, should we wait until she can join us? Mr. Somero stated if we open the discussion and table at this point, it will give us some time to think about how we want to proceed. Mr. Salmonson agreed that we should explore it further and possibly expand the scope. Mr. Kingston agreed that exploring what other School Boards do is a good idea, hearing from Mrs. Sousa is a good idea, and we should explore the idea of more forums and more opportunities to meet with the public.

Chairman Wallace stated that we would table this agenda item and add it to the agenda building section for the next meeting.

#### **4. New Business - to 7:20 p.m.**

##### **1. 2015-16 School Calendar - First Reading**

Superintendent Goguen stated that the calendar has a start date of August 31st for students, and includes three in-service days for teachers. Last year, teachers wanted to start later. We have an end date of June 13th. There are a total of 7 in-service days, plus one parent/teacher conference day for staff for a total of 183 teacher days. Students are in school for 175 days. This calendar is based on the NH DOE model school year calendar. There are no significant changes from last year.

Chairman Wallace moved to send the 2015-2016 to a second reading at the next School Board meeting.

##### **2. Facilities Use Waivers**

Gary Somero, Facilities Director, has received a number of facility use waivers. Freedom Bond Cooperative is Vaillancourt Mobile Home Park; we granted them a waiver for their initial organization meetings last year.

Why was Student Council listed for a waiver when it is a school function? Mr. Gary Somero responded because it was a for profit function and because we needed custodial coverage. Mr. Kingston stated that we need to communicate with these people that we may not be able to grant waivers next year dependent on the budget.

Jim Kingston made a motion for Gary Somero to waive fees for listed requests, but to communicate that this is not a precedent. Jeff Salmonson seconded the motion. No members opposed. Motion carried.

#### **5. Public Comments - to 7:30 p.m.**

Public Comment will be restricted to precise topics announced in advance. This means public comment will only be allowed on items in this weekly agenda.

Mark Mansfield, New Ipswich, commented on the recent Obituary of Ralph Kangus. Mr. Mansfield also commented on the bandwidth with regards to the Smarter Balanced testing.

Rick Maino, New Ipswich, proposed the potential scenarios regarding the program and staffing reductions be made available to the community.

Woody Meisner, New Ipswich, commented on improving our District's college readiness score.

Julie Lampinen, New Ipswich, asked a question on the 2015-2016 School Year calendar. Mrs. Lampinen also commented on Smarter Balanced testing.

### **3. Unfinished Business - continued**

#### **1. FY 16 Budget Discussion**

Superintendent Goguen stated that her Administrative Team was working diligently for days since the Deliberative Session. We looked at every avenue of our budget. There is no way a \$1.6 Million decrease can happen without impacting our schools. To think there is enough materials/resources for a \$1.6 Million reduction in this budget is not true. We had come to the board on 1/22 with a reduction of \$279,000 from cost centers after the public hearing. The School Board decided to keep the proposed budget. The Administrators and I looked at reductions; we have gone through each of the cost centers and reduced \$400,000 of materials and resources. The Elementary school took \$34,220 additional reduction of resources which is a 23% reduction from FY15 budget; BMS took \$67,146 additional reduction which is a 42% reduction from the FY15 budget; the high school has \$166,928 reduction of resources and materials which is a 40% reduction from FY15. Facilities has a \$48,433 additional reduction of resources, SpEd has a \$32,141 reduction of resources, Tech has a \$26,799 reduction of resources, and the SAU has a \$25,090 reduction of resources. We looked at programming that would have the least impact.

What we came up with is 8.6 classroom teacher reductions, reduction of 2 librarians, reductions for Specialists, Guidance reductions, No Cola increases, eliminating non-mandatory programming. Eliminating summer school & afterschool programs, and using a pay to play model for sports in the middle and high schools. We kept preschool at half day.

#### **Draft proposal**

##### Elementary School:

3 teachers, 1 attrition, 1 restructuring Kindergarten, class size to 18.

Replace librarian with bldg. paraprofessional.

Reduction of one .5 reading specialist.

Keep Specials at .6.

Elimination of reading/math tutor.

Sharing art teacher between HHES & MRHS

Eliminate extended-day Kindergarten and one am Kindergarten session

Eliminate four building paraprofessionals—2 assigned to library positions

Kindergarten summer school eliminated (Not Special Education summer school)

##### BMS

2 classroom teachers – attrition

Reduction of band, music teacher will pick this class up

Librarian replaced by paraprofessional

Reduction of Consumer Science and Computer Science to .5

Pay to play sports instituted

Elimination of summer school & after school programs (Not Special Education summer school)

MRHS

Reduction of 3.6 teachers

Elimination of Fire/Woodworking program

Combining Plato/RTI teacher

Art teacher reduced to .4; re-assigned .6 at elementary school

Eliminating foreign language

Eliminating sports that affect less than 10 students--golf, swimming, indoor track, JV girls basketball, boys volleyball; pay to play for all other sports

SpEd

Pre-School will stay at current schedule

Facilities

Reduction of a Full-time custodian

Reduction of two part-time custodians

Other options we discussed were closing the SAU office, but per the Articles of Agreement – Section 3, which states must have a school building in each town it represents. Estimated costs of closing Boynton Middle School and moving grades 5, 6, 7 to HHES and grade 8 to MRHS. Discussed the moving costs and relocating Kindergarten and Pre-School to the SAU office.

We discussed eliminating all transportation, but based on our Articles of Agreement, Section 10, we must provide transportation to all students. The team also discussed eliminating all sports and academic co-curricular stipends.

With the reduction of 8.6 teachers, our estimated class sizes will be:

K- 18

1<sup>st</sup> /Readiness- 17

2<sup>nd</sup>- 20

3<sup>rd</sup>-26

4<sup>th</sup>- 26

5<sup>th</sup>-26

6<sup>th</sup>-23

7<sup>th</sup>-19

8<sup>th</sup>- 22

MRHS ELA- 17

MRHS Math-15

MRHS Social Studies-19

MRHS Business-25

MRHS Art-20

Mr. Kingston asked the question in the Middle School how do you get rid of a teacher without getting rid of a subject? Mr. Starratt responded that we will still be able to do the same as they are doing, we had an extra teacher in grade 5 due to class size. Mr. Kingston also stated I also don't know if I agree with eliminating building paraprofessionals with the increase in classroom sizes—I noticed that we didn't get rid of the SpEd Director. Superintendent Goguen stated the need for a SpEd Director is supported by the Administrative Team.

Jeff Salmonson commented that we all have our special interests. I am disappointed to see that we haven't cut sports entirely. We need to do what is critical. This is a brutal process. Do we need to cut course offerings and programming?

Superintendent Goguen stated this is a draft, and this is what came from weeks of work from the Administrative Team. We don't know what the budget is going to be until March 11<sup>th</sup>. If a \$1.6 million cut happens. This district will look different next year. If the \$1.6 million cut happens, we can expect that it will impact the programming to prepare our students to be college and career ready.

Mr. Kingston stated it hurts me to see the Arts/Specials being reduced. I fail to grasp the logic that we should cut funding from the towns. We are taking it out on the kids. I am not one to say we are doing this for the children. My moto is to say do this for society. I don't think we get a community that is better by down grading our schools.

Superintendent Goguen stated that we are not losing any arts program. The Specials at the elementary school are staying at their current level. The high school will have one full-time Art teacher, and one part-time Art teacher.

Chairman Wallace stated a school with a strong arts program supports a strong curriculum. Everything is troubling. Whatever we choose to shift will impact someone else.

Mrs. Sousa asked what the State maximums for class sizes are. Superintendent Goguen responded that the State recommendation is that class sizes should be under 30 for grades 3 – 8.

Mrs. Sousa also asked about pay to play sports. This revenue doesn't reduce our bottom line number. Mr. David Jack responded that we will see the reduction of the cost within the budget.

How many kids are not going to play with the pay to play? Now we are going to charge kids. Diminishing our overall culture. We have a strong cultural value in our community. It is going to diminish with these cuts.

Mrs. Sousa agreed with whoever mentioned that we get the options out to the community so that they are well informed before the public vote.

Mr. Somero stated he understood the high taxes in the area. I'm troubled by the fact that the town can increase their budget by \$1.6 million, but that our budget was proposed to decrease by that much. I hope we can work our way through this with everyone's best interest in mind.

Superintendent Goguen stated, again this is just a draft. It could look different after the vote.

Jeff Salmonson commented that he would like to commend the Superintendent and her staff for their effort over the past two months. This isn't the ideal budget for everyone.

Mr. Earl Somero would like to go on public record to make a resolution to thank the Superintendent and the Administrative Team for the task of working on the budget and budget options. Jeff Salmonson seconded the resolution. All board members unanimously agreed.

Mr. Kingston would like a clean look at what programs are on the chopping block and a couple hundred thousand just below the line. If you had to re-prioritize; what is off the table and those that might get traded out. How would be impacting graduation standards? What will impact Specials and some of the mandatory programming. What do you want to keep that is non-mandatory? Let's be fair and put the options in front of the public to say they are not gone yet, but could be.

Chairman Wallace pointed out that the options list is in the back of the budget package. Those items are in there.

Mr. Somero asked, Can the School Board offer another alternative. Can we offer another \$500,000 cut, and we would strive to do our best to get to \$250,000 less than default next year?

Mr. Kingston stated we had a meeting where we discussed cutting below default. And we decided that this would not be optimal in our programming efforts. Mr. Somero stated that he was offering this as a brainstorming idea. Chairman Wallace stated I think we are out of options, legally. Mrs. Sousa said making that sort of commitment, would not reduce taxes. It would increase a larger fund balance in the next year which would help reduce taxes.

Mr. Somero would like clarification, increasing the fund balance would have to come out of this year's budget? Mr. Jack responded if you don't have the amount you've estimated it is already taking a cut. Whatever happens at the meeting that is what you are forced to send to the town for their appropriations. What you are suggesting is increasing the fund balance, it won't help anyone with their taxes. You will still be taxed the same way. Mrs. Sousa stated the only thing that would adjust taxes is additional revenue. Mr. Jack stated If we institute pay to play, we will file estimated revised revenues. Mrs. Sousa said if we can find a source of new revenue that can help reduce the tax burden.

Chairman Wallace stated we need to move to have this budget approved to be part of the warrant articles based on feedback from our attorney.

Mr. Jim Kingston moved to amend the ballot to state the proposed budget as \$17,665,000 as amended at the Deliberative Session, which is not supported by the School Board. Mr. Jeff Salmonson seconded the motion. No members opposed. Motion carries

## 6. Policies - to 7:50 p.m.

N/A

## 7. Personnel - to 8:00 p.m.

1. Retirement



Superintendent Goguen stated that she received a retirement letter from Marlise Bryant, Assistant Principal of MRHS. Superintendent Goguen would like to publicly thank Marlise for her 17 years of dedicated service.

Mrs. Tara Sousa made a motion to accept with regret Mrs. Bryant's retirement. Mr. Jim Kingston seconded the motion. No members opposed. Motion carries

**8. Agenda Building - to 8:15 p.m.**

1. School calendar - second reading.
2. Snow date for Monday? Thursday, February 19<sup>th</sup> School Board in case of snow; criteria is no school no meeting
3. Public comment discussion

**9. Appreciation and Reflections**

Chairman Wallace stated we had some good public feedback. We appreciate all who attend.

**10. Non-Public Session - RSA 91-A:3, II (a-c)**

Mrs. Tara Sousa made a motion to move to non-public per RSA 91A:3 II (a). Mr. Earl Somero seconded the motion. Roll call Jim Kingston yes, Jeff Salmonson yes. Chairman Wallace yes. Motion passed.

Mrs. Tara Sousa mada a motion to move to non-public per RSA 91A:3 II (c). Mr. Earl Somero seconded the motion. Roll call: Jim Kingston yes, Jeff Salmonson yes. Chairman Wallace yes. Motion passed.

**11. Adjournment**

1. Process Observer Report Out
2. Motion to Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Maureen DeGrenier, Executive Assistant