

MASCONOMET REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

March 6, 2023

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

MEMBERS ABSENT J. McLean, Boxford

OTHERS PRESENT: M. Harvey, Superintendent
J. Sands, Asst. Superintendent & 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 6, 2023, to Order at 7:00pm, in the High School Library.
- B. **Remarks from the Chair** – T. Cooper congratulated the Gymnastics team on their state title.
- C. **Comments from the Public** – Dan Volchok, Boxford, asked the SC to keep the towns in mind when deliberating. Boxford is already looking at an override.
- D. **FY24 Budget Deliberation**
- a. Requests not included in our Recommendation
 - b. FY25 Forecast
 - c. Circuit Breaker Overview
 - d. Scenario Planning FY24 Operating Budget

M. Harvey stated that nothing new has been included in this budget. He reviewed additional requests not included in the recommended budget.

T. Cooper asked if Speech and Language is needed. L. Bennett responded that it is anticipated in the next 2 years.

There are 22 members of the gymnastic team with one coach which is not safe. The assistant coach is not a recurring position but filled year to year.

Essex Tech After Dark provides access to vocational programming. Students could have classes at Masco early in the day and go to Essex Tech in the afternoon for classes. C. Bolzan added that this is a great option for Masco students.

T. Currier asked if a Director of Curriculum covers all subjects. Yes, it is a position to oversee teaching and learning and co-ordinates Department Heads work.

Z. Bhujju inquired about the JV Volleyball and JV Golf positions. J. Sands responded that these 2 programs continually have high numbers of participants.

There are no new instructional programs costs and there will be no further reduction in athletic fees.

The FY24 Budget Requests not included in the Recommendation were broken down by cost per town.

FY25 Forecast Assessment Overview, and FY25 Forecast Major Expense Category Analysis increases were reviewed by category.

M. Ogden asked if the HVAC was covered under the ESSER grant. Air quality, HVAC preventative maintenance and air cleanliness is covered under the grant. J. Sands also stated that all positions currently funded by the ESSER Grant are included in the salaries in the FY25 forecast.

FY24 Circuit Breaker was reviewed. The Special Education office administers Circuit Breaker and any claims received. Discussion followed regarding the reimbursement formula from the state.

Stabilization account was discussed and how it works.

M. Ogden asked what would happen if the budget failed at Town Meeting. The SC would have 60 days to deliberate and adopt a new budget and there would be a Special Town Meeting to vote only on the SC budget.

P. Bernheart asked for ideas for some reduction with the least impact to students teaching and learning or take more money from the Circuit Breaker.

C. Bolzan asked for real data and class size to make these decisions. M. Harvey responded that the cuts cannot be identified because it would not be based on real numbers.

Z. Bhujju asked to hear what SC members thought about an option for additional athletic fee reduction of 12.5% this year. The decision was to be based on affordability.

Scenario Planning was discussed.

T. Cooper added that she would prefer to add the 2 JV coaches into the budget to give more students an opportunity to play a sport.

W. Hodges agreed adding the 2 JV coaches is the least expensive option.

It was agreed that the scenario planning would include:

1. No further athletic reduction;
2. 2 JV Coaches;
3. After Dark program for next year; and
4. Cut $\frac{3}{4}\%$ to 1% of the budget.

C. Bolzan asked that the Director of Curriculum be added instead of the other smaller items because this position impacts every student and teacher. Z. Bhujju agreed and added that it was previously discussed to be considered as part of the Strategic Plan.

The Implications of a failed budget were reviewed according to Mass General Laws.

The Regional Agreement dictates what must be included in the budget.

Capital costs include debt service. The statute governs what we do and supports the language in the Regional Agreement.

If the Operating Budget passes and the Capital Budget fails, the SC can rework the budget less the amount that failed to pass.

The capital assessment is the Turf Up design cost.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Z. Bhujju, seconded by D. Casamassima and unanimously approved by Rollcall Vote:

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

MOTION: Adjourn

VOTE: 10-0, Motion Carried

Meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm 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