

Mascenic School Board Meeting Draft Minutes

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

11/16/2015

1. Organization

Attendees: Earl Somero, Chairman, Jeff Salmonson, Tara Sousa, Ruthann Goguen, Superintendent of Schools, Glen Waring, Business Administrator, Tom Kelly, Director of Student Services, Gary Somero, Facilities Director, Maureen DeGrenier, Executive Assistant, various community members. Missing: Jim Kingston

Call to Order – 6 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Agenda Adjustments

N/A

Date/Time Next Meeting: December 7, 2015

Correspondence

N/A

Review/Approval of 11/2/2015 Minutes

Under Review and approval of 10/19 minutes after “not”

Budget & Warrant articles—the largest paragraph on page second to last to our students to suffer (TS).

“How” not hey is the town going to pay

MOTION made by Mrs. Tara Sousa to approve the minutes of November 2, 2015 as corrected. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jeff Salmonson. All members were in favor. No members opposed. Motion passed. 3-0-0.

2. Reports to the Board

1. School Board Chair

Mr. Somero reported on the Mascenic Bldg program. The original trust was established in 1972. In 1987 re-enacted to serve the needs of students interested in building construction. Mr. Somero met with members of the council to discuss disposition of the equipment and funds in the trust. A meeting will be scheduled to determine best use of funds and how to proceed from this point.

2. Superintendent - Ruthann Goguen

My report is on Eduportal. I attended the annual School Care meeting. Rates are up 8.9%. The district needs to make a decision by Feb. 1, 2016 whether to lock into those rates. The orange plan was voted in, which is a high deductible plan.

CALM training onsite for suicide prevention training for Guidance counselors, administrators, healthcare professionals, and psychologists; Title 1 onsite review finished up last week.

3. Business Administrator - Glen Waring

My report is on Eduportal. The standard monthly reports which includes the summary of all district accounts, cash balance as of last Thursday, Cash Flow, Revenues & Expenditures, full line item detail. Projected expenditures shows encumbrances greater than \$5k. I believe it is the unemployment compensation, but Mr. Glen Waring has not had a chance to look into it and is sure it is a software issue. The SpEd Secretary & SpEd Director line will be overexpended. Teacher line is overinflated by at least that much money.

Mrs. Tara Sousa asked is that the Director of Student Services or SpEd Coordinator? Mr. Glen Waring responded both are expended out of that line. That is where I see the budgeting error.

4. Facilities Director - Gary Somero

Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated that he has been at school several times during the day. A while back we did a lot of work up there on the door locks. I got a lot of comments that staff is having trouble with keys. This is a safety issue if a lock is not working properly, the teacher needs to go outside the door to lock the door. I've heard there is a lot of key problems. Mr. Gary Somero responded each door is double-sided so they can lock the door from the inside. Each room has a key hanging inside the door. Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated that he has heard a lot of complaints, can you look into it?

Superintendent Goguen stated when we have a lockdown the principal reports should state if there are any problems. I will look into it, there is an Administrator's meeting this week.

5. IT Director - Matt Ballou

Mr. Ballou's report is on Eduportal. Mr. Ballou is attending a PowerSchool training session.

3. Unfinished Business

1. New Ipswich Recreation Dept. Waivers for BMS Basketball and Volleyball

Superintendent Goguen stated that Mr. Somero has put together the estimated costs and the waivers/insurance information is in Eduportal.

Ms. Mindy Buxton stated that volleyball will start off as an adult program. Because BMS doesn't provide boys volleyball, eventually there will be set hours for adult and then set hours for Boynton age group hours.

Mindy Buxton stated that she is hoping to collect a mandatory donation and donate it to BMS sports program or Volleyball program. Because it is an adult program, and if we have out of town players, we will set a mandatory donation of \$3 for residents and \$5 for out of town players. Monies would go wherever you thought appropriate to offset usage costs.

Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated that this has been an ongoing issue with waivers. I think as a board, we agree to support waivers for youth town programs. I thought there was a consensus on adult programs. I would personally be against an adult volleyball program. Mrs. Tara Sousa asked is the total cost \$261.38. Mr. Earl Somero said is volleyball totally adults? Mindy Buxton stated that would be how we would start it. We do have a small amount in the budget if we have to pay for facility use.

Mrs. Tara Sousa said if you have 13 players that put in \$20 that would cover the use of the building. I would be willing to re-look at this if it became a youth program. It is a pretty small amount. Mindy Buxton stated I think the \$13 registration fee would cover it.

MOTION made by Mr. Jeff Salmonson to approve the New Ipswich Recreation Department youth basketball waiver. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Tara Sousa. All members approved. No members opposed. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Mr. Earl Somero asked is there a motion to support the volleyball waiver. Mrs. Tara Sousa stated not at this time but certainly having the information for the future is useful.

2. Business Manual per School Board Policy DJ - for School Board Approval

Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated I have some input for the Board that I would like to add on Page 5 Item 6, for all purchases exceeding \$5k . . . Final award may be subject to school board approval should be changed to shall be subject to school board approval. Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated that anything purchased over \$5k, must have school board approval. Mr. Waring asked what about the exceptions in Section 6? Mr. Waring also asked will all the changes be voted on by the Board. Mr. Salmonson stated this is only the second reading, but there are items that I don't feel comfortable supporting.

On Page 11 regarding emergency purchase, I don't agree with the way this is written. In case of an accident or emergency the Superintendent or Business Manager shall contact the School Board Chairman to call an emergency meeting to discuss the purchase over \$5k.

Mr. Earl Somero said sometimes when you have an emergency you can't get the board together to make the decision. Mr. Jeff Salmonson said if you are spending \$100k that needs to have Board approval. Mr. Salmonson said the way it is written now is open-ended and bypasses the board. Mr. Earl Somero said if we have administrators that can deal with it, we should let them decide as opposed to getting the board together.

Mr. Jeff Salmonson said the authority rests with the board, and I won't support the way it is written.

Mrs. Tara Sousa said I believe it happened when our snow load was reaching a critical amount. It was taken care of and then brought to the board for notification. It is entirely reasonable that we have to trust people to make an emergency decision. I don't know if there is a higher cap that should be used. I think something that significant would be an emergency. Mr. Jeff Salmonson said if there is an anticipated emergency contract to exceed \$25,000, but I just don't want it to be open-ended.

Mr. Earl Somero stated if I am away, I can't assess the situation. Mr. Jeff Salmonson said I believe we have reached some kind of compromise. Mr. Earl Somero stated I believe that we need to address the situation.

On page 14 we need to institute advertising for bids; this outlines bids on bulletin boards, school website, and local newspaper. Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated based on my years of experience in soliciting bids, I found that advertising is one means, but you really get results from sending out invitations. I would like to add send out invitations to a minimum of 3 vendors. Glen when you are putting together these requests for proposals, how many days in advance are you advertising? Mr. Waring asked is your question about lead time? A small scope project is a couple of weeks. Larger projects a couple of months. Mr. Jeff Salmonson said I would like to recommend to the board that 30 day in advance of the bid to allow a sufficient number of bidders in the interest of getting the best price for the taxpayers. Mr. Glen Waring stated I understand your point, but a small scope project that is \$6k, a 30-day time frame could delay the project to start from 4-6 weeks, and this may tie Gary's hands. Projects that we can plan we can schedule the bidding process, however, some projects that come up, we may not have time to use that classification, that is my only caution to you.

Mr. Jeff Salmonson asked about an emergency plan. If it is more than \$25k we should have a special school board meeting. Mr. Earl Somero stated I don't support what you are saying. Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated that if you advertise bids for two weeks ahead of time, contractors bid schedules may be full. I can't tell you the number of rfp's in the last few years that we received only one bid. Mr. Earl Somero asked have you seen problems in the past where you have seen this. Is it to address an issue that we have? Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated I am trying to improve the process. If we get enough comparative bids, we will get the best price.

Mr. Gary Somero stated that in order to have this policy work, we will need to get the Capital Investment approval earlier from the board in April, because once approved, we have to put RFP's out and work needs to get scheduled over the summer months. Mrs. Tara Sousa stated that usually means getting solid accounting numbers.

Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated I would like to give vendors enough time to get their bids in. Mr. Gary Somero stated that we do contact them. Mrs. Tara Sousa said I would say depending on the scope of the project just as Glen suggested if we are only talking about a \$7k project, do we need 30 days, especially if we are inviting 3 people to bid. But if it is something that can be planned in advance, or is a larger amount, that we make sure we are getting a competitive bid. Soliciting bids 2 weeks in advance of the due date, you can't get a good response, I don't believe. Mr. Earl Somero stated I am not in favor of the change. Mrs. Tara Sousa stated I would be interested in seeing the previous ones that we talked about incorporated. I haven't had much time to think about it.

Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated let's go on and consider it. I still have some other suggestions for changes.

Mr. Jeff Salmonson said on page 15, third sentence unless otherwise noted all documents become public documents upon bid opening. Mr. Glen Waring responded the bid opening is the same opening as the bid close date. One competitor should not see another competitors quote before it was decided. Change to bid results become public information upon completion of the bid opening. All bids; bid results or bid documents? Glen Waring asked do we have a final consensus. Mr. Earl Somero stated strike documents and change bid to bids.

Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated on page 19 for disposal of surplus property, which is policy DM. In the first sentence I would like to add District Business Manager is to oversee disposal of surplus property. Mr. Glen Waring said can you explain to me what your intent of that is? Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated purchasing and bidding are your responsibilities. This just defines part of your area. Mr. Glen Waring stated I don't have authority to dispose of any property. I don't want it to be understood that I have the means to dispose of it.

Mr. Jeff Salmonson is asking the board to change that policy slightly. I would be reluctant to have an administrator injected into that policy. Who have we authorized in the past? Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated who is responsible for doing that? Mr. Glen Waring stated that he is responsible for presenting it. Superintendent Goguen stated that all records and paperwork are under your purview after the decision is made. It would come along with the change in the handbook if you change the problem with the policy. Mrs. Tara Sousa stated if you change the policy, then you address the problem in the handbook. Mr. Earl Somero asked are you going to review policy DM and make the change there? Consensus is for the policy committee to review and make changes to policy DM.

Mrs. Tara Sousa said basically the one item that we left out that we need to look at coming to a consensus on that addresses Jeff's concern but doesn't tie the hands of those doing the work in the district is the time for bidding. Mr. Glen Waring asked instead of require would you agree to when reasonable? Mr. Jeff Salmonson said yes that is the approach we want. Mrs. Tara Sousa stated yes I agree.

3. Update Check Signer Authorization per Policy DIHA - School Board Permission

Mr. Glen Waring stated this is a follow-up from our last meeting. You wanted to see who the actual check signers on each account were. We recommend that the board delete this policy because it includes bank numbers and signers.

MOTION made by Mr. Jeff Salmonson to approve the slate of authorized signers. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Tara Sousa. All members were in favor. None opposed. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Mr. Jeff Salmonson asked are there two separate actions? To approve signers and remove the policy? Superintendent Goguen stated yes. Mrs. Tara Sousa stated that she had no objection to the list of signers.

Superintendent Goguen stated that Policy DIHA includes authorized signers and account numbers to bank accounts. Does the board want this to be a policy or an internal document? We already share this information in our financials every month.

Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated would a compromise be to eliminate the account information and leave the check signers for public information? Superintendent Goguen stated yes that is a great compromise. Mr. Salmonson asked is there any downside to publicly identified check signers? Mr. Glen Waring stated this is not a practice that I am aware of. If someone gets your check they know who the signers are. Mrs. Tara Sousa asked it doesn't make sense why this is a policy. DIHA because it is an appendix to another policy. It seems like the policy should be that the board be brought the check signers at any time that alterations to accounts are made. It could even go so far as to say, customary policy of the board is to have the principal and another designee that it specifies who would sign. Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated instead of the person, how about the position. Should this go back to the policy committee? Superintendent Goguen and Glen Waring responded yes. Mrs. Tara Sousa asked maybe Mr. Glen Waring can find a sample policy.

4. Proposed FY17 Budget

Superintendent Goguen presented the following information for the FY17 budget: the health insurance rates have been confirmed, and we estimated an 8% increase and it came in at 8.9%, which amounts to a \$20,400 increase in health insurance rates. Other updates include \$4754 teacher salary rates due to increased education. We are also recommending an update of the reading program. There is a new version of what we are currently using coming out in November. The program is for grades K-6 and the amount covers 6 years with updated resources. We are seeing a decrease from Primex in our property and liability insurance of \$7200.

We have set aside \$38,800 to cover a ½-year sabbatical. Per the CBA we have \$40,000 set aside for early retirement benefits. The School board negotiation team requested an

additional \$10,000 for legal consultation. We had previously put in math program K-8. We learned we can pay over 2 years for the math program. If we were to do that, it will cost us about \$28,500 each year. If we go with the math pilot, this cost over two years will cover us for 6 years for math curriculum at HHES and BMS. The updated FY17 proposed budget shows a decrease of \$736,789.

Mr. Jeff Salmonson asked what was the pilot? Superintendent Goguen responded the math pilot program. The pilot program was free except for the consumables this year. Given light of NECAP and testing scores, we are working with teachers to see how they like this program. This amount is based on the pilot program. We will need to update our math program, regardless. Mr. Jeff Salmonson asked is there a possibility that we will not go with the pilot program? Superintendent Goguen stated we are still in the process of getting feedback from the teachers. So far I've been given positive feedback. Some teachers have shared they like the home to school connection, and they like the resources. The math program fee is \$57,000 and it would cover us for 6 years, but payable over 2 years. We are also looking at an updated reading program that would cover us for 6 years, but paid over 2 years.

Mrs. Tara Sousa asked how old is the reading program? Superintendent Goguen responded probably 10-15 years old. I am not saying that just because it is old that it is bad. The new reading programs have phonics and RTI built into them. We are looking at the Wonders program, and other programs. This budget number is a placeholder for reading curriculum.

Mr. Jeff Salmonson said in past years based on Superintendent recommendations (2 superintendents previous to you) they would normally include a couple hundred thousand dollars contingency. If there is a need for an identifiable contingency or do we have enough money in Special Ed funds and Facilities funds in the event of a catastrophic event. Superintendent Goguen responded that each of the school buildings have curriculum and instruction funds. We don't have a large amount in them. Mr. Jeff Salmonson asked do we need an identifiable contingency in support of SpEd. Superintendent Goguen stated we do have a contingency of \$200,000 for Special Education, a contingency for health insurance changes of \$45,000 and Safety for \$10,000. We are getting in the habit of naming what we are doing. We put funds aside for science in the elementary and middle school to get more science resources. We are using our budget as a planning tool.

Mrs. Tara Sousa asked are there things for example retirement expenses and health benefits, as time expires that we can adjust? Superintendent Goguen responded that's up in the air right now. We are approaching the deadline, and I was just curious if this is being driven by knowing the amount or if it is a placeholder; is it defined? Superintendent Goguen responded it is both.

Mr. Earl Somero stated it has come to my attention that we do not have an HR person. Would we benefit from having that position? Superintendent Goguen responded it is

something that the auditors recommended. I am looking at what we need to do for the students first. It is something put as a priority. We are an organization with 200+ personnel, and could certainly use an HR person but the students need to come first. I did not put an HR person in the budget, I wanted to make sure the teachers and students received the much needed reading and math curriculum materials. Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated I know this issue has come up in the past. The question was posed to Sheryl Burke if other districts perform the HR function without having a person in the position. Sheryl Burke answered yes that other districts do not have an HR position. I would be cautious about adding additional personnel. Mrs. Tara Sousa stated I know it has been an issue over the years. I appreciate your focus on the things you have chosen to focus on in the budget this year.

Mrs. Tara Sousa also wanted to know about the list that has the budget hearings and such. When does that happen? Are the numbers going to potentially change before that? Superintendent Goguen responded we hope not. The budget is a line item budget. Previous to my tenure, the budgets were not as specific. We have tightened the accountability, and we are being very conservative.

5. Revised Pipeline Letter

Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated that Mr. Jim Kingston is working on it. He could not be here tonight, but I expect him to have it for the next meeting. Mr. Earl Somero asked do you want it on the next agenda? Mr. Salmonson responded yes please.

4. New Business

1. School Care rates

Superintendent Goguen announced that the School Care rates are in. The District needs to decide if they are going to commit to these rates. Mr. Earl Somero asked we don't have to decide now? Superintendent Goguen stated you can wait. Mr. Jeff Salmonson asked is this tied into the CBA? Mrs. Tara Sousa said currently School Care is the vendor as described in the CBA. Mr. Earl Somero stated should we table this? Is that reasonable? Mrs. Tara Sousa stated we cannot go into any details so yes let's table it.

2. Five-year Pitney-Bowes Meter Rental Agreement for BMS

Mr. Glen Waring stated the agreement is on Eduportal to renew the postage meter at BMS, we brought it to you because it is a 5-year lease. Because it is multi-year lease it makes sense to ask School Board for approval. Mr. Jeff Salmonson asked who would sign it normally? Glen Waring stated in the past it was signed by administrative assistant at BMS.

MOTION made by Mr. Jeff Salmonson for Glen Waring to sign the 5-year Pitney-Bowes Meter Rental Agreement. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Tara Sousa. All members were in favor. No members opposed. Motion passed 3-0-0.

5. Public Comments

Note: 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.

Jen Sikkila, New Ipswich

My concern is curriculum for the Math, and I ask the School Board to look into this. At the Middle School level, the books are disposable workbooks. If we are paying for this over two years would we get workbooks every year? At what point is that not cost effective.

Superintendent Goguen responded all consumables will be covered every year. We are proposing \$57k over six years.

6. Policies

7. Personnel

1. Retirements

Superintendent Goguen announced that she had received a retirement notification from Patti Landi Gerringer. Ms. Gerringer has been with the District for 20 years.

Superintendent Goguen announced that she had received a retirement notification from Dianna Griffin. Mrs. Griffin has been with the District for 26 years.

The Board would like to thank both retirees for their service to the District and wish them well in their retirement.

2. Resignation

Superintendent Goguen announced that she had received a letter of resignation from Peter Kelleher for the end of first semester.

MOTION made by Mr. Jeff Salmonson to accept the resignation of Peter Kelleher with regrets. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Tara Sousa. All members were in favor. No members opposed. Motion passed 3-0-0.

3. Kindergarten Long-Term Sub Recommendation

Superintendent Goguen announced that she would like to recommend Diane Piurkowski as a long-term substitute teacher for the Kindergarten class.

MOTION made by Mr. Jeff Salmonson to accept Diane Piurkowski as the long-term Kindergarten substitute teacher. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Tara Sousa. All members were in favor. No members opposed. Motion passed 3-0-0.

4. School Board Clerk Recommendation

Chairman Earl Somero announced that he would like to recommend Jeanne Cunningham as the School Board Clerk. Superintendent Goguen stated a voice recording device was purchased for Jeanne. Jeanne would be appointed District Clerk position once she starts.

MOTION made by Mr. Jeff Salmonson to approve Jeanne Cunningham as the School Board Clerk. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Tara Sousa. All members were in favor. No members opposed. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Mrs. Tara Sousa asked does the board need to quickly develop a policy for maintaining the recordings for a certain period of time or the destruction of the recordings. Superintendent Goguen stated that the information for our legal counsel in Eduportal stating that the meeting minutes are the only official record of the meeting. Meeting minutes also only need to reflect motions.

8. Agenda Building

1. Policies to review

Mr. Jeff Salmonson will e-mail Mr. Jim Kingston on policy updates; policy committee needs to meet do we want to set a date? Superintendent responded yes we do. How about Thursday? Mr. Jeff Salmonson stated the date was fine with him, I will check with Mr. Jim Kingston. I know on a normal workday he cannot get here any earlier than 6 p.m.

2. School Care rates

3. Pipeline Letter

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

MOTION made by Mr. Jeff Salmonson to move to non-public session per RSA 91A:3 II (a). The motion was seconded by Mrs. Tara Sousa. Roll call vote: Jeff Salmonson, yes; Tara Sousa, yes; Earl Somero, yes. The vote was unanimous.

MOTION made by Mrs. Tara Sousa to move to non-public session per RSA 91A:3 II (c). The motion was seconded by Mr. Jeff Salmonson. Roll call vote: Jeff Salmonson, yes; Tara Sousa, yes; Earl Somero, yes. The vote was unanimous.

MOTION made by Mrs. Tara Sousa to move to non-public session per RSA 91A:3 II (i). The motion was seconded by Mr. Jeff Salmonson. Roll call vote: Jeff Salmonson, yes; Tara Sousa, yes; Earl Somero, yes. The vote was unanimous.

MOTION made by Mr. Salmonson, Second by Mrs. Sousa to re-enter public session at 8:20 p.m. Unanimously approved by roll call vote.

MOTION made by Mr.

Salmonson, Second by Mrs. Sousa to seal the minutes of non-public session in perpetuity. Unanimously approved.

The Chairman reported action was taken under (i) and (c).

MOTION made by Mr. Salmonson, Second by Mrs. Sousa, to adjourn at 8:21 p.m. Unanimously approved.

10. Adjournment

1. Motion to adjourn at 7:25 p. m.