

ADVISORY BUDGET COMMITTEE

TOWN OF MADISON

January 5, 2021

MINUTES

**Members Present:** Chairman Force, Ned Rogerson, Steve Bartlett, Doug McAllister, Tino Fernandes and School Board Representative Mike Brooks.

**Others Present:** None.

**Special Note:** Unfortunately, Madison TV was not able to attend this meeting.

**When and Where Posted:** Town Hall upper & lower bulletin boards and Madison & Silver Lake Post Offices on December 28, 2020.

**Meeting Called to Order** – By Chairman Force at 6:02PM.

Chairman Force welcomed our new Madison Advisory Budget Committee member, Tino Fernandes. Although Dr. Fernandes is an Alternate Member, he voted tonight in place of Nicole Nordlund.

The Committee proceeded to review the Madison School District's 2021 School Warrant Articles. It was noted that Article 1 and Article 4 were not applicable to the Madison A.B.C.

**ARTICLE 2: Shall the School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$7,170,464.69? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$7,154,144.25 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the School District or by law or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.**

With only a 1.69% increase in the proposed operating budget over last year, the Advisory Budget Committee unanimously recommended this appropriation.

Article 2 was **Recommended** by a vote of 6-0-0

**ARTICLE 3: Shall the voters of the Madison School District adopt a school administrative unit budget of \$710,513 for the 2020-2021 school year in which \$249,285 is assigned to the school budget of this district? This year's adjusted budget of \$702,724 with \$246,553 assigned to the School District budget will be adopted if the article does not receive a majority vote of all the district voters voting in this administrative unit.**

With a slight decrease being proposed from last year's budget, five Committee members agreed that this appropriation was reasonable. Bartlett voted No on this Article because he would like to see a cooperative school district arrangement in the near future.

Article 3 was **Recommended** by a vote of 5-1-0

**ARTICLE 5: To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 to be placed in the capital reserve fund previously established for the purpose of educating educationally disabled children.**

McAllister asked why more funds were needed when this Reserve account had a \$100,000+ balance. Brooks, Rogerson and Force each gave reasons why adequate funding in this account is so important.: Families with special needs children moving into town during the school year, the exceptionally high cost of special education for students and federal/state mandates that dictate essential services to educationally disabled children.

Article 5 was **Recommended** by a vote of 6-0-0

***ARTICLE 6: To see if the Madison School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 to be placed in the Building Capital Reserve Fund previously established for the purpose of capital repairs.***

Brooks mentioned that he helped craft this Article and Article 7 for the School Board. Based on the Madison School's long term Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), he felt this was an appropriate amount for next year. The problem, as strongly expressed by the majority of Committee Members, was that no one has had an opportunity to adequately review this CIP to better understand the timing of capital improvement needs of our school district. The CIP was not provided to our Committee in advance to study and the document was not available on the School's website. Our message to the Madison School Board: Please provide all the appropriate documents to our Committee that support your budget proposals so that we can make well informed decisions. Brooks recommended this Article, McAllister and Bartlett voted NO and abstentions were by Rogerson for lack of available documentation, by Fernandes for reason of documentation lacking as related to the School CIP, and by Force for lack of transparency because not adequate time to study the School's CIP.

Article 6 was **Not Recommended** by a vote of 1-2-3

***ARTICLE 7: To see if the Madison School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of up to \$30,000 to be placed in the previously established Building Capital Reserve Fund, with such amount to be funded from the June 30 unreserved fund balance available for transfer on July 1.***

The Advisory Budget Committee fully understands the need for a building capital reserve fund. Since this Article states that needed funds will be obtained from the June 30 unreserved fund balance available for transfer on July 1, the Article not only provides additional funding to this account but also has no adverse impact on taxpayers. However, the need for better transparency of the School's long term CIP program still exists.

Article 7 was **Recommended** by a vote of 6-0-0

**Next ABC Meeting:** Tuesday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 6:00PM in the school gymnasium, masks required.

**Public Comments** – There were none.

**7:03 PM** – Bartlett made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Force. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ronald Force

Chair, Advisory Budget Committee