

Mt. Blue Regional School District
Board of Directors Meeting
AGENDA MINUTES

COMMUNITY | CULTURE | CURRICULUM

Working together to provide high-quality educational opportunities for all

DATE: September 26, 2023

PLACE: The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

TIME: 6:30pm

LIVESTREAM LINK: <https://boxcast.tv/channel/unvoa3ijkfnyp9oufole>

Members present: Gloria McGraw, Amanda Caruso, Rich Ruhlin, Kyle Fletcher, Josh Robbins, Jeff Barnum, Alexander Creznic, Greg Kimber, Libby Kaut, Will Jones, Scott Erb, Debbie Smith, Gwen Doak, Dee Robinson

Members absent: Janice David, Carol Coles, and Abbey Goodspeed

Staff present: Christian Elkington, Monique Poulin

Other staff present: James Black, Katie Duschene, Joel Smith, Keith Acedo, Carol Kiesman

- I. Call to Order at 6:35
 - II. Pledge of Allegiance
 - III. Adjustments to the Agenda
 - A. None
 - IV. Report of the Chairperson - Dee Robinson
 - A. [Code of Ethics G & H](#)
 1. Chair Robinson reviewed this portion of the Code of Ethics.
 - V. Communications
 - A. Staff Members of the Month for August
 1. This was tabled until the next meeting.
 - B. *Alexander Creznic shared in a letter that he will be resigning his position because of family needs. He is grateful for the opportunity to serve as a member of the board.
 - VI. Good news stories from the Board or Administrators
 - A. MBHS Principal Joel Smith shared:
 1. Gym floor is drying nicely and looks great
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2. Homecoming week is this week with lots of activity.

VII. Public Comment

A. None

VIII. [Superintendent's Report](#) - Elkington

A. New Hires, Transfers, Resignations, and Retirements

B. 9-15-2023 Openings Update

C. RSU 9 Committee next steps?

D. RSU 9 Student Enrollment Comparisons

IX. Administrator Reports

A. [AHS/GDC - Keith Acedo](#)

1. The new Adaptive Skills Program is making strides every day.
2. The gym has a fresh coat of paint and looks great. The outdoor pavilions are also complete.
3. AHS and Cushing will be implementing BARR this year. The focus is on relationships, and the training has been wonderful. It fits like a glove with PBIS and will strengthen what takes place in the Wilton schools.
4. There was a question about math achievement. The focus has been on growth across the board, and AHS has been making great strides.
5. Having access to a full time literacy interventionist and full school training with reading has had a positive impact on our reading scores.

B. [CCHS - Carol Kiesman](#)

1. Carol took a moment to thank those who have been helpful throughout her transition, Libby Kaut being one.
2. CCHS is implementing BARR school wide with a train-the-trainer model. It is going well.
3. The Dyer Fund supports the school in areas that are not included in the local budget. This year, CCHS is fortunate to receive a new sign for the front of the building as well as landscaping. Going forward, the Dyer fund has agreed to sponsor a matching fund for books at the K-3 level. Kevin Libby, one of the New Sharon selectmen, serves on the committee and has been very helpful in the work that has occurred.

C. [MBMS - James Black](#)

1. MBMS is so pleased to have a lead custodian who takes pride in her work and in building a team.
2. There has been an increase in enrollment this year, and they are fully staffed.
3. The Bjorn CTE Center building should be closed-in before snow flies. A shout out to Mike Henshaw and Heather Ingraham-Quimby for being flexible with room displacement during this part of the construction. Everything is on schedule with no major change orders nor additional expenses. Open by fall of 2024 is the plan.
4. A shout out to Denise Mochamer for getting the MBMS Yearbook back up and running.
5. BARR is being implemented at MBMS at the grade 6 level with a train-the-trainer model. The data driven aspect is promising.
6. The community garden in the courtyard has been a wonderful learning experience for students.
7. There is a high level of participation in athletics this year, with 41 on the cross country team (sixth, seventh and eighth graders). There is a strong system in place for working through the numbers of athletes and the different levels of teams.
8. MBMS average class size is between 20 and 21 students.

X. Presentations

A. 23-24 Attendance Focus/ Strategic Plan Update - Elkington & Poulin

1. "Every Day In School Matters!"
 - a) [Poster](#)
 - (1) This was crafted by Joel Smith with input from the administrative team and is posted in schools and has been shared with families.
 - b) [Codes](#)
 - (1) The codes were reviewed this summer and reduced to specific categories that align with state law and which will improve consistent reporting.
 - (2) Early data shows district wide that we have between 1.5% and 2% higher attendance as compared to this time last year.
2. Connecting to the RSU 9 Strategic Plan Next Steps
 - a) Attendance is a theme that is connected to our strategic plan in several ways. The district has set two outcomes for the next couple of years.
 - b) Superintendent Elkington participated in a nationwide ZOOM where steps to improving student attendance were shared.

Many of the suggestions that were shared are what is in our steps for 23-24.

- c) There are live links in the document that will be accessible when it is posted on the website.
- d) The Committee Structure implementation has been delayed but will be moving forward this fall.
- e) Attendance will be a continued focus throughout the year, with continued emphasis with staff being held on the 10/6 workshop day.
- f) The attendance data points will be measured in increments throughout the year.
- g) Every day our students miss school is a day that they are missing instruction. Success will need to be a collaborative effort with all stakeholders
- h) Questions raised:
 - (1) Should there be a poster that shares the positives of being in school? This initial poster shares the expectations for attendance. The intention of the poster is to help clarify to families the only reasons they are excused by statute which becomes a debate at times.
 - (2) What about staff attendance? It is also vital for staff to be present in our schools-every day in school matters. We make accommodations for staff needs on a daily basis just like we do with students. We also have official accommodations for staff as necessary.

XI. Consent Agenda

- A. New Hires/Resignations etc.
- B. Board Minutes [9-12-23](#)
- C. Committee Report Outs and Minutes
 - 1. Operations Committee - None
 - 2. Personnel & Finance - None
 - 3. Educational Policy - None

<i>Motion to approve the consent agenda.</i>	Yeas: Gloria McGraw, Amanda Caruso, Rich Ruhlin, Kyle Fletcher, Josh Robbins, Jeff Barnum, Alexander Creznic, Greg Kimber, Libby Kaut, Will Jones, Debbie Smith, Gwen Doak, Dee Robinson, Scott Erb Nays:	Motion: Scott Erb Seconded: Rich Ruhlin Motion: Passed
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	Abstained: Vote: 882/0/0 Unanimous	
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XII. New Business

A. [FBLA Trip to RI](#)

1. National Conf.

- *Motion to approve FBLA Trip as shared*

<i>Motion to approve FBLA Trip as shared.</i>	Yeas: Gloria McGraw, Amanda Caruso, Rich Ruhlin, Kyle Fletcher, Josh Robbins, Jeff Barnum, Alexander Creznic, Greg Kimber, Libby Kaut, Will Jones, Debbie Smith, Gwen Doak, Dee Robinson, Scott Erb Nays: Abstained: Vote: 882/0/0 Unanimous	Motion: Rich Ruhlin Seconded: Debbie Smith Motion: Passed
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B. Approval of a Lease-Purchase Agreement for the RSU 9 District Office using Federal ESSER Funds

1. Review

- Superintendent Elkington reviewed the lease-purchase agreement.

2. Discussion

- The \$50,000 down will be applied as a down payment and not as a lease payment if the voters do not approve.
- If approved by the voters, the plan will be to close as soon as possible.
- If the referendum does not pass, what is the plan for the ESSER funds? The funds will be returned to the State of Maine and the federal government. If the referendum passes, \$60,000 for the first two months will go towards the purchase price prior to closing. We have about \$550,000 ready to put towards purchase and repairs to include technology, asbestos removal, roof, and heat pumps.
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- *Motion to approve the Lease-Purchase Agreement as presented*

<p><i>Motion to approve the Lease-Purchase Agreement as shared.</i></p>	<p>Yeas: Gloria McGraw, Amanda Caruso, Rich Ruhlin, Kyle Fletcher, Josh Robbins, Jeff Barnum, Alexander Creznic, Greg Kimber, Libby Kaut, Will Jones, Debbie Smith, Gwen Doak, Dee Robinson, Scott Erb</p> <p>Nays: Abstained: Vote: 882/0/0 Unanimous</p>	<p>Motion: Gloria McGraw Seconded: Rich Ruhlin Motion: Passed</p>
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C. Referendum Ballot & District Meeting Approval - Elkington

1. [Why is a referendum needed?](#)

a) Superintendent Elkington reviewed the rationale for a referendum.

2. Ballot Review

a) Sample Town Ballot

(1) Superintendent Elkington reviewed the warrant, the notice of public hearing and the ballot.

3. Timeline posting in 10 towns within next three days

a) Richard Joseph will deliver these this week.

- *Motion to approve the warrant and notice of election presented to the meeting be and is hereby approved and that a Regional School Unit No. 9 referendum be and is hereby called for November 7, 2023 for the purpose of purchasing the property and building at 227 MAIN STREET, FARMINGTON, by Regional School Unit No. 9 as described therein.*

<p><i>Motion to approve the warrant and notice of election as presented.</i></p>	<p>Yeas: Gloria McGraw, Amanda Caruso, Rich Ruhlin, Kyle Fletcher, Josh Robbins, Jeff Barnum, Alexander Creznic, Greg Kimber, Libby Kaut, Will Jones, Debbie Smith, Gwen Doak, Dee Robinson, Scott Erb</p>	<p>Motion: Rich Ruhlin Seconded: Debbie Smith Motion: Passed</p>
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	Nays: Abstained: Vote: 882/0/0 Unanimous	
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- *Motion that the Notice of Public Hearing (October 24th, 6:00pm) presented to the meeting be and is hereby approved for the purpose of notifying the Regional School Unit No. 9 voters of the public hearing scheduled as provided (therein on the purchase of the property and building at 227 MAIN STREET, FARMINGTON.
(Board Members will need to sign after approval)*

<i>Motion to approve the Notice of Public hearing as presented.</i>	Yeas: Gloria McGraw, Amanda Caruso, Rich Ruhlin, Kyle Fletcher, Josh Robbins, Jeff Barnum, Alexander Creznic, Greg Kimber, Libby Kaut, Will Jones, Debbie Smith, Gwen Doak, Dee Robinson, Scott Erb Nays: Abstained: Vote: 882/0/0 Unanimous	Motion: Rich Ruhlin Seconded: Scott Erb Motion: Passed
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D. Policy Review

1. Second Readings

- a. KE Public Concerns and Complaints - Rewrite
 - i. [Draft Revision](#)
 - ii. Questions?
 - iii. Approval
- b. [BEB School Board Use of Social Media](#) - Brand New
 - i. Questions?
 - ii. Approval
- c. [BHC Board Relationships and Communications with Staff](#)
 - i. Questions?
 - ii. Approval
- d. [CHCAA Student Handbooks](#)
 - i. Questions?

ii. Approval

- e. [FF Naming Rights](#)
i. Questions?
ii. Approval

<i>Motion to approve the block of policies as proposed</i>	Yeas: Gloria McGraw, Amanda Caruso, Rich Ruhlin, Kyle Fletcher, Josh Robbins, Jeff Barnum, Alexander Creznic, Greg Kimber, Libby Kaut, Debbie Smith, Gwen Doak, Dee Robinson, Scott Erb Nays: Abstained: Will Jones Vote: 798/0/84	Motion: Rich Ruhlin Seconded: Gwen Doak Motion: Passed
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E. Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(D) - Labor Contract Discussion w/Association - Elkington

- Motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(D) - Labor Contract Discussion w/Association

Entered Executive Session at 7:58

<i>Motion to go into Executive Session to discuss Labor Contract - Association w/ Elkington.</i>	Yeas: Gloria McGraw, Amanda Caruso, Rich Ruhlin, Kyle Fletcher, Josh Robbins, Jeff Barnum, Alexander Creznic, Greg Kimber, Libby Kaut, Will Jones, Debbie Smith, Gwen Doak, Dee Robinson, Scott Erb Nays: Abstained: Vote: 882/0/0 Unanimous	Motion: Josh Robbins Seconded: Scott Erb Motion: Passed
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Exited Executive Session without objection at 8:20.

<p><i>Motion to extend the meeting until up until 8:45 to sign warrants</i></p>	<p>Yeas: Gloria McGraw, Amanda Caruso, Rich Ruhlin, Kyle Fletcher, Josh Robbins, Jeff Barnum, Alexander Creznic, Greg Kimber, Libby Kaut, Will Jones, Debbie Smith, Gwen Doak, Dee Robinson, Scott Erb</p> <p>Nays: Abstained: Vote: 882/0/0 Unanimous</p>	<p>Motion: Rich Ruhlin Seconded: Gwen Doak Motion: Passed</p>
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XIII. Adjourn without objection at 8:45

NEXT SCHEDULED BOARD MEETINGS

October 10th, 2023 - 6:30pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

- Board Reports - Adult Ed.

Special Public Hearing October 24th, 6:00pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

October 24th, 2023 - 7:00pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

- Board Reports - Special Services

NEXT SCHEDULED COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Operations - Oct. 3rd, 2023 - 5:00pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

Personnel & Finance - Oct. 3rd, 2023 - 6:00pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus

Educational Policy - Oct. 3rd, 2023 - 7:00pm - The Forum, Mt. Blue Campus