MASCONOMET REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

April 10, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT:	M. Ogden, Chair, Topsfield	J. McLean, Boxford, Vice Chair
	T. Currier, Middleton	J. Horrigan, Boxford (zoom)
	M. Alexander, Middleton	Z. Bhuju, Topsfield
	C. Bolzan, Boxford	E. Clements - Boxford
	D. Casamassima, Middleton(zoom)	K. Petrone, Middleton
	W. Hodges, Topsfield	
OTHERS PRESENT:	M. Harvey, Superintendent	
	J. Sands, Assistant Supt. & Chief Procurement Officer	

Call to Order – M. Ogden, Chair, called the Regular Meeting of the School Committee of April 10, 2024, to Order at 7:00pm, at the High School Library.

A. Remarks from the Chair – None.

B. Comments from the Audience – None.

C. SAB Report – None.

D. Legislative Update

Sally Kerans informed the SC that the house budget was released today. There were no proposed tax increases and she reviewed how the funding from the Fair Shair Funding has been spent. The proposed student reimbursement is $104/student, up from $30/student.
Kristen Kassner reviewed the regional transportation cost increases and informed the SC that free Universal School Meals will continue.
Bruce Tarr reviewed the budget process with the SC. The Commonwealth has built up a robust surplus and continues to invest in education, even with a decline in revenue. He also reviewed Chapter 70 aid and circuit breaker reimbursement.
Tram Nguyen discussed tuition reductions for mental health training for professionals and discussed the continuance of a lack of providers. B. Tarr added that there are databases available to get students' help.
K. Petrone asked about affordable housing options for ownership. B. Tarr reviewed the ownership programs available.
T. Currier informed the legislators about the proposed recall language being worked on. B. Tarr stated that this would be difficult to achieve with 3 communities, local SC approval and Town Meeting approval needed before sending it to the legislature for approval.

E. **Rescind and Re-Vote Debt Authorization** The SC needs to rescind the previous vote and re-vote the debt authorization due to MGL c.71 sec. 16(d) which states the vote must extend 60 days beyond Town Meetings to include election dates.

A Motion was made that the Masconomet Regional School District ("the District") hereby appropriates Five Million Dollars ($5,000,000) for the purpose of paying costs of an owners' project manager (OPM) and design services in connection with the Roof,

HVAC, and Building Management System construction project at the High School/Middle School Building Complex including payment of all costs incidental or related thereto. To meet this appropriation, the District Treasurer, with the approval of the Chair of the Committee, is authorized to borrow said amount under G.L. c.71, sec. 16(d), or pursuant to any other enabling authority, and to issue bonds or notes of the District therefore was made by Z. Bhuju. It was seconded by M. Alexander.

Rollcall Vote:

M. Alexander – yes	T. Currier – yes	Z. Bhuju – yes	C. Bolzan – yes
D. Casamassima – yes	K. Petrone – yes	J. Horrigan – yes	W. Hodges – yes
J. McLean – yes	M. Ogden – yes	E. Clements – yes	

MOTION: Approve Roof, HVAC & Building Management System Project
VOTED: 11-0, Motion Passed.

A Motion was made that within three (3) days from the date on which this vote is adopted the Secretary be and hereby is instructed to notify the Select Boards of each of the District's member towns as to the amount and general purposes of the debt herein authorized, as required by the District Agreement and by G.L. c. 71. Sec. 16A(d) was made by Z. Bhuju. It was seconded by E. Clements.

Rollcall Vote:

M. Alexander – yes	T. Currier – yes	Z. Bhuju – yes . Bolzan – yes	
D. Casamassima – yes	K. Petrone – yes	J. Horrigan – yes	W. Hodges – yes
J. McLean – yes	M. Ogden – yes	E. Clements – yes	

MOTION: Notification of District's member Towns
VOTED: 11-0, Motion Passed.

F. <u>FY25 Budget Communications Plan</u>

M. Ogden thanked the Community Relations Sub-Committee for their work on the communications plan.

a. **Mailer** – Z. Bhuju reviewed the information and graphs on the mailer with the SC. M. Alexander suggested removing the timeline chart from the flyer because it is too confusing, and print is too small. Discussion followed regarding the information in the mailer and decided to allow the sub-committee to make adjustments as discussed.

A Motion was made to approve the mailer with the changes discussed made by C. Bolzan and seconded by M. Alexander.

Rollcall Vote:

M. Alexander – yes	T. Currier – yes	Z. Bhuju – yes . Bolzan – yes	
D. Casamassima – yes	K. Petrone – yes	J. Horrigan – yes	W. Hodges – yes
J. McLean – yes	M. Ogden – yes	E. Clements – yes	

MOTION: Approve Mailer
VOTED: 11-0, Motion Passed.

b. **Press Release** – M. Odgen will add percentage rates to the press release and other amendments discussed. The Community Relations Sub-Committee will send out the press release.
c. **Digital Content** – K. Petrone reviewed the articles to be sent out via social media.
d. **Capital Planning Slides** – M. Alexander suggested adding pictures to tell the story of why we need these capital repairs.

G. **Proposal for Building Committee Charter** J. McLean informed the SC that the DCI/Budget Sub-Committee will become the Masconomet Building Committee (MBC) which will make recommendations to the SC to help decide which projects to spend the funding on. They will monitor capital projects that exceed $1.5 million. He also reviewed the scope of the MBC. Committee membership includes the 4 SC members currently on DCI, the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and 2 community members from each town. The selection process and terms (2 years) were reviewed. Voting rights and procedures were reviewed with each town receiving one full vote total. The specific activities were reviewed.
A Motion was made to approve the charter of the Masconomet Building Committee by C. Bolzan, seconded by E. Clements.

T. Currier informed the SC that the Middleton SB will be withholding support for the Warrant Articles at Town Meeting unless a member of the SB and FC are made a part of the MSB. They want 1 at large member from each committee in the Towns.
J. McLean stated that 1 vote per Town was recommended by other Town Government members and a smaller committee is easier to manage.
W. Hodges stated that it was understanding that Topsfield and Boxford support the MBC as it is structured.
M. Ogden stated that it appears that there has been a breakdown in communications at the Town level. M. Harvey and J. Sands have been sending information and being transparent and involving the towns in the Capital Planning as early as November, including 2 public meetings with Town officials. The point of the MBC is to bring experts to the committee, not public officials.
Z. Bhuju added that Topsfield had a town hall building committee made up of 5 appointed experts plus 3 non-voting members from select board and town government. Ultimately the SC would have the final vote on any MBC recommendations either way.
M. Alexander suggested the MBC bring the information and recommendation to the SC without a vote.
J. McLean informed the SC that the MBC will be monitoring capital projects, and the work is done under MA state laws.
D. Casamassima added that the communities are involved, and the MBC is advisory only and can provide additional research if needed with no voting capacity.
W. Hodges stated that the size of the MBC is important because it should not be too large, and the purpose is to make the work better and engage the towns in the process. He is opposed to increasing the size of the MBC.

M. Odgen added that engaging the experts with a size that is appropriate and is helping our students. Not every person engaged has the same "why".

Discussion followed regarding the size of the MBC and voting capacity and being an advisory committee. **C. Bolzan withdrew her motion for approval.**
The following was decided:

- Each member of MBC will have 1 vote.
- Votes on recommendations that reach the 50% threshold will proceed to the full SC for final approval; and
- Candidates approved by majority of DCI/Budget Sub-Committee members.

A Motion was made to approve the MBC Charter as amended by E. Clements, seconded by W. Hodges.
Rollcall Vote:

M. Alexander – yes	T. Currier – no	Z. Bhuju – yes.	Bolzan – yes
D. Casamassima – yes	K. Petrone – yes	J. Horrigan – yes	W. Hodges – yes
J. McLean – yes	M. Ogden – yes	E. Clements – yes	

MOTION: Approve Charter for MBC as amended
VOTED: 10-1, Motion Passed.

H. **<u>Superintendent's 2023-2024 Goals Report</u>** M. Ogden reviewed the contract clause of Supt. Harvey's contract regarding merit-based payments for significant progress in his agreed upon goals. There has been significant progress made with the completion of the strategic plan and implementation with staff, development of a staff plan and work to implement the capital plan.
A Motion was made to grant M. Harvey merit pay in the amount of $1,000 based upon his contract by M. Alexander, it was seconded by K. Petrone.

T. Currier expressed his concern with the implementation of the capital plan which he believes is impaired by lack of communication.
W. Hodges added that the SC members and Administration have done a lot of work with the SBs and FCs with the towns. We need to keep them informed so the SC is not surprised at the last minute.
J. McLean would like the goals to be clearly communicated.
Z. Bhuju spoke regarding the communication of the strategic plan to the Department Heads and how it will be implemented.
Rollcall Vote:

M. Alexander – yes	T. Currier – no	Z. Bhuju – yes	Bolzan – yes
D. Casamassima – yes	K. Petrone – yes	J. Horrigan – yes	W. Hodges – yes
J. McLean – yes	M. Ogden – yes	E. Clements – yes	

MOTION: Approve Merit-Based Pay for Supt. Harvey
VOTED: 10-1, Motion Passed.

I. **<u>Approve FY25-27 Student Opportunity Act Plan Submission</u>** M. Harvey informed the SC that the Student Opportunity Act Plan has been in existence for 7 years and this is the

second plan being submitted. This submission will enable Masco to receive the $100/student reimbursement Senator Tarr spoke about earlier.

A Motion was made to approve the FY25-27 Student Opportunity Act Plan as presented by C. Bolzan; it was seconded by M. Alexander.

Rollcall Vote:

M. Alexander – yes	T. Currier – yes	Z. Bhuju – yes.	Bolzan – yes
D. Casamassima – yes	K. Petrone – yes	J. Horrigan – yes	W. Hodges – yes
J. McLean – yes	M. Ogden – yes	E. Clements – yes	

MOTION: Approve FY25-27 Student Opportunity Act Plan
VOTED: 11-0, Motion Passed

J. **Approve CREST Request to Increase Capital Account Limit** The request is to increase the limit on the capital fund to pay for HVAC issue. This will not cost the towns any additional funding. CREST has the funds; they only need to increase the limit to get the project completed.

A Motion was made to approve the request to increase the CREST capital account limit by T. Currier, it was seconded by Z. Bhuju

Rollcall Vote:

M. Alexander – yes	T. Currier – yes	Z. Bhuju – yes.	Bolzan – yes
D. Casamassima – yes	K. Petrone – yes	J. Horrigan – yes	W. Hodges – yes
J. McLean – yes	M. Ogden – yes	E. Clements – yes	

MOTION: Approve CREST Capital Account Limit
VOTED: 11-0, Motion Passed.

K. Sub-Committee Reports

Community Relations – next open dialogue meeting is April 24th.
DCI/Budget – Nothing further.
Anti-Racism – Nothing further.
Policy – next meeting is April 24th.
Liaison Updates – Boxford has a private warrant article proposing to ban turf fields for 5 years. Middleton members to schedule a forum ASAP.
Turf Up – Nothing further.
Negotiations – met March 26th with MTA and presented an initial response to opening proposals and identified areas in agreement or close to an agreement. The next meeting is April 30th.

L. Consent Agenda

1. Approval of March 11, 2024, and March 20, 2024, Meeting Minutes.
2. 8 Warrants in the amount of $1,194,020.76 signed since March 20, 2024.
3. Approval DECA MEG grants.
4. Accept Football Booster Donation for Uniforms.

A Motion was made to approve the Consent Agenda as presented by M. Alexander. It was seconded by C. Bolzan.

Rollcall Vote:

M. Alexander – yes	T. Currier – yes	Z. Bhuju – yes.	Bolzan – yes
D. Casamassima – yes	K. Petrone – yes	J. Horrigan – yes	W. Hodges – yes
J. McLean – yes	M. Ogden – yes	E. Clements – yes	

MOTION: Approve Consent Agenda
VOTED: 11-0, Motion Passed.

The next meeting will be held April 24, 2024, at 7:00pm.
The meeting was adjourned by M. Ogden at 10:09pm.

Submitted By: _____ Approved: _____
Lynn Viselli, Recording Secretary 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. Rescind and Re-Vote Debt Authorization
3. FY25 Communication Plan Documents
4. Building Committee Charter Proposal
5. Superintendent Goals Report
6. FY25-27 Student Opportunity Act
7. Crest Capital Account Request
8. Consent Agenda
9. FY25 Budget Deliberation