

**MMUSD Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2010**

Present: Judy Jones (Chair), George Till, Ken Wyman, Ken Remsen, Jerome Mendicino, Yasmine Ziesler, Cliff Peterson, Michael Marks, Alison Anand, Bob Robbins, Linda Willmott, Jeff Doremus, Marissa Giroux, Jim Massingham, Jennifer Botzjorns, Mike Weston, Mark Carbone, Nancy Guyette, Laura Nassau
Others: Six audience members were also present

Judy Jones called meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

No public comments or questions.

Review of '10-11 Budget Draft and Approval

-George Till presented Draft 6 of the FY '11 budget, which represents a slight decrease from when the board last convened. The board is hoping to approve the \$26,111,773 budget tonight. It is down .28%, or \$72,000, from the FY '10 budget. The transfer of the teacher retirement fund also has a lot of traction in the statehouse, Till said, adding that he's surprised Gov. Douglas didn't mention it today.

-Till said there is a 3% reduction in the number of teachers at the district's three schools this year (3.64 FTE).

-The FY '11 budget represents the first year-to-year decrease in recent memory. The FY '10 budget was up 3.03% from the previous year. The district's education spending down 0.41% from FY '10, its equalized pupils are down 2.08%, its education spending/equalized pupil is up 1.71%.

-After the CLA Adjustments, the MMUSD portion of the Homestead Tax Rates will be as high as a 10.74% increase in Bolton. With the elementary homestead tax rate added in, the lowest rate would be in Underhill, with .35% increase. Bolton would be the highest with an 11.47% increase. In terms of real money, Till explained that would roughly equal \$156 more in property tax payments this year per \$100,000 of housesite value in Bolton. People are eligible for property tax relief, however. Gov. Douglas said people who make up to \$110,000 in household income may be eligible for prop tax relief.

-Till said class sizes will be up slightly at the middle schools but stable at MMU.

-NECAP scores: Students in the district scored above the statewide and national averages in every category. Same with SAT scores. The graduation rate among CESU students is 96%, above the statewide average of 86%. The CESU drop-out rate is 1.2%, less than the Vermont average of 3.25%. MMUSD's student-teacher ratio is 16.2:1; the state average is 12.4:1 (though the governor said it is 11:1).

-Till said the board already has a seconded motion from the Finance Committee to approve the amount of \$26,111,773 for the MMUSD budget. Discussion: Bob Robbins requested that the board put some money back into the board stipends? He said that when you take them away you are saying that there is no border between anyone who serves on the board and the public. That may discourage people from running for the board, he fears.

****Robbins made a MOTION to put \$1,950 total back in as a stipend - \$125 per member and \$200 for chair. Ken Wyman SECONDED it. Michael Marks said that any other year I'd agree with you. This year I don't. The motion received only two 'ayes'. The rest of the board voted 'nay'. The motion was rejected.***

****With a seconded motion already passed on to it, the board unanimously approved the FY '11 budget.***

Football Award

Judy Jones said the board's charge is to accept the award or to decline it. The award is given by State Farm Insurance Company, in the amount of \$17,500. It was voted on by public vote, nationwide. There were ten finalists, each given \$2,500, and MMU emerged as the winner.

Jim Massingham elaborated: People voted on a video they could watch on YouTube, submitted by a parent, and MMU's got the most votes. It was an Internet competition. MMU is grateful to State Farm Insurance. Peterson explained it won the award for receiving the most internet votes.

***Linda Wilmott made a MOTION to accept the award from State Farm Insurance in the amount of \$17,500, Jerome Mendicino SECONDED it.** Discussion: Peterson: How will this money be used? Massingham: That will be determined at a future meeting. **The motion carried.**

Committee Reports

Facilities Committee: Wilmott reported that Camels Hump's new transformers are up and running as of today.

Finance Committee: Till said the committee held a joint meeting with the Facilities Committee about the Qualified School Construction Bond. We have motion for you to approve this bond, Till said. The motion is that the board move to accept an agreement with Merchants Bank to receive QSCB in the amount of \$1,300,000. Laura Nassau explained that Merchants will receive a tax credit from the IRS for this zero-interest bond. This first came out in spring last year. The maturity rate is currently 17 years, though it has fluctuated down to 16 at times. Nassau said she would like to lock in the 17. By approving agreement tonight, the district would be locked in at these rates. **The previously seconded motion carried.**

Student Report

Marissa Ginoux said that auditions for spring musical started today. There was also a schoolwide gingerbread-making competition, which Ms. Botzjorns' advisory won.

Jeff Doremus reported that two Afghan exchange students came to MMU today and spoke to a number of classes. It was pretty eye-opening, he said.

Administrators' Report

Mark Carbone said Camels Hump was up on the new transformer service this morning as of 11:30 a.m. They are putting the final touches on it in terms of making it pretty. Carbone added that two teachers have asked for long-term subs, and the school is in the process of looking for them.

Nancy Guyette said that Browns River will put on a production in March of The Wizard of Oz. The first winter concert will take place in two weeks. In February the school will be hosting a parent informational series. The first workshop is entitled, Where's the Manual? How to Raise Teenagers. Lastly, teacher Rita LaPierre announced she is moving to Arizona. She has been with the district 27 years teaching math.

Mike Weston said MMU's late bus moving to 4:30 from 5 p.m. after exams for academic purposes. There are lots of ninth graders struggling with academics.

Jennifer Botzjorns reported that the first H1N1 clinic was completed in just 2.5 hours. She also said that the last day before winter vacation the school was vandalized when wood putty was put in all the locks.

Weston said the school picked up the incident on its security cameras and has handed the tape over to the police to try and identify the perpetrators.

Superintendent's Report

Massingham suggested a carousel-type meeting be held on March 11 to have board members attend for training on policy governance. It will be the same night as a regular board meeting. All other CESU boards have signed on. It will be an opportunity to learn about policy governance, Massingham explained.

Massingham said the school is still in the running for two energy-efficiency grants.

Massingham passed around the March Ballot Warning for the board members to sign.

The Assistant Superintendent job has been posted and there are already 10-12 candidates from all over the country.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes and Warrants: There are several name changes to the Dec. 10 MMUSD meeting minutes. The audience member identified as Louis Hipes was actually Allan Hefferson. The "Caitlin" identified in the audience was Caitlin Hester. The audience member listed as Adam Poplein is actually Adam Popkin. And Marissa Ginoux, the newest student representative, was introduced at the meeting. One other change: In the last sentence of paragraph five underneath the heading, "Question-and-answer session regarding the FY '11 budget", Jim Massingham meant to say the concept of pay to play "may be illegal in Vermont", rather than "is illegal", as it is listed. The minutes were approved with the aforementioned changes.

Warrants in the amount of \$2,007,445.87, were approved.

Announcements: Carbone said there has been a request to have dance at Camels Hump on Valentine's Day in which alcohol will be served. Proceeds would potentially go to Richmond Elementary's PTO.

****Till made a MOTION to approve the request, Willmott SECONDED the motion. Motion carried.***

Till said that the MMU boys cross-country team just won the state championship and there is a resolution in the statehouse to honor them.

The meeting was adjourned to Executive Session at 9:01 p.m. Peterson recused himself from the executive session.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Preston

Unofficial until approved