

1 Mont Vernon School Board

2 Thursday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023

3 Meeting Minutes- Approved 02 08 2023

4 Attendees:

5 Administration: Interim Superintendent- Steven Chamberlin, Assistant Superintendent- Christine  
6 Landwehrle, SAU #39 Business Administrator- Amy Facey and Tom Lecklider- MVVS  
7 Principal.

8 Mont Vernon Village School Board: Chair- Sarah Lawrence, Peter Eckhoff, George Torres, and  
9 Kristen Clark.

10 Meeting Minutes: Danae A. Marotta

11 Public: Mont Vernon Community Members

12 Meeting Summary:

- 13 • The board moved to accept the consent agenda items 1. AMS December Principal's  
14 Report, 2. MVSD Dec. Facilities Update, 3. Kindergarten Science Unit, 4. Grade 1  
15 Science Unit, 5. Grade 2 Science Unit, 6. Grade 3 Science Unit, 7. Grade 4 Science Unit,  
16 8. Grade 5 Science Unit, 9. Grade 6 Science Unit, 10. July 2022 MVSD Treasurer's  
17 Report, 11. August 2022 MVSD Treasurer's Report, 12. Budget Transfer 2023 002, and  
18 13. December 1st, 2022 Draft Minutes.
- 19 • Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Christine Landwehrle, gave the board an update on the  
20 Science Curriculum that was included in the consent agenda.
- 21 • SAU #39 Business Administrator, Ms. Amy Facey, presented the FY 24 Draft III budget.  
22 the executive summary included the following:

23	<u>Budget Comparison*</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>
24	FY23 Operating Budget -> FY24 Proposed	\$476,200	8.1%
25	FY23 Operating Budget -> FY24 Default	\$393,054	6.7%
26	FY24 Default -> FY24 Proposed	\$83,146	1.4%

- 27 • The board had discussion on the Public Hearing Presentation Slides.
- 28 • The board motioned to approve the warrant articles as presented.

29  
30 I. Call to Order

31 **Chair of the Mont Vernon School Board, Ms. Saran Lawrence, called the meeting to order**  
32 **at 6:00PM.**

33 II. Public Comment I of II

34 No Public Comment

35 III. Consent Agenda

36 Ms. Lawrence noted the items in the Consent Agenda 1. AMS December Principal's Report, 2.  
37 MVSD Dec. Facilities Update, 3. Kindergarten Science Unit, 4. Grade 1 Science Unit, 5. Grade 2  
38 Science Unit, 6. Grade 3 Science Unit, 7. Grade 4 Science Unit, 8. Grade 5 Science Unit, 9.  
39 Grade 6 Science Unit, 10. July 2022 MVSD Treasurer's Report, 11. August 2022 MVSD  
40 Treasurer's Report, 12. Budget Transfer 2023 002, and 13. December 1st, 2022 Draft Minutes

41 Mr. Eckhoff asked about the Treasurer's Report and the payments made to people. He inquired if  
42 they could get more clarification on the items.

43 Ms. Facey responded that those are checks that are outstanding.

44 Ms. Clark added that she and Ms. Hinckley get the full detailed report in the manifest. Maybe  
45 there can be a threshold number where they can share that explanation.

46 Interim Superintendent, Mr. Steven Chamberlin, added that he wants to make sure that Mr.  
47 Eckhoff is comfortable with the information.

48 Ms. Lawrence asked for other comments or concerns.

49 She asked Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Christine Landwehrle, to explain the Science Units  
50 included in the Consent Agenda.

51 Ms. Landwehrle responded that they did deep science work a few years ago, so this is part of the  
52 refresh that they are doing to all of their curriculum documents. For K-4<sup>th</sup> Grade, their  
53 curriculum is aligned to one of the main resources which is Mystery Science. Mystery Science is  
54 aligned to NGSS. In 5<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> grade, there was deep work done by past AMS Principal, Dr.  
55 Bethany Bernasconi. They wanted to capture the changes and adjustments that they have made in  
56 collaboration with AMS. There were no major changes. They were able to purchase the hands-on  
57 materials for their students.

58 She noted that she is happy to answer questions.

59 Ms. Lawrence asked if there was going to be a request for science books in the future.

60 Ms. Landwehrle replied most likely not. The teachers have found out that the online resources  
61 better meet students needs and are more flexible. They are moving a little away from the  
62 textbook with hands on items such as dissecting pig hearts.

63 Mr. Eckhoff asked how quickly the teachers are able to incorporate real time weather events into  
64 the curriculum.

65 Ms. Landwehrle replied that there are intentional connections to the world such as the 4<sup>th</sup> grade  
66 solar cooker. The teachers are keeping that in mind and things come naturally. The standards in  
67 general are phenomenon based. It is called Mystery Science because the students are trying to  
68 understand the phenomena.

69 Mr. Lecklider responded that they have a number of teachers use Newsela for science and other  
70 things.

71 **Ms. Clark motioned to accept the consent agenda items 1. AMS December Principal's**  
 72 **Report, 2. MVSD Dec. Facilities Update, 3. Kindergarten Science Unit, 4. Grade 1 Science**  
 73 **Unit, 5. Grade 2 Science Unit, 6. Grade 3 Science Unit, 7. Grade 4 Science Unit, 8. Grade 5**  
 74 **Science Unit, 9. Grade 6 Science Unit, 10. July 2022 MVSD Treasurer's Report, 11. August**  
 75 **2022 MVSD Treasurer's Report, 12. Budget Transfer 2023 002, and 13. December 1st, 2022**  
 76 **Draft Minutes. Mr. Eckhoff seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

77 IV. FY 24 Budget Presentation Draft III

78 SAU #39 Business Administrator, Ms. Amy Facey added that this is your FY 24 Draft III budget  
 79 presentation but also your public hearing prep Public Hearing is scheduled for Wednesday,  
 80 January 11<sup>th</sup> here at the MVVS. You may want to think about who is going to present. She is  
 81 available to answer questions and make changes. This is the board's presentation.

82 She displayed **Article #2- Operating Budget warrant article.**

83 **Article 2. Shall the Mont Vernon School District raise and appropriate as an operating**  
 84 **budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations**  
 85 **voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as**  
 86 **amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling six million,**  
 87 **three hundred forty nine thousand, four hundred fifty dollars (\$6,349,450)? Should this**  
 88 **article be defeated, the default budget shall be six million two hundred sixty six thousand,**  
 89 **three hundred four dollars (\$6,266,304), which is the same as last year, with certain**  
 90 **adjustments required by previous action of the Mont Vernon School District or by law; or**  
 91 **the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and**  
 92 **XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only? Majority vote required.**

93 The language has been approved; the numbers can change.

94 She noted the summary of budget changes from draft II to draft III. The transfer to food service  
 95 (\$14,999) they do have fund balance for food service. One of the unknowns is Special Education  
 96 Transportation they budgeted high based on their current provider. They went through a bid  
 97 process and received one proposal, not from the current vendor and they were concerned about  
 98 the cost. They had a meeting with how the new company is doing the costing. They are looking  
 99 at an increase of \$3,577 for a total of a net reduction of (\$11,422).

100 Mr. Eckhoff asked where the bulk of the food comes from.

101 Ms. Facey replied that there are a lot of vendors for foods. They are looking at staffing and  
 102 making sure that they are utilizing the staffing appropriately.

103 Mr. Eckhoff noted that he knows schools that buy in bulk.

104 Mr. Torres asked if they are required to take the lowest bid or best provider.

105 Ms. Facey asked if this was for the Special Education transportation.

106 Mr. Torres replied yes, but for other things.

107 Mr. Chamberlin responded that this is the first bid for Special Education Transportation.

108 Ms. Facey added that they had three providers at the bid meeting and the one company that put  
109 in the bid is a very professional organization.

110 She displayed the Executive Summary.

111 Budget Comparison\* \$ Change % Change

112 FY23 Operating Budget -> FY24 Proposed \$476,200 8.1%

113 FY23 Operating Budget -> FY24 Default \$393,054 6.7%

114 FY24 Default -> FY24 Proposed \$83,146 1.4%

115 She displayed the major stories:

- 116 • Increase in Student Services Costs
  - 117 ○ Transportation
  - 118 ○ Student Need
- 119 • Increase in AMS Tuition
  - 120 ○ Based on # Students
  - 121 ○ Average Cost per Pupil
- 122 • Competitive Wage Adjustment for Non-Union Employees
  - 123 ○ Food Service
  - 124 ○ Facilities
  - 125 ○ Office Staff
- 126 • Inflation
  - 127 ○ Gas Prices
  - 128 ○ Utilities
  - 129 ○ Facilities Service Contracts
- 130 • Risk Management-Investment in Capital Reserves
  - 131 ○ Facilities
  - 132 ○ Special Education
  - 133 ○ Health and Dental Insurance

134 Salaries and Benefit budget assumptions.

- 135 ○ MVEA Contract in 3rd Year, expires 6/30/2025
- 136 ○ 5% Market Adjustment for Non-Union Employees

137 \* Health and Dental Insurance Employer Contribution Rate

- 138 ○ 4.1% Increase for Health Insurance
- 139 ○ 1.5% Increase for Dental Insurance

140 \*\* NH Retirement Employer Contribution Rate FY24-FY25

- 141 ○ 1.38% Decrease from 21.02% to 19.64% for Teachers

- 142       ○ 0.53% Decrease from 14.06% to 13.53% for Non-Teachers
- 143 She displayed the enrollment projections based on the 2022 NESDEC report.
- 144 Principal Lecklider noted that they will be up to 220 by mid- February.
- 145 Ms. Facey displayed the staffing levels.
- 146 She displayed the budget by category- Transportation, Student Services, Facilities,
- 147 Administration, Curriculum, Food Service and Technology. There are notes underneath.
- 148 Mr. Torres inquired if Special Education was in Student Services.
- 149 Ms. Facey replied yes.
- 150 She reviewed the default calculation.

151	<u>FY23 Adopted Budget</u>	<u>\$5,923,250</u>	<u>% of FY23</u>
152	Remove Warrant Article	(\$50,000)	
153	<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>\$5,873,250</u>	
154	Student Services (including Transportation)	\$210,923	3.6%
155	Tuition	\$102,582	1.7%
156	Salaries/Benefits Contractual-Reg. Ed.	\$50,966	0.9%
157	SAU #39 Apportionment	\$29,903	0.5%
158	Misc.	-\$1,320	0%
159	<u>Subtotal Changes to Default</u>	<u>\$393,054</u>	<u>6.7%</u>
160	<u>FY24 Default Calculation</u>	<u>\$6,266,304</u>	

161 She reviewed the proposed budget calculation.

162	<u>FY24 Default Calculation</u>	<u>\$6,266,304</u>	<u>% Change</u>
163	Salary/Benefit Adjustments (non-union)	\$59,887	1%
164	Transportation-Reg. Ed.	\$13,790	.2%
165	Facilities	\$16,608	.2%
166	Misc.	(\$7,139)	0%
167	Subtotal Changes Default to Proposed	\$83,146	1.4%
168	<u>FY24 Proposed Budget</u>	<u>\$6,349,450</u>	

169 Mr. Torres questioned when the last time they operated in a default budget.

- 170 Ms. Landwehrle replied 5 to 6 years ago, past MVVS Principal, Mr. John Schuttinger, had done  
171 a lot of community outreach and the board has kept a tight budget.
- 172 Ms. Facey displayed the budget composition pie chart.
- 173 Ms. Facey explained the projected revenue.
- 174 Ms. Lawrence noted that they heard at their community listening session that people want to hear  
175 the honest truth about the revenue.
- 176 Mr. Chamberlin commented that he can do a memo for the board regarding the tax rate  
177 stabilization fund.
- 178 Ms. Facey asked if they wanted to discuss this at the public hearing.
- 179 Ms. Lawrence noted that it would be helpful to get the information out to the community.
- 180 Ms. Clark asked if that would be introducing another warrant article.
- 181 Ms. Lawrence responded that it opens the board up to have that conversation transparently.
- 182 Mr. Torres remarked that they have a Capital Reserve Fund, so the concept is there.
- 183 Mr. Chamberlin added that the town uses it, and it gives the school the same ability. At one of  
184 the budget meetings, he did reach out to one of the Selectboard members.
- 185 Mr. Torres asked if it would be tied to specific expenditures.
- 186 Mr. Chamberlin responded that the statute changed since its inception, it now opens up to be an  
187 emergency fund. He will work on a memo this weekend.
- 188 Ms. Facey asked if they want to introduce this to the public.
- 189 Mr. Torres added that less is more.
- 190 Mr. Eckhoff remarked that he believes that they are going to need a slide with bullet points  
191 explaining what it is, how it works and operates.
- 192 Ms. Lawrence noted that she can add that to a letter to the community.
- 193 Ms. Facey displayed the projected tax rate impact-budget.
- 194 Mr. Torres noted that people will question the revenues.
- 195 Ms. Facey reviewed the capital reserve fund.
- 196 Property Maintenance Fund
- 197 ○ Balance: \$116,000
  - 198 ○ Recommended Contribution Request: \$35,000 (\$0.11 tax impact\*)
  - 199 ○ Funding Source: Unassigned Fund Balance
  - 200 ○ Contribution maintains Adopted Facility Plan

201 Students w/Disabilities Fund

- 202 ○ Balance: \$32,000
- 203 ○ Recommended Contribution Request: \$20,000 (\$0.06 tax impact\*)
- 204 ○ Funding Source: Unassigned Fund balance
- 205 ○ Reduces Risk: Provides Support for Unanticipated Need

206 Health and Dental Insurance Fund (New)

- 207 ○ Recommended Contribution Request: \$15,000 (\$0.05 tax impact\*)
- 208 ○ Funding Source: Unassigned Fund balance
- 209 ○ Reduces Risk: Provides Support for Unanticipated Plan Changes

210 Tuition Contingency Fund

- 211 ○ Balance: \$33,000
- 212 ○ Recommended Contribution Request: \$0

213 \*No New Tax Impact as Revenue Comes from Prior Year (FY23) Fund Balance

214 Mr. Eckhoff asked why the tax impact is not included.

215 Ms. Facey added that it is coming from UFB.

216 Ms. Lawrence remarked that they were that transparent in the past and it will come up as a  
217 question. She would rather uphold their transparency.

218 Mr. Chamberlin responded that they do not list that on the warrant article.

219 Ms. Lawrence asked if they had that information in the presentation last year.

220 Ms. Facey responded that they had that at the deliberative session.

221 Mr. Torres added that he would not want to potentially omit something. It is short-sited thinking,  
222 the total impact is negligible, it is a rounding issue.

223 Mr. Chamberlin suggested that they add a bullet underneath for impact and risk.

224 Ms. Lawrence added that they should be very clear in their explanation.

225 Mr. Torres commented that this is a prudent expenditure.

226 Ms. Facey displayed **Article 3 – Contribution to Property Maintenance Fund**

227 **Shall the Mont Vernon School District raise and appropriate the sum of up to thirty five**  
228 **thousand dollars (\$35,000) to be added to the School Property Maintenance Expendable**  
229 **Trust Fund previously established in March 2007? This sum to come from the June 30,**  
230 **2023 unassigned fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2023. No amount**  
231 **to be raised from new taxation.**

232 **Majority vote required.**

233 Ms. Facey displayed the Long Term Facilities Funding Plan.

- 234 ○ FY22 Roof Replacement-\$207,000
- 235 ○ FY23 Phase 1 HVAC Duct Replacement-\$88,000
- 236 ○ FY25 Phase 2 HVAC Duct Replacement-\$100,000
- 237 ○ FY28 Replace Playground Equipment-\$100,000
- 238 ○ FY31 Replace Fire Alarm System-\$140,000
- 239 ○ Adjust based on Facilities Plan as required
- 240 ○ Expand Facilities Plan (ADA Ramp, Water System Design, HVAC Equipment, etc.)

241 Mr. Torres asked when phase II was scheduled.

242 Ms. Facey replied that it is summer work. There are unknown variables with other work. He does  
243 have that bid out for phase II. It is a timing and a prioritization.

244 Mr. Eckhoff commented that we are back up to \$50k next year for FY 25. He does not see the  
245 economy changing so rapidly.

246 Mr. Chamberlin added that they are trying not to go below \$100k. They are also looking hard at  
247 fund balance.

248 Mr. Torres mentioned that they can reassess next year.

249 Ms. Facey added that Mr. Preston does a good job at looking for ways to save money.

250 She displayed **Article #4 Mont Vernon Village School Renovation/ Addition.**

251 **Shall the Mont Vernon School District raise and appropriate the sum of up to sixty**  
252 **thousand dollars (\$60,000) for the purpose of developing an Architectural and Engineering**  
253 **Study including a conceptual design, program study, cost estimate, and site review for a**  
254 **renovation/addition to the Mont Vernon Village School? This sum to come from the June**  
255 **30, 2023 unassigned fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2023. No**  
256 **amount to be raised from new taxation. This special article is a special warrant article per**  
257 **RSA 32:3 VI (d) and RSA 32:7 V.**

258 **Majority vote required.**

259 Mr. Eckhoff remarked that they should add the enrollment slide. He believes that people will be  
260 shocked with the 8.1% increase and suggested that they lead with the revenue.

261 Mr. Torres commented that it needs to come across that there is not much that they can do with  
262 the budget.

263 Ms. Clark commented that the Major Stories should come in the beginning of the presentation.

264 Ms. Lawrence mentioned that she heard from residents what is coming their way and how they  
265 will be impacted. It is just feedback that they have received.

266 Ms. Clark mentioned that they need to explain the context as much as possible.



267 Ms. Lawrence commented that they have obligations that they are trying to meet and have staff  
268 that are underpaid.

269 Mr. Chamberlin responded yes; this is 8.1% to continue a proven public education approach in a  
270 very small town. You found a strong public system and will need to explain that this is what we  
271 need to maintain. That is the story and there are storms. If we fund the reserves, then we can  
272 manage the storms in the future.

273 Ms. Lawrence added that she does not like the number, but it does not make her feel  
274 uncomfortable because this is solid. They have done a good job with the staff with where the  
275 budget needs to be.

276 Mr. Chamberlin suggested that they change the name from “Major Stories” to “The Story”.

277 Mr. Torres commented that he would like people to know that this is a prudent budget. it is  
278 important to tell the taxpayers that they are keeping their staffing level the same.

279 Ms. Clark suggested a bullet point.

280 Ms. Lawrence mentioned that they are collecting feedback and will email Ms. Facey.

281 Ms. Facey asked if they want to move the Executive Summary to the end.

282 Mr. Chamberlin noted that they would expect budget first.

283 Ms. Facey reviewed **Article 5–Students with Disabilities Fund**

284 **Shall the Mont Vernon School District raise and appropriate the sum of up to twenty**  
285 **thousand dollars (\$20,000) to be added to the Mont Vernon School District Students with**  
286 **Disabilities Capital Reserve Fund established in March 2016? This sum to come from the**  
287 **June 30, 2023 unassigned fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2023. No**  
288 **amount to be raised from new taxation.**

289 **Majority vote required.**

290 Ms. Facey reviewed **Article 6- –Health and Dental Insurance Fund**

291 **Shall the Mont Vernon School District establish a Health and Dental Insurance Capital**  
292 **Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for unanticipated health and dental**  
293 **insurance payments and to raise and appropriate the sum of up to fifteen thousand dollars**  
294 **(\$15,000) to be placed in this fund? Further, to name the Mont Vernon School Board as**  
295 **agents to expend from said fund. This sum to come from the June 30, 2023 unassigned fund**  
296 **balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2023. No amount to be raised from new**  
297 **taxation.**

298 **Majority Vote Required.**

299 Ms. Clark suggested that they should speak to the scope of the Renovation/Addition.

300 Ms. Landwehrle commented that they may need an addition no matter what.

301 Ms. Lawrence noted that she will collect board feedback.

302 **Mr. Torres motioned to approve the warrant articles as presented. Ms. Clark seconded the**  
303 **motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

304 V. Deliberative Session Discussion

305 Ms. Facey remarked that she will have slides and in the past they did have the Superintendent  
306 speak.

307 Mr. Chamberlin replied that he can do a quick State of the State.

308 Ms. Facey added that is for Deliberative not Public Hearing.

309 Mr. Chamberlin remarked that Souhegan and Amherst School Districts have received a Tax Cap  
310 Warrant proposal.

311 Ms. Facey added that the percentage does not change.

312 Mr. Chamberlin added that this is more of a heads up. You will be sending students to a school  
313 with a cap. It has its own public hearing schedule with its own specific statute.

314 The board thanked Ms. Facey and Mr. Chamberlin.

315 VI. First Reading Policy

316 Ms. Lawrence commented that in past practice they usually use this as a second reading.

317 Mr. Torres suggested that they table this till the next meeting.

318 Ms. Lawrence noted that they will be holding community listening sessions at the Wilkins  
319 School on Jan 24<sup>th</sup> 6PM- Educational and Instruction, Jan 25<sup>th</sup> 6pm- Safety and Town Benefit,  
320 and Feb 1<sup>st</sup> 6PM- Financing.

321 VII. Public Comment II of II

322 No Public Comment

323 VIII. Meeting Adjourned

324 **Ms. Clark motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:34PM. Mr. Eckhoff seconded the motion.**  
325 **The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**