

Merrimack School District Budget Committee  
Minutes  
May 11, 2021

Present: S. Adler, S. Albuquerque, L French, C. Mower, M. Murphy, B. Stisser N. Schoenfeld, E. Wilson  
and School Board liaison L. Peters

Excused: G. Savitch and C. Lang

Absent: D. Coakley

Also Present: School District Clerk Pat Heinrich

C. Mower called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Mower said that article to eliminate the Committee had failed by more than 61% and welcomed everyone to or back to the Committee. He asked members to introduce themselves.

**Election Results**

C. Mower asked School District Clerk Pat Heinrich to explain the unusual situation that occurred during the election.

P. Heinrich explained that after the Town Clerk's office had started sending out absentee ballots, she had received a certified sworn affidavit from Ashley Poulin, one of the two candidates for two one-year seats on the Budget Committee, that she was no longer a Merrimack resident. P. Heinrich said she consulted the School District's legal counsel as well as the Secretary of State's office about the correct steps to take in this situation and was told to remove Ms. Poulin's name from all official ballots and all remaining absentee ballots. This meant that there was only one qualified candidate on the ballot for the two one-year seats so the second seat was offered to the registered voter who received the highest number of write-in votes. That person was Scott Adler who accepted the seat and was sworn in.

Further, P. Heinrich said that L. Peters, who had been elected to the Budget Committee in 2020, was elected to the School Board. As a result, her Budget Committee seat is now vacant.

**Re-organization**

**Chair**

C. Mower called for nominations for Chair of the Committee.

B. Stisser nominated C. Mower for Chair.

L. French nominated G. Savitch for Chair.

N. Schoenfeld asked if the Committee should wait to vote until G. Savitch was contacted to see if she accepted the nomination. C. Mower said he preferred to see how the voting went.

A roll call vote was held. C. Mower was unanimously elected Chair.

**Vice Chair**

C. Mower called for nominations for Vice Chair of the Committee

L. Peters nominated N. Schoenfeld.

N. Schoenfeld nominated B. Stisser.

A roll call vote was held.

	Schoenfeld	Stisser
Scott Adler	X	
Shayne Albuquerque	X	
Lee French		X
Chuck Mower	X	
Mackenzie Murphy	X	
Naomi Schoenfeld		X
Brian Stisser	X	
Ellen Wilson	X	
SB Liaison: Lori Peters	X	
total	7	2

C. Mower declared N. Schoenfeld elected as Vice Chair of the Committee by a 7 – 2 – 0 vote.

**Budget Committee Vacant Seats**

C. Mower asked members how they wanted to proceed regarding the vacant seat.

S. Adler said he thought the Committee should fill the seat.

C. Mower agreed and suggested the Committee could advertise the seat, requesting interested registered voters submit letters of interest to be received by June 1<sup>st</sup> and then the Committee could meet on June 8 to interview candidates and finalize the selection process.

By consensus, members agreed to the plan.

**Announcements**

C. Mower reminded members to notify him if they were going to miss a meeting because by statute a member who has 4 consecutive unexcused absences automatically loses his or her seat.

C. Mower asked members to review the Member listing and notify the secretary if any information needed to be corrected.

C. Mower announced that he was planning to hold some type of Budget Committee training in the fall.

**Public Participation**

There was none.

**Member comments**

C. Mower said he would like a closer relationship with the School Board and wants more information relative to School Board budget directives to department heads and School Board budget priorities. He said he wanted to be sure that sufficient funds to run the District are budgeted and he would like to see more of the annual surplus put into Capital Reserve funds to save for future needs. He said this coming budget might be a good opportunity for changes.

School District Budget Committee Minutes, 5-11-21, continued

L. Peters asked C. Mower to clarify that he wanted more detailed information about the budget rather than broad stroke summaries.

B. Stisser made a MOTION to adjourn. Second: L. French.

C. Mower declared the meeting adjourned at 7:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Heinrich