

MT. BLUE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



COMMUNITY | CULTURE | CURRICULUM

"Working together to provide high quality educational opportunities for all."

227 MAIN STREET, FARMINGTON, ME 04938

(207) 778-6571 | (fax) 778-4160

Personnel & Finance Committee

Agenda NOTES

December 3, 2024

6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

The RSU 9 District Office, Main Street Farmington

Members present: Josh Robbins, Gloria McGraw, Greg Kimber, Jeff Barnum

Other board members present: Dee Robinson

Staff present: Chris Elkington, Monique Poulin, Nicole Ibarguen, Kevin Bremner, Alison Gamache, Mary Redmond-Luce

1. Call Meeting to Order - Chair McGraw

- a. Called to order at 6:00

2. Previous Committee Minutes- [11-19-24](#) - Chair McGraw

- a. Any questions?
 - i. None

3. Add under new-a potential housing grant-yes!

4. [24-25 Warrant Schedule](#) - Director Gamache

- a. Questions?
 - i. Josh and Gloria will be in tomorrow to sign.

5. New

- a. Leach Field at Cape Cod Hill School needs - Elkington

- i. Possible next steps?
 - 1. Taylor Construction reported that the initial survey company cannot do the septic. We will need to go with a professional survey company. There is hope that we can move the process forward despite the wait for the professional survey company.
 - 2. The tank has been pumped three times at the cost of \$1000 per pump. This system has worked so far.
 - 3. We can potentially leave the current leach field (under the parking lot) and construct another. This will save disposals and DEP expenses. The size of the current tanks holds 4500 gallons.
 - 4. There is room enough coming up the driveway to the right in the trees to install a new leach field. The site is being surveyed.
 - 5. Hoping to have more information to the committee in early January.
- ii. Funding from?
 - 1. Potentially the maintenance reserve account could be accessed.

2. Approximate cost \$200,000.
- iii. Vote?
 1. None at this time.
- b. FY26 Budget Discussions - Elkington
 - i. Preliminary #s
 1. We are looking at a \$1.3 million increase **just** for salary and benefit increases from FY25 to FY26. This is a most concerning # for budget planning.
 2. We are asking each cost center to look at their portion of that total. Some examples are noted below:
 - a. Cushing's increase is approximately \$20,000. The principal will look to reduce by that amount.
 - b. AHS is already ahead due to staff hired lower on the salary scale and the one year position not being .
 - c. Mallett is approximately at a \$44,000 increase and so will look to reduce that amount from their school budget, not to include reductions in Operations, Special Education, etc.
 - d. MBHS, MBMS, Special Ed and Transportation total about 1 million of the figure.
 - i. Special Education-\$395,000
 - ii. MBMS-\$275,000
 3. How might each cost center get to reducing their areas so that there is a 0 percent increase to the budget?
 - a. This plan will be what is submitted to the budget committee.
 4. \$2,050,000 from balance forward funds is being used to balance the FY25 budget. The hope is to reduce this total by at least \$650,000 to get to \$1.4 million of balance forward use for FY26.
 5. Question-Is there another strategy?
 - a. After reviewing this first round of reductions our 2nd round we will be looking at possible program consolidation. The shared larger group admin conversations will help us prioritize programming and suggest where to reduce. We can't keep everything we have done previously along with new initiatives such as staffing in PK and PD for Literacy in grades PreK -3. That is the foundation for future success our district needs. We will probably need to look at higher class sizes in grades 1-5. Leaders of cost centers understand that we need to consider reductions. Unfilled positions which are still in the budget could be places to reduce.
 6. We hope to receive at least the same funding from the state as we do now.
 - ii. Next steps for Cost Centers?
 1. Finish round one's review and go into program review with the admin team.
- c. Added agenda item-Review of the [Student Homelessness Prevention Grant](#)
 - i. Monique reviewed the proposed grant that would be overseen by Amanda Clark, our Family Engagement and Student Support Coordinator.
 - ii. Vote?
 1. Unanimous to move this grant forward.

6. Updates

- a. District Phone Upgrade - Bremner
 - i. Info
 - 1. [Phone System Migration Committee Report](#)
 - ii. Question Answers
 - 1. Kevin reviewed responses to the questions from the last meeting.
 - 2. We see significant savings over time with the move. Over five years, there will be at least a 60% savings.
 - iii. Recommendation to move this forward
 - iv. Approval (FY26 budget item)
 - 1. The committee supports putting this forth to the budget committee.
- b. [24-25 Monthly Budget Update](#) - Gamache
 - i. November Review
 - 1. Spending is on track for this time of the year.
 - 2. Debt service is processed twice a year and why that line has not had much spent from it at this time.
- c. FMLA Review - Gamache
 - i. [Presentation](#)
 - 1. [Highlights](#)
 - a. Alison reviewed the highlights.
 - b. Chris is starting conversations with the Association regarding the 50% share, .5 of 1%. 1% for the support staff contract equals about \$35,000.
 - ii. Key issues
 - TBC at next meeting
- d. 23 Audit - Gamache-TABLE
 - i. Key financial points
 - ii. Corrective actions?
 - Postponed to next month
- e. 24 Audit
 - i. Progress?
 - 1. Slow but in progress
- f. [MBMS Kitchen Expansion Proposal](#)
 - i. Progress?
 - 1. \$32,000 for the pad. School Nutrition cannot pay for the pad as it would in theory become part of a building. Plan is to have Nicole Ibarguen work with Chef Andy in order to find \$32,000 worth of purchases which can, as discussed at the last meeting, be purchased.
- g. MBMS
 - i. [MBMS Sprinkler Suppression System Failure](#)
 - 1. GYM
 - a. Bleachers
 - i. 12/16 install
 - b. Floor
 - i. Sanding and sealing is done, working on the court lines at this time.
 - ii. Should be set for the return to school in January.
 - 2. Air Assessments
 - a. [AIQ MBMS Basement](#)
 - b. [AIQ Basement](#)
 - c. Important findings?

- i. No elevated mold spores. Areas cleaned appropriately.
 - ii. Are there needs for checks in other areas of the building?
 - 1. The area was sealed for the entire time of the work. No classroom concerns have been reported.
 - 2. Nicole Ibarguen will double check to see what area/wing was tested early on.
 - 3. Basement
 - a. Progress?
 - i. Sheetrock contractors are well underway. Specialty Services is also starting their work.
 - b. Next steps?
- h. Connectivity Ed Grant - Mary Redmond-Luce
 - i. Further Review
 - 1. Mary reviewed responses to questions from the last meeting. Updates were noted in blue in the docs she shared (will be linked into the 12-10-2024 Board Mtg. Agenda.
 - 2. Mary also reviewed a document which included the funding model from the current owner.
 - 3. Career Center, DOL, Voc Rehab, DHHS are all interested in leasing space.
 - ii. Discussion
 - 1. Would need to use the town parking and community parking given that there are only 22 spaces. There is some street parking.
 - 2. Why is the seller being so generous? Purchased it to be a community center and comes from this area.
 - 3. Lease from the first floor currently generates \$8,000/month.
 - 4. What is our exposure if nothing were to rent?
 - a. We would have to put it up for sale or give it to the feds.
 - 5. Mallett is bursting with special programming space needs. With modifications, some space may be able to be accessed as necessary.
 - 6. Questions:
 - a. If there are programs that might lease the space who eventually fold, what does that mean?
 - b. Are we duplicating services within Franklin County?
 - iii. Other requests for Board mtg.
 - 1. Digital literacy services in Wilton and??
 - 2. Please cover the exposure question-how much needs to be leased in order to say that RSU #9 will not be negatively impacted?
 - 3. If there is a big downturn, what does that mean?
 - 4. Amortization questions were asked.

7. Next Meeting - January 7, 2025

8. Adjourned at 7:09

9. Future Agenda Items:

- RFP
- Solar Update - Jan

- ESSER Funding Update
- Staff Resignation Survey