

Monadnock Regional School District

Budget Committee By-Laws

Revision 10/2010 Revision: A

Adopted by the Budget Committee at the November 23, 2010 meeting

I. Philosophy

The Budget Committee, with information provided by the administration and school board, will develop a budget compatible with the current goals and mission statement of the school district.

II. Budget Committee Purpose and Mission

The purpose of the Budget Committee is to assist its voters in the prudent appropriation of public funds. (RSA 32:1). The committee shall gain the knowledge necessary to oversee and analyze the expenditures of the District, in order to provide the electorate with sufficient information to determine the amounts necessary to fund the District expenditures.

III. Goals and Objectives

Each year the Budget Committee will formulate goals and objectives. The goals and objectives may include but are not limited to the Committee functions of vision, structure, accountability and advocacy.

At the conclusion of the year the Committee shall reflect on the degree to which the goals and objectives have been accomplished by conducting a Committee self evaluation and engaging in Committee development activities where needed.

IV. General Duties

To provide the best resources to the school children of the MRSD at a cost that can be managed by the taxpayers within the district.

To prepare the School District Budget as provided in RSA 32:5.

"The Budget Committee is responsible for setting the bottom line."

To prepare the MRSD Default Budget (RSA 40:14-b)

"The prior year's expenditures, less onetime expenses, plus any contractual obligations."

To conduct the public hearings as required under RSA 40:13 II-a.

V. Membership

Budget Committee membership shall follow the laws established in Title XV Education, Chapter 195 Cooperative School Districts (195:12-a Budget Committee)

To become a candidate for the Budget Committee, a person must be a registered voter in the district.

All powers of the Budget Committee lie in its action as a corporate body. Individual members may not exercise authority over District affairs.

An individual Committee member, including the chairperson, has power only when the Committee by vote has delegated authority to him or her.

No legal action can be taken except at a duly warned meeting of the Committee and by a quorum acting as a unit.

The decisions of the Committee shall be binding until rescinded by the Committee at a duly called regular or special meeting.

VI. Membership Voting/Composition

The Budget Committee voting formula will mimic the weighted vote formula of the district's school board.

A membership of the Committee comprising greater than 8, one half of the total weighted votes shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

A majority vote of the Committee shall be defined as a vote of more than 50% of the total weighted votes cast.

A two-thirds majority weighted vote of the Committee shall be defined as a vote of more than sixty-six and two-thirds percent of the total weighted votes cast.

A majority vote as measured by weighted vote and two-thirds majority weighted votes will be figured based on the membership present at the meeting.

In order for Committee members to show neutrality on an issue or to not affect the outcome of the vote in cases where board members choose not to vote due to a conflict of interest, all abstentions cast on any motion will not influence the vote.

A representative from the School Board will serve on the Budget Committee, that member being appointed by the School Board chair. The vote weight assigned to the appointed Board Member shall be .01 less than the lowest elected member's vote weight. The weighted voting formula was approved by the membership at the September 28, 2004 Budget Committee meeting.

Town	Voting Members	Weighted vote
Fitzwilliam	2	1.239
Gilsum	1	.899
Richmond	1	1.24
Roxbury	1	.274
Sullivan	1	.897
Swanzey	8	1.124

Troy	2	1.135
School Board Liaison	1	.264

VI. Membership Voting/Composition (continued)

One of the members shall be elected by the Budget Committee as chair. A second vice-chair will be elected. The committee may choose a secretary or use the district’s recording secretary. The Committee may elect other officers as it sees fit. In the event that a member steps down during his term, the Budget Committee will appoint a replacement. Persons appointed to fill vacancies shall serve until the next annual meeting at which time a successor shall be elected to either fill the unexpired term or start a new term, as the case may be. (RSA 32:15 VII) Alternates for members will not be accepted.

VII. Sub-Committee Formation

The Budget Committee will form supporting committees as it sees fit in order to gain additional knowledge necessary to make informed recommendations to the electorate. This may include, but not be limited to, committees formed to review individual schools within the district. Where not otherwise determined, members will be asked to self-nominate to serve on the various committees.

VIII. Agenda Preparation and Dissemination

The Budget Committee Chairperson shall prepare all agendas for meetings of the Committee. In doing so, the Chairperson shall consult with the Superintendent. Items to be placed in the agenda should be in the hands of the Superintendent on or before the seventh day preceding the meeting. The agenda, together with supporting materials, shall be distributed to Committee members at least seven days prior to the Committee meeting, to allow members to give items of business careful consideration. Committee Members shall be expected to read the information provided them and to contact the Chairperson to request additional information that may be deemed necessary to assist them in their decision making responsibilities. The agenda shall also be made available to the press and others upon request. Every Committee member has the right to place items on the agenda. An item not included in the agenda may be brought before the meeting provided it is agreed to by a 2/3majority vote. Alternately, the Committee may choose *not* to deal with an agenda item if agreed to by a 2/3majority vote. Any Committee member may suggest items for business. Staff members, students, or citizens of the District may place an item on the agenda by petition signed by 25 persons. The inclusion of items suggested by staff members, students, or citizens shall be at the discretion of the Superintendent and Chairperson. The agenda, however, shall always allow suitable time for the remarks of the members of the public who wish to speak briefly before the Committee.

The Committee shall follow the order of business set up by the agenda unless the order is altered by a majority vote of the members present. Suspension of the rules to vote on a non-agenda item will be by 2/3 of those in attendance.

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Committee may not revise Committee policies, or adopt new ones, unless such action has been scheduled, or unless there is an emergency.

IX. Rules of Order

Except as otherwise provided by law, by rules of the State Department of Education or by the Budget Committee, meetings of the Committee shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, Revised when appropriate and possible.

X. Attendance

Members shall cease to hold office immediately upon missing four consecutive scheduled or announced meetings of which that member received reasonable notice, without being excused by the chair. (RSA 32:15 VI).

XI. Issuance of Public Statements

Official public statements made to the media, whether to reporters, in a letter to the editor, informational fliers or other forms will come only from the Chairperson or a spokesperson designated by the Chairperson.

Opinions or public statements made by Committee members, when not made as a designated representative of the Committee, will be accompanied by a disclaimer indicating that the opinion expressed is that of the individual and does not necessarily represent that of the Budget Committee.

XII. Ethics and Conduct

As elected officials, Budget Committee members are held to the highest ethical standards. Because the Committee depends on the public trust of its impartiality and authority for its recommendations to be approved by the voters, members should avoid any actions that create a conflict of interest or that give the appearance of a conflict of interest. Members will treat each other and all present with respect at all times.

XIII. Meetings and Schedules

The Budget Committee meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month it deems necessary and may meet more frequently during the fall budget season. The basic meeting framework and timeline guidelines are as follows:

March: New Budget Committee members elected.

April:

- Budget committee meets and new members are sworn in.
- Goals for year discussed.
- Members are briefed on the prior year's budget building process, as well as on new developments regarding fiscal issues.
- Tentative meeting calendar set.

- Goals and objectives discussed

May/June:

- Chairperson elected and any other offices deemed necessary.
- Goals and objectives formalized.
- Supporting committees formed.

August/September: Committee review of audited version of prior year's budget.

XIII. Meetings and Schedules (continued)

October: Budget presentation by administrators.

November/December: Budget work sessions and discussions with the administrators. Joint meeting(s) with the MRSD School Board. Reflections on goals and objectives and self-evaluation.

January: Public Hearing, vote on budget and warrant articles

February: Deliberative Session

XIII. 1. Minutes

The Secretary, either a paid recorder or an elected member, shall keep a record of the actions of Committee meetings. The minutes of the Committee shall be kept in an official minute book and shall include resolutions and motions. Papers not a part of a formal motion may be omitted if they are referred to and identified by some method. Copies of the draft minutes of a meeting shall be sent to the members of the Committee before the meeting at which they are to be approved. Corrections to the minutes may be made at the meeting at which they are to be approved.

All minutes shall be kept in accordance with RSA 91-A:2 and 3 III and will be in the custody of the Superintendent/SAU who will make them available no later than 144 hours after the meeting to interested citizens on request. (72 hours for minutes of non-public sessions).

XIV. Lessons Learned

The Monadnock Regional School District is a Cooperative School District, in some cases other RSA's apply.

The New Hampshire Local Government Center (NHLGC) is a valuable resource for the Budget Committee; the NHLGC also produces a book- "The Basic Law of Town, Village and School District Budgeting" which has been very helpful. The Superintendent shall provide a copy of above to each new member.

State RSA's, Rulings developed by New Hampshire Dept. of Education (DOE) and Dept. Revenue Administration (DRA), take precedent over any Committee By-Laws.