

MASCONOMET REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

**March 1, 2023**

MEMBERS PRESENT: T. Cooper, Chair, Middleton  
P. Bernheart, Boxford  
W. Hodges, Topsfield  
C. Bolzan, Boxford  
C. Miller, Boxford via remote  
J. McLean, Boxford via remote  
M. Ogden, Vice Chair, Topsfield  
T. Currier, Middleton  
Z. Bhuj, Topsfield  
K. Prentakis, Middleton  
D. Casamassima, Middleton

MEMBERS ABSENT

OTHERS PRESENT: M. Harvey, Superintendent via remote  
J. Sands, Asst. Superintendent and Chief Procurement Officer  
L. Bennett, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

- A. **Call to Order** – T. Cooper, Chair, called the Regular Meeting of the School Committee of March 1, 2023, to Order at 7:02pm, in the High School Library.
- B. **Public Hearing on FY24 Budget** – M. Harvey presented the Recommended FY24 Budget which is a level service budget. Operational expenses increased 6.9% and Operating Assessments increased 6.3%. Assumptions for FY24 were reviewed. E&D was certified for FY22, there are no change in athletic fees, no new staff reductions or increases. Contractual salary obligations were reviewed. Debt service for the Stantec turf project was reviewed.
- Ms. Petroni, Middleton, asked if a staffing reduction for the budget would include administrative cuts. J. Sands responded that there are no staffing cuts recommended. Laura Turcotte, Boxford, asked the SC to decrease the budget increase because it would take away from other town programs.
- Russ Fiore, Boxford, asked about maintenance and security costs which were discussed at the 2/15 meeting asking for specific amounts budgeted for security. J. Sands stated that the Capital Plan includes security improvements and that maintenance and security have their own accounts. All of the information can be found in the budget book posted online.
- Dan Volchok, Boxford, asked if Turf Up has provided an update. The warrant articles to get the funds to get the project moving needs clarification. The individual Town Finance Committees should decide where the funds are to come from.
- T. Cooper closed the public hearing on the FY24 Budget at 7:34pm.
- C. **Remarks from the Chair** – T. Cooper provided an update on the upcoming SC meetings: 3/6; 3/8; 3/15 and 3/29. She thanked everyone for reaching out to the state representatives regarding the increases in OOD tuition.
- D. **Comments from the Public** – Laura Turcotte, Boxford, asked if Masco is meeting the required time on learning and if M Block time counts towards time on learning. Yes, we are meeting the DESE requirement for learning and M Block counts towards learning time.
- E. **FY24 Budget Deliberation**

- a. Adjustments to the Budget Recommendation
  - i. Final Health and Dental Rates
  - ii. Certified Excess and Deficiency
  - iii. Retirement Salary Savings
  - iv. FY24 Preliminary Cherry Sheet and Net School Spending
- b. Review of Expense Categories
  - i. Insurance
  - ii. All Others
  - iii. Salaries (revised)

J. Sands provided a summary of the Adjustments as of March 1, 2023 to the budget. The total revised increase to the Total Assessment is \$2,731,082. The change as of March 1<sup>st</sup> to the FY24 Operating Budget is \$136,350 favorable (6.4%) and change to the FY24 Capital Assessment is \$181,900 favorable (5.9%). The Assessment Overview was updated and reviewed including FY24 Budget Assessment by Town. J. Sands reviewed the updates and deductions by town. Capital Assessments per town were reviewed. Assessment calculations were reviewed including an increase to Boxford and a decrease to both Middleton and Topsfield. There is a 1% increase or \$170,000 contribution shifted to Boxford. C. Miller added that the factors driving the increase are out of our control. The items within our control have not increased. J. Sands explained how the minimum contribution per Town was calculated. Discussion followed regarding increases and decreases the last few years per town. The insurance benefits were reviewed, including a 5.05% increase in health insurance and a 0% increase in dental insurance. The average health and dental cost increases over the past years were reviewed. All Other Expense Category contains over 100 accounts that are not reflected in one of the major expense accounts of the budget. The replacement of MS Math materials and online resources was discussed as the existing program will expire December 31, 2023. \$65,000 for the replacement for 6 years' worth of materials of the same curriculum as is currently being used. Salary Expense Drivers were reviewed and updated with retirement savings and end of career payouts.

- F. **Capital Plan Discussion** – T. Cooper provided an update from Turf Up. The Turf Up committee is putting together the materials for fundraising. \$250,000 is committed to date and they expect that amount to double shortly. They are updating the website with the final information and have discussed meeting with the Boxford Conservation Commission to daylight the project. Discussion of the Stantec proposal and scope of work through the permitting process with the Boxford Town departments occurred. M. Ogden asked to put funds back into the budget to fix the sod on the fields using the stabilization account. Funding for HVAC was discussed and the timeline for the work to be done. Not replacing the HVAC could cause a catastrophic issue resulting in the closing of the school. Mass Save audits and rebates and timelines were discussed as well as the Clean Energy laws in place. Discussion regarding the timing for the Town Meeting warrants took place including a Special Town Meeting for the fall.
- G. **Approve Annual Report** – T. Cooper presented the 2021-2022 Annual Report. A few non-substantial changes will be made to the final report.

A Motion was made to approve the 2021-2022 Annual Report with proposed corrections by Z. Bhujju, seconded by D. Casamassima and unanimously approved by Rollcall Vote:

T. Cooper – yes	K. Prentakis - yes	P. Bernheart - yes
T. Currier - yes	W. Hodges - yes	Z. Bhujju - yes
M. Ogden – yes	C. Bolzan - yes	C. Miller - yes
D. Casamassima - yes	J. McLean - yes	

MOTION: Approve Consent Agenda

VOTE: 11-0, Motion Carried

#### **H. Consent Agenda**

- a. Approval of February 1, 2023, and February 15, 2023, Meeting Minutes
- b. Warrants of \$1,762,121.91 (13) signed since February 15, 2023.
- c. Accept MEF Grants

A Motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda as presented by M. Ogden, seconded by T. Currier and unanimously approved by Rollcall Vote:

T. Cooper – yes	K. Prentakis - yes	P. Bernheart - yes
T. Currier - yes	W. Hodges - yes	Z. Bhujju - yes
M. Ogden – yes	C. Bolzan - yes	C. Miller - yes
D. Casamassima - yes	J. McLean - yes	

MOTION: Approve Consent Agenda

VOTE: 11-0, Motion Carried

T. Cooper made a Motion to enter into Executive Session to conduct strategy relative to bargaining with non-union personnel (Superintendent Harvey) (Executive Session Purpose #2). The Chair has determined that holding this discussion in Open Session may have a detrimental impact on the District's Bargaining Position. The Committee will not return to Open Session after the conclusion of the Executive Session, it was seconded by M. Ogden and unanimously approved by Rollcall Vote:

T. Cooper – yes	K. Prentakis - yes	P. Bernheart - yes
T. Currier - yes	W. Hodges - yes	Z. Bhujju - yes
M. Ogden – yes	C. Bolzan - yes	C. Miller - yes
D. Casamassima - yes	J. McLean - yes	

Meeting was adjourned at 9:56pm by T. Cooper

Submitted By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lynn Viselli, Recording Secretary

Approved \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Per the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, the list of documents that were either distributed to the Masconomet School Committee before the meeting in the packet or at the meeting.**

1. Agenda
2. FY24 Budget Presentation
3. Annual Report
4. Consent Agenda