

Town of Mount Desert  
Board of Selectmen  
Special Meeting  
Monday, February 12, 2018  
Location: Meeting Room, Town Hall, Northeast Harbor

Present were: Chairman Macauley

Town Manager Durlin Lunt, Town Clerk Claire Woolfolk, CEO Kimberly Keene,

Members of the public were also present.

**I. Call to order at 4:00 p.m.**

Chairman Macauley called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

**II. New Business**

**A. MDES Budget Review**

Caroline Pryor introduced the Budget Review, and noted Principal Gloria Delsandro would speak to the school's achievements. The program is well-rounded. For the second or third consecutive year, the school has faced declining enrollment. The school's work is directly impacted by the cost of living in the Town. She lauded Island Housing Trust's work in creating affordable housing. Ms. Pryor noted families are attracted to living in Mount Desert due to the quality school.

Principal Gloria Delsandro reported to the Board. She noted the school is holding at 168 students enrolled next year. The lowest point so far has been the 2009/10 school year with 152 students and planning for upwards of 12 Kindergartners based on preschool estimates, up from the six Kindergartners this year. She provided a number of statistics:

- 85% of the students enrolled in grades 6 through 8 are involved in extracurricular activities.
- 17% of the students receive counseling from the school-based mental health counselor who also provide guidance classes to the students.
- 15% of the student population receives free or reduced lunch.
- 34% of the students have an Individual Education Plan or a 504 Special Education Plan. These accommodations address a variety of reasons.
- 9% of the students are considered gifted or talented.
- Attendance was on target last year; Ms. DelSandro felt students wanted to be there.
- Last year 63% of the students met the standards in math, compared to the State average of 39%.
- MDES was at 71% students meeting or exceeding the standards in reading and literary arts, compared to the State average in reading is 52%.
- In the science testing, 72% of Grade 5 students met or exceeded the standards, and 100% of Grade 8 met or exceeded the standards.

Ms. DelSandro pointed out some budget highlights. The last page of the budget shows how the budget is increasing with some additional items. The increase is not

1 yet added into the budget, but with these items added, there would be an increase of  
2 \$135,132.00; a 3.18% increase to the budget.

3  
4 Ms. DelSandro was asked at the Warrant Committee meeting what percentage of the  
5 total budget was allocated to salaries, insurance, medicare and social security. She  
6 reported that 72.6% of the total budget was allocated to salaries, insurance, medicare  
7 and social security. Leaving approximately \$3,098,572.00. Health care benefits  
8 alone are %17.97 of the budget, or \$767,000.00.

9  
10 Ms. DelSandro listed the items added to the draft budget:

- 11 - Increase in time for the Speech and Language Pathologist for the school. This  
12 person provides services to students that may be hearing impaired or have  
13 speech/language challenges. Additionally, she works with autism-spectrum  
14 students, and trains the Ed Techs in their work. Due to the needs of the students,  
15 her time needs to be increased from 60% to 100%.
- 16 - Increase in the stipend to the library. This has been a flat rate for the past ten  
17 years. Ms. DelSandro hopes to increase the amount by \$5,000.00 this year and  
18 \$5,000.00 next year.
- 19 - Playground woodchips. Replacing these is required on a regular basis. The  
20 safety mats need to be updated as well.
- 21 - Front entryway re-design. This re-design is a school safety issue. A window will  
22 be installed this year as the first phase, to provide office staff with a better visual  
23 of those entering the school, followed by new doors next year.
- 24 - An energy study is hoped to be implemented, starting next year, to assess the  
25 future direction of the school.
- 26 - One-year custodian position. Currently the school is down an employee and a  
27 half due to medical issues.
- 28 - Special Education Secretary's hours would be increased from 35 to 37 hours a  
29 week.

30  
31 Ms. DelSandro noted some staffing changes:

- 32 - Art teacher Ms. Shutt is retiring this year after 27 years with the school.
- 33 - The half-time Response to Intervention teacher, Brian Baker, is leaving.
- 34 - Kate St. Denis will be returning to the school as the Response to Intervention and  
35 RTT teacher.
- 36 - An ASL interpreter was hired over the summer.

37  
38 Ms. Pryor pointed out the Facilities Study. She felt that in coming years there will be  
39 some expensive maintenance, repairs, and updates. The ones proposed this year are  
40 small. She noted insulation and repointing of brickwork as two of those upcoming  
41 projects. She suggested the school meet with the Board to make plans. She hoped to  
42 get estimates.

43  
44 It was noted that there's approximately \$115,000.00 in the Maintenance Reserve.

45  
46 Chairman Macauley asked whether the issue of tuition students at the elementary  
47 school has been discussed. Ms. Pryor noted it hasn't been discussed in depth. The  
48 AOS has opportunity for great collaboration between the schools. It was felt the

1 schools can collaborate more effectively, but whether it could be done less  
2 expensively is still undecided. Ms. Pryor noted about a quarter of the MDI high  
3 school students are tuition.

4  
5 Superintendent Marc Gousse noted the conversations should be had regarding  
6 efficiencies the schools can realize in their operations. From what he's hearing the  
7 island communities are not ready to form an RSU, turning buildings and equipment  
8 over to a central authority. Health insurance is an issue but unavoidable. The schools  
9 are trying to focus on health and wellness as perhaps a way to be more efficient.

10  
11 Selectman Dudman wondered if there were a way to use the buildings during the  
12 summer to create some income and offset the expense. Dr. Gousse felt there was an  
13 opportunity for use. Uses would have to be planned through individual communities,  
14 and extra use results in extra maintenance and expenses. Selectman Dudman also  
15 noted some schools are welcoming international students.

16  
17 Selectman Hart felt that at this point, out-of-state students and international students  
18 are not tuitioned in. If the school attracts the students, he felt it could only benefit the  
19 Town. Selectman Littlefield agreed. She noted that extra use of the high school does  
20 currently happen, and it's often a large amount of work. It would be a balancing act  
21 to ensure the benefits of extra use doesn't outweigh the cost. Further Ms. Littlefield  
22 felt all the MDI schools are good. There may not be a large call for students of one  
23 good island school to tuition to another good island school. Perhaps students from  
24 off the island might be attracted. Chairman Macauley opined that, with regards to  
25 international students, it's a good idea. Both educational and living facilities would  
26 be necessary and would have to be fully in place prior to starting a program.  
27 Selectman Dudman felt the strength of the community school is having it in the  
28 community for kids in the community. The issue would have to be carefully  
29 considered.

30  
31 Ms. Pryor wondering if pre-K programs could be incorporated, or senior citizens.

32  
33 Selectman Littlefield inquired whether resources like the ASL interpreter were shared  
34 among schools. Dr. Gousse said resources are shared, but they are split up. The ASL  
35 interpreters for example are in different schools. There are other places where  
36 resources can be shared.

37  
38 Dr. Gousse mentioned Special Education and students at The Community School.  
39 There is a responsibility to provide some services to Special Education students at  
40 The Community School. When a parent chooses to place their child in a private  
41 school, they give up their right to a free and appropriate public education. However,  
42 that doesn't remove the public school's responsibility to provide limited services to  
43 children who are identified as needing them. This means MDES personnel consult  
44 with staff at The Community School. Direct services are not provided. This results in  
45 a small portion of the MDES budget - approximately \$1000.00 per student used by  
46 students not attending MDES. This affects any student attending The Community  
47 School and requiring help, regardless of where they live.

1 Ms. Pryor noted a special meeting will have to be scheduled by the School Board to  
2 vote on the budget. Town Manager Lunt mentioned the Board will be voting on  
3 much of the budget February 26, so having it ready prior to that date might be a good  
4 target.

5  
6 *B. Municipal Review Budget Review*

7 Town Manager Lunt noted the budget was very similar to last year's. Estimates are  
8 included in the budget, but they may change a bit before the final vote.  
9

10 Selectman Mooers pointed out the building/plumbing/sewer permit item. Were the  
11 estimated numbers off? Mr. Lunt felt it was more a seasonal thing and they'd pick up  
12 in the Spring. This time of year tends to be the lowest level for those.  
13

14 Chairman Macauley asked about the appropriations going up to 17.097 million from  
15 1.5 million in the 2017 budget. He asked what the number was and where it came  
16 from. Town Manager Lunt noted that once the newly revised 2018 budget comes in,  
17 it will note the increase comes from the property taxes. Mr. Macauley asked for  
18 annotation to explain the discrepancy.  
19

20 Selectman Mooers inquired about the Inter-Fund Transfer from the Marina. Mr. Lunt  
21 explained the Town estimates the cost of services the Town provides to the marina.  
22 This would include police and fire services.  
23

24 *C. Draft Warrant Review: Land Use Zoning Ordinance*

25 Noel Musson reported on the proposed changes for this year. He listed the changes:  
26

- 27 - Clarification of the Amendment process for the Unconditional Use Permit already  
28 approved.
- 29 - Making the standards for Animal Husbandry 2 (chickens) applicable in all zones.  
30

31 Chairman Macauley asked how people are found to be out of compliance with  
32 regards to chickens. Is it based on the complaints received, or does the CEO actively  
33 look for issues. CEO Keene noted she relies on complaints for this type of issue.  
34 CEO Keene has had very few complaints since chickens have been allowed.  
35

- 36 - Allowing the CEO to approve one- and two-family dwellings and accessory  
37 structures in Village Commercial and Shoreland Commercial Districts.
- 38 - Allowing Rooming Houses in the Village Commercial District and adding  
39 regulatory standards that allow the CEO to follow up on safety issues.  
40

41 Chairman Macauley asked what the oversight would be for these types of uses. CEO  
42 Keene knew of only two places that could be considered Rooming Houses in the  
43 Town. She would rely on complaints as to whether oversight was required. Ms.  
44 Keene noted that currently the LUZO does not have a use that identifies rooming  
45 houses. One of the buildings that could be considered a Rooming House has had a  
46 number of complaints. Work is being done to bring the building into compliance.  
47 The Planning Board had to deem the building Hotel/Motel, which has caused issues  
48 for the owner. Selectman Hart asked whether, with the money being put into the

1 Town's Village Center, does this use align with what the Town is trying to  
2 accomplish. Mr. Hart agreed wording must be put in place. He voiced concern over  
3 the concept of 70 square-foot rooms, 16 residents per floor, and one shared bathroom.  
4 He suggested more stringent requirements.  
5

6 Mr. Musson noted this was the first attempt at wording. Rooming houses are a  
7 growing trend on the island. The consensus when creating the wording was to start  
8 with the situation already in place and grow from there. Selectman Mooers countered  
9 that the Town did not want the current situation to expand without some semblance  
10 of regulations controlling the expansion. Mr. Musson felt this was the start. He  
11 added that in other places, there is typically a licensing process for rooming houses.  
12 There are other things to consider if the situation becomes an issue. Selectman  
13 Dudman agreed licensing made sense. Mr. Musson said that with Warrant deadlines  
14 at stake the possibility of licensing was not discussed. Mr. Musson asserted that a  
15 good first step was to get some terminology and regulations in the LUZO.  
16

- 17 - Adding the requirement of a 100-foot setback to lot Map 9, Lot 120-10-1.
- 18 - Making Shoreland Zoning consistent by adding elements in more current versions
- 19 of the Shoreland Zoning guidelines. Several suggested changes are included.
- 20 - Correcting the Road Acceptance Ordinance to refer to the standards in the
- 21 ordinance. No new standards have been added.
- 22 - Making zero-foot setbacks for the downtown area lots consistent and allowing
- 23 each lot to have zero-foot setback.
- 24 - Creating an area per dwelling unit provision. This will replace the idea of
- 25 allowing accessory dwelling units on a single lot, with the exception of the
- 26 Village Commercial District. This will help with long-term discussions on
- 27 density. It will not actually change density provisions currently in place.  
28

29 **III. Other Business**

30 There was no other business.  
31

32 **IV. Adjournment**

33 MOTION: Selectman Dudman moved, with Selectman Littlefield seconding,  
34 adjournment. Motion approved 5-0.  
35

36 Meeting was adjourned at 5:12PM.  
37  
38

39 Respectfully Submitted,  
40  
41

42 Wendy Littlefield, Secretary  
43  
44