

Minutes

Deliberative Session Meeting for Mont Vernon School District

Wednesday, February 6th, 2019

Mont Vernon, NH

Attendees:

Administrative Team: Superintendent- Adam Steel, Assistant Superintendent- Christine Landwehrle, John Schuttinger- MVVS Principal, and Bruce Chakrin- Director of Technology

Mont Vernon School Board: Thomas Driscoll-Chair, Sarah Lawrence- Vice Chair, Peter Eckhoff- Secretary, Kim Roberge and Stephen O'Keefe

Mont Vernon School District Moderator: Peter King, 36 Kendall Hill Road, Mont Vernon NH.

Mont Vernon School District Clerk: Sue Leger

School District Attorney: Thomas Barry Esq. The Stein Law Firm, PLLC, One Barberry Lane, Concord, NH.

Minute Taker: Danae Marotta

Public (speakers or commenters): Nancy Curry, 47 Spring Hill Road, Mont Vernon NH, Eileen Naber, 14 Beech Hill Road, Mont Vernon, NH, Charline Brown, 7 Daland Circle, Mont Vernon, NH, Lorri Hayes, 4 Cranes Crossing, Mont Vernon, NH, JoAnn Kitchel 13 North Main Street, Mont Vernon NH, Jessica Hinkley, 13 Rangeway Road, Mont Vernon, NH, Anne Dodd, 26 Mason Road, Mont Vernon, NH, Andrew Brown, 7 Daland Circle, Mont Vernon, NH, Autumn Grdina, 4 Pinkham Avenue, Mont Vernon, NH, and Amy Wyman, 4 Wallace Lane, Mont Vernon, NH, and Howard Brown, 2 Blood Road, Mont Vernon, NH.

There were 31 registered Mont Vernon, NH voters in attendance.

I. Deliberative Session Call to Order

Moderator, Mr. Peter King, called the 2019 Deliberative Session of the Mont Vernon School District to Order at 7:00PM.

II. Deliberative Session

Mr. King welcomed the public adding that it was their meeting. The Mont Vernon School District follows the guidelines of Senate Bill 2 (SB2) which are outlined in RSA 40:13.

30 The Deliberative Session is the first session of the annual meeting and consists of explanation,
 31 discussion, and debate of each article on the warrant. All warrant articles that are presented
 32 tonight including articles that are amended, are then placed on the official ballot and moved to
 33 the second session of the annual meeting for a final vote by ballot on March 12th 2019.

34 He noted that there was no Budget Committee this year and thanked the PTA for the drinks and
 35 snacks.

36 He then introduced The Mont Vernon School Board, Ms. Sue Leger, Mont Vernon School
 37 District Clerk and Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Adam Steel.

38 Superintendent Steel introduced legal counsel, Mr. Thomas Barry, Assistant Superintendent, Ms.
 39 Christine Landwehrle, Principal of the MVVS, Mr. John Schuttinger and Director of
 40 Technology, Mr. Bruce Chakrin.

41 Mr. King discussed that only Mont Vernon registered voters are entitled to participate in the
 42 meeting and vote. This does not include SAU and school district staff and employees necessary
 43 to the meeting. He added that the Moderator's Rules of Procedure are on the back of the Voter's
 44 Guide.

45 Article 1. Election of Officers

46 ***Article 1. Election of Officers (voting by official ballot March 12th 2019) To the following***
 47 ***school district offices:***

- 48 ***a) To choose two (2) School Board Members for the ensuing three (3) years.***
- 49 ***b) To choose one (1) School District Moderator for the ensuing one (1) year.***
- 50 ***c) To choose one (1) School District Clerk for the ensuing one (1) year and***
- 51 ***d) To choose one (1) School District Treasurer for the ensuing one (1) year.***

52 He then noted that there is nothing to discuss and moved on to Article #2.

53 Article #2 Operating Budget

54 ***Article #2 Operating Budget: "Shall the Mont Vernon Village School District raise and***
 55 ***appropriate as an Operating Budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles***
 56 ***and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the***
 57 ***warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling***
 58 ***five million, one hundred one hundred sixty thousand, five hundred and fifty-seven dollars***
 59 ***(\$5,160,557)? Should this article be defeated the default budget shall be four million, nine***
 60 ***hundred and sixty-seven thousand, nine hundred and ninety-three dollars (\$4,967, 993),***
 61 ***which is the same as last year with certain adjustments required by previous action of the***
 62 ***Mont Vernon School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting,***
 63 ***in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget***
 64 ***only? Majority vote required."***

65 *Recommended by the Mont Vernon School Board (5-0)*

66 *Estimated Tax Impact of passing this article is: -0.52 per thousand.*

67 *Estimated tax Impact of not passing this article is -\$1.35 per thousand.*

68 **Mr. Thomas Driscoll motioned to place Article #2 on the ballot as printed. Ms. Kim**
69 **Roberge seconded the motion.**

70 Mr. King asked if the Board would like to give a presentation on Article #2

71 Mr. Driscoll added that Superintendent Steel has a presentation for the public.

72 Superintendent Steel noted that he has a presentation on the State of their School.

73 He began his presentation by discussing that there are a number of ASD Kindergarteners here at
74 the MVVS. One of those families approached him to ask if their child can stay at the MVVS and
75 go on to 1st grade. He responded by saying that he would have to talk to both the Amherst
76 School District Board and the Mont Vernon School Board. The family replied by adding that
77 they were so impressed by the school that they would sell their home in Amherst and move to
78 Mont Vernon just to make sure that their child remains in this school.

79 He then emphasized that they have a wonderful school here in Mont Vernon.

80 He then showed the graph, how the students are doing on the NWEA Assessment, K-10 in the
81 SAU #39, it is the largest assessment in the world. If he looked at just the MVVS, it would show
82 that they are truly doing something remarkable with their students.

83 Superintendent Steel explained the chart showing NWEA Students Hitting Growth Targets. He
84 described how on the left you see the Lowest Quartile, noting that they are far exceeding the
85 expectations in Reading, 74, and Math, 78, with the norm being 50. The Middle Two Quartiles
86 are also above the norm, and the highest with Reading, 52 and Math 57. The Highest Quartile are
87 at, 41 in Reading and 47 in Math, respectively.

88 He then explained the Growth Summary Reading and Growth Summary Math information at
89 each grade level. He discussed that there is a green dot showing the Projected (Mean) growth, the
90 Blue Bars are the observed growth

91 He then explained that there are soft skills that employers are looking for and they are preparing
92 their students for jobs that don't exist yet.

93 He finalized by adding that they have a great school and he is proud to be a part of it.

94 Chair of the Mont Vernon School Board, Mr. Thomas Driscoll then gave an Executive
95 Summary:

- 96 * Default Budget Calculation is a reduction of 3.7% from FY 19
- 97 * Total appropriations in all warrant articles is a reduction of \$291 over FY 19.
- 98 * Tuition (both out of district and to ASD) reduce the default by \$297,710
- 99 * Two classroom teaching positions add \$155,187, but are offset by the reduction of two
100 paraprofessionals in the amount of \$42,963.
- 101 * A full-time case manager is split between the default and the proposed budgets. That is a
102 decision that the board made. He then discussed how they came to that conclusion.
- 103 He then showed a graph explaining the Appropriation Overview: Budget and Warrant Articles.
104 As you can see it is a flat budget.
- 105 He then explained the Default Calculation, noting that there are new laws. There is a reduction in
106 Special Education Tuition (-\$233,210), and reduction to ASD Tuition (-\$64,500), the additions
107 are SAU #39 costs (\$5,079), CBA Increases/Turnover (\$14,981), Health Insurance (\$ 22,052),
108 Medicaid Payback (\$25,290) and the 0.5 Special Education Teacher at (\$42,494). There is a
109 reduction of everything else in the amount of (\$5,041).
- 110 He then explained the Proposed Budget Calculation. He added that they did remove two
111 paraprofessionals, the Regular Ed Para and a Special Ed Para. He added that there is no longer a
112 need for the Special Ed Para. He further explained that they did have additions.
- 113 Mr. Driscoll then reviewed the enrollment trends.
- 114 He then went to the Projected Staffing Levels. You can see the impact at the larger grades, it is
115 an important part of their schools to have the smaller class sizes.
- 116 He then went to the Certified Staffing.
- 117 He then moved to the Non-Certified Staffing they are reducing that to Classroom Assistant to 0
118 and the Special Education Aid is not needed.
- 119 He then reviewed the Major Stories noting that enrollment shifts have led to increased staffing
120 requirements, shifting special education to in-district servicing of students reduces out-of-district
121 tuition, but increases staffing costs, still a net budget decrease, and transportation contract
122 increases cannot be included in the default budget.
- 123 Mr. King then noted that he had a question about the additional 6th Grade Teacher in the amount
124 of \$84,988.
- 125 Superintendent Steel replied that \$84,988, is salary plus benefits.
- 126 Moderator, Mr. Peter King, then opened it up to questions from the public.

127 Ms. Nancy Curry, 47 Spring Hill Road, Mont Vernon NH, asked about the removal of the
128 regular education paraprofessional from the Kindergarten program. She added that someone had
129 mentioned that there are some difficult classes and agreed that is true. Sometimes you need more
130 than one person in the room to keep everyone safe and doing what they are supposed to.

131 She then emphasized that the enrollment is a big variable.

132 Ms. Curry recommended in that they add in the regular or special ed paraprofessional stating that
133 it is necessary.

134 Mr. King noted that there are two Kindergarten teachers.

135 Ms. Curry replied that she knows that they have two Kindergarten teachers. In Amherst, they
136 have a paraprofessional for each Kindergarten classroom. Here, they have two Kindergarten
137 teachers and a shared paraprofessional.

138 Mr. Driscoll explained that they looked at that and have a limited budget. It is important for them
139 to add two proposed teaching positions back in. In speaking for himself, and not the Board, they
140 are quick to react. This year, when they needed an extra Kindergarten teacher they found a way
141 to make that work. If Principal Schuttinger came to the Board with a concern, they would find
142 way to make that happen.

143 Ms. Roberge remarked, just to be clear there is no motion on the floor at this time. With SB2,
144 you are discussing a dollar amount to increase or decrease the budget. It is then up to the
145 Administration and the Board to make a decision in order to meet the needs of all the students.

146 Mr. Driscoll noted that it can change if the enrollments change in different grades.

147 Mr. King asked for additional comments from the public.

148 Ms. Eileen Naber, 14 Beech Hill Road, Mont Vernon NH, asked about the Tax Impact on page
149 11 of the pink Voter's Guide. She then asked about the revenue and where does it come from.

150 Superintendent Steel replied a portion of it is the MS 26 there is a Revenue page and it lists by
151 line item.

152 Ms. Roberge replied it's on Page 6 and 8, and its estimated.

153 Ms. Naber asked about Adequacy Aid.

154 Superintendent Steel replied, yes, it comes from the State although roughly half comes from the
155 State Wide Educational Property Tax, in your tax bill, which is local.

156 Ms. Charline Brown, 7 Daland Circle, Mont Vernon NH, commented that she appreciates the
157 Administration and the Board presenting a responsible budget, and understands the challenges
158 that they are facing. She was not able to be at the Public Hearing and wanted to comment in

159 regards to the regular education paraprofessional position. The Kindergarten class is extremely
160 high performing and part of that success is due to the regular education paraprofessional position
161 and the support they provide.

162 Second, it is rarer for the Kindergarten Special Education students to be identified as Special
163 Education. They work to figure out whether it is exposure to skills vs. a true learning disability.
164 The regular education para acts as a special education para for students that have not been
165 identified. She added that you have kids with a variety of needs in any kindergarten class.

166 Ms. Lorri Hayes, 4 Cranes Crossing, Mont Vernon NH, asked what the regular ed para does vs. a
167 special ed para.

168 Superintendent Steel explained that a Special Ed Paraprofessional is assigned to service specific
169 student related to their Individual Education Plan (IEP). He/ she might be assigned to one student
170 all the time or several students at different times during the week.

171 A Regular Education Paraprofessional is assisting the entire class. He then asked them to
172 imagine 20 kids going to recess in the winter, it takes a lot to get them ready to go. The job is
173 supporting those sorts of issues.

174 Ms. Hayes asked if the Regular Ed Para also corrects homework, assisting the teacher and
175 possibly doing quite a bit educationally.

176 Superintendent Steel replied, yes.

177 Ms. Hayes asked if they can help out in 5th grade.

178 Superintendent Steel replied, yes, it is possible.

179 Ms. Hayes commented that she is not understanding the reason why they are taking away that
180 position. She emphasized that the need of that person does not go away even if you hire an
181 additional Kindergarten Teacher.

182 Ms. Roberge replied that it wasn't there previously. She added if you look, the position has not
183 been in place for three years. That is when they were reducing the teachers.

184 Ms. Hayes remarked that she doesn't want to lose the regular paraprofessional.

185 She then asked when can she motion to add the amount of \$23,012 back into the Proposed
186 Budget.

187 Mr. Driscoll explained that the position was put in to help the first grade teacher and they are not
188 saying that there aren't benefits.

189 Ms. Hayes asked if they were thinking of a Tutor position to help those with special needs during
190 the day in small groups.

191 Ms. Roberge replied that they do have a Math Coach/Interventionist and a Reading Specialist
192 and it is a full-time position.

193 Ms. Hayes then asked what would the tax impact be if they added back \$23,012 back into the
194 budget.

195 Superintendent Steel replied that estimated Tax Impact of passing this article is (-0.52), he
196 already checked with MVSD School Clerk, Ms. Sue Leger. With that addition, the estimated Tax
197 Impact would be (-0.43) minus forty-three cents and still a negative budget.

198 **Ms. Lorri Hayes motioned to add \$23,012 to the FY 20 Budget to total \$5,183,569. Ms.**
199 **Joann Kitchel, 13 North Main Street, Mont Vernon NH seconded the motion.**

200 Moderator, Mr. Peter King, called for a discussion on the amended amount.

201 Ms. Jessica Hinkley, 13 Rangeway Road, Mont Vernon NH, asked about the guarantee that the
202 money will go to that Kindergarten Paraprofessional Position.

203 Mr. Driscoll replied, no, but it is good to hear that feedback and they will take that into
204 consideration.

205 Mr. King repeated the motion from Ms. Hayes to add \$23,012 to the FY 20 Budget to total
206 \$5,183,569. Ms. Joann Kitchel, 13 North Main Street, Mont Vernon NH, seconded the motion.

207 **Mr. King called for a vote.**

208 **The motion failed.**

209 Ms. Anne Dodd, 26 Mason Road, Mont Vernon, remarked that she is concerned about the Bus
210 Transportation would like to motion to add \$14,805 to the default budget.

211 Mr. King replied that you can only motion to increase the proposed budget not the default.

212 Ms. Roberge noted that it is a concern but they could not even put it as a warrant article.

213 Mr. King explained that they are not paying \$14,000 for the busses, it is for the Transportation
214 Contracts. The default budget law has changed this year.

215 Ms. Dodd asked what are they using for an average home cost.

216 Superintendent Steel replied, \$300,000.

217 Mr. King then asked the public for additional comments or questions.

218 There were no further comments or questions.

219 Mr. King then instructed the Clerk to place Article #2: Operating Budget on the ballot as written.

220 Article #3 Roof Contribution to CRF

221 Mr. King then read Article #3 *“Shall the Mont Vernon School District raise and appropriate*
 222 *fifty-thousand dollars (\$50,000) to be added to the School Property Maintenance Expendable*
 223 *Trust Fund established in March 2007. With said sum to come from the year-end Unassigned*
 224 *Fund Balance (surplus) if available on June 30th 2019? Majority Vote required”.*

225 *Recommended by the Mont Vernon School Board (5-0)*

226 *Estimated Tax Impact of passing this article is \$0.00 per thousand.*

227 *Estimated Tax Impact of not passing this article is -0.19 per thousand.*

228 **Mr. Thomas Driscoll motioned to place Article #3 on the ballot as printed. Ms. Kim**
 229 **Roberge seconded the motion.**

230 Mr. King asked Mr. Driscoll if the Board would like to speak to this Article.

231 **Mr. Andrew Brown, 7 Daland Circle, Mont Vernon NH, motioned to restrict**
 232 **reconsideration for Article #2. Operating Budget. Mr. Howard Brown seconded the**
 233 **motion.**

234 Mr. Driscoll then explained that they are anticipating a roof replacement in FY21-FY22 which is
 235 projected to cost \$300,000. This year in Board goals they asked the administration to prepare a
 236 long-range plan for their school and infrastructure. With the goal to continue level funding for
 237 these larger projects in a similar manner to the roof. This plan will include major items such as
 238 the ventilation, playground equipment, and fire alarm upgrades.

239 He finalized the tax impact with the proposed budget on an average home of \$300,000.

240 Mr. King asked for questions or comments on Article 3.

241 Mr. Howard Brown, 2 Blood Road Mont Vernon NH, asked how much are they anticipating for
 242 surplus.

243 Superintendent Steel replied, \$400,000.

244 Mr. Brown asked if they have thought of taking that money for the roof. He then suggested that
 245 they do it this year.

246 Ms. Roberge explained that they don't think it needs to be done right away and it is a better to
 247 give back the money to the taxpayers. She noted that the Souhegan Cooperative School District's
 248 Budget is much larger than the MVVS Budget.

- 249 Mr. King asked for any comments or questions on Article 3.
- 250 There were no further comments or questions from the public.
- 251 He then instructed the Clerk to place Article 3: CRF Contribution, on the ballot as written.
- 252 He then asked if anyone from the public had any questions or comments before they adjourn.
- 253 Ms. Anne Dodd, 26 Mason Road, Mont Vernon NH, emphasized that everyone should go home
254 and tell their friends and neighbors to support the budget.
- 255 Mr. Peter King thanked Ms. Naber for her work noting that she is one of three, Trustees of the
256 Trust Fund.
- 257 He then encouraged residents to run for School Board and thanked them for their attendance
258 tonight.
- 259 Ms. Autumn Grdina, 4 Pinkham Avenue, Mont Vernon NH, asked what is the plan for the
260 highest quartile students.
- 261 Superintendent Steel replied that they are going through as Strategic Planning process over the
262 next 6 months, it started last week and will continue through June of this year. He noted that it
263 might mean that school looks different in the future. He emphasized that they want to support all
264 of their learners.
- 265 Ms. Amy Wyman, 4 Wallace Lane, Mont Vernon NH, noted that she attended the first Battelle
266 for Kids Strategic Planning session. She would like to be at the next one, but it conflicts with the
267 Public Hearing for the Mont Vernon Town Budget.
- 268 Superintendent Steel noted that Ms. Roberge has told him about that previously and gave his
269 apologies.
- 270 XI. Close Deliberative Session
- 271 **Moderator, Mr. Peter King, closed the Deliberative Session at 8:26PM.**
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