

State of New Hampshire
Monadnock School District
Warrant for 2025-26
Deliberative Session February 1, 2025
Monadnock Regional MRMHS Auditorium
Swanzy, NH

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Scott Peters, Lisa Steadman, Eric Stanley, Betty Tatro, Dan LeClair, Brian Bohannon, Hannah Blood and Jeff Cesaitis. **Absent:** Gina Carraro, Cheryl McDaniel-Thomas, Kristen Noonan, Jennifer Strimbeck and Edmund LaPlante.

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Edward Sheldon, Doug Bersaw, Anne Marie Osheyack, Robert Audette, Nancy Carney, Jack Gettens and Sarah Burgess. **Absent:** Wayne Lechlides, Virginia Doerpholz, Bruce Murphy, Jon Hoden and Unassigned representatives from Roxbury and Troy.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: J. Rathbun, Superintendent, C. Woods, Director of Student Services, J. Morin, Business Administrator, C. Czifrik, Director of Technology and T. Breen, Director of Building and Grounds.

ALSO PRESENT: W. Hutwelker, Moderator, K. Thibault, Assistant Moderator and Attorney J. O'Shaughnessy.

CALL TO ORDER: W. Hutwelker opened the Deliberative Session at 10:05 AM. He pointed out the exits and the designated seating.

Everyone rose for the Pledge of Allegiance. Lucas and Andrea, students at Cutler School led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Superintendent Rathbun on behalf of the staff and students welcomed everyone to the school. He thanked L. Sutton, T. Breen and C. Czifrik for all the work they did to prepare and run this meeting.

S. Peters, Chair of the School Board introduced the members on the Board.

E. Sheldon, Chair of the Budget Committee introduced the members of the Budget Committee.

W. Hutwelker thanked the administration, the teachers, the support staff, C. Czifrik, the custodial staff, the nutritional staff, the Fine Arts Dept. and the Supervisors of the Checklist for the preparation of this Deliberative Session. He thanked the road crews for clearing the roads of the snow and allowing everyone to attend this meeting. Also an extra thank you to Lillian Sutton, administrative assistant. She received a special round of applause.

W. Hutwelker announced the open offices for the School Board and the Budget Committee. He explained the purpose of this meeting is to amend the articles if voted on, place on the ballot and vote on March 11, 2025

W. Hutwelker informed the voters that he will not read the article unless he is asked. The articles are displayed on the screen.

ARTICLE ONE: Shall the Monadnock Regional School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations votes separately, totaling \$39,199,676 (\$970,000 is required for federal grants and nutrition grants that are funded by separate State and Federal revenues)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget will be \$38,819,434 (\$970,000 is required for federal grants and nutrition grants that are funded by separate State and Federal revenues) which is the same as last year with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Monadnock Regional School District 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. The School Board supports this article. The Budget Committee supports this article. (Majority vote required). MOTION: B. Tatro MOVED

Article One to the Ballot as written. **SECOND:** B. Bohannon. **DISCUSSION:** B. Tatro explained the pie chart on the screen reflects the increase that the Board has no control over. Special Ed. is going up. The MESSA Contract which is in the 3rd year and the Specialists Contract that is in the 2nd year. They are included in the proposed budget. There are no new programs, this is the cost of doing business. B. Tatro also explained the cost per pupil is on the screen and lower than the State average. This is due to the hard work of the administration, holding the line and offering a good education. **MOTION:** A. Cincotta of Richmond. **MOVED** to amend the 2025-26 Proposed Budget to \$36,000,000. **SECOND:** K. DeMasco.

DISCUSSION: L. Traeger presented W. Hutwelker a signed petition for a secret ballot vote on Article One. K. Tomer of Swanzey asked what programs will be cut with this reduction. L. Traeger commented it is not our job to find what to cut. The proposed budget can be cut within 10% of the ballot. They do not tell us how to cut at home. We do not need to tell them. R. Butko of Richmond agrees that we all have to do with what we have. We need to work within our budget. E. Kaplan, Swanzey commented that dropping the proposal would greatly impact education. There are no new programs. Personal attention to the students will go down. Athletics, Afterschool Programs, electives and special help for students will be sacrificed. There are mandates from the State that they do not pay. There will be drastic cuts by cutting \$3.1 million from the budget. A. Cincotta of Richmond commented that there is 1 teacher for 14 students. She said her taxes went up \$1600.00. This is not an assault on the teachers, there are fewer kids and you need to tighten your belts. Lloyd LeBlanc of Fitzwilliam commented on what he called E. Kaplan's scare tactic. Small schools can run on \$10,000 per pupil. More than half of the property taxes go to the schools. The School Board needs to figure out the cuts. We can figure out solutions with a lot less money. Scott Stelz would like to hear from the Budget Committee. E. Sheldon said that he cannot speak to the number. He would recommend looking at non academic programs to be cut with the reduction. The Budget Committee will deliberate and vote after this meeting. K. DeMasco of Richmond said the budget is getting higher and higher and the test

scores are not good. S. DeMasco of Richmond said that he has worked with the Dept.of Ed. and he can let the administration know where to cut. Pay teachers more. Compensate the teachers to motivate them. B. Tatro commented having more than 20 kids in a classroom means one child will be missed. E.Sheldon explained the default budget. **MOTION:** B.Bohannon **MOVED** call the question. **SECOND:** D.Bersaw. **SECRET Ballot Vote:** 156-yes and 56-no. **Article One will move to the Ballot as amended.**

ARTICLE TWO: To see if the Monadnock Regional School District will vote to approve the cost items included in the 3-year Collective Bargaining Agreement reached between the Monadnock Regional School Board and the Monadnock District Educators Association of SAU 93 for the following increases in wages and benefits at the current staffing level. The estimated increase in the costs for wages and benefits under the collective bargaining agreement are as follows:

Year	Estimated Increase
2025/26	\$524,604 - Salaries
	\$141,118 - Wage associated costs
	<u>\$ 59,500</u> - Increases in various stipends and professional development
	\$725,222
2026/27	\$365,602 - Salaries
	<u>\$ 98,273</u> - Wage associated costs
	\$463,875
2027/28	\$362,333 - Salaries
	<u>\$ 97,395</u> - Wage associated costs
	\$459,728

And further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$725,222 for the 2025-26 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional cost attributable to the increase in wage and benefits over those of the appropriation at the current staffing level paid in the 2024-25 year. The School Board supports this article. The Budget Committee supports this article. (Majority vote required) W. Hutwelker explained that Article Two can not be changed, only discussed.

MOTION: L.Steadman **MOVED** Article Two to the Ballot as written. **SECOND:** S.Peters

DISCUSSION: L.Steadman explained that the MDEA Union consists of 150 staff members. This is a 3 year contract. There are slight language changes and the salary increases are to keep pace with other districts. A.Cincotta of Richmond commented that over the last 3 years the MDEA members received a 10% increase and now they are asking for a 16% raise over the next 3 years. The total raise for 6 years is 26%. L.Steadman commented that the increase per year is \$2000 per employee, no way 26%. A.Cincotta of Richmond commented that the raise is rather extravagant. D. Coffman of Swanzey commented that there needs to be an improvement in

student achievement. The teachers deserve a raise but will not get it. The math is not correct regarding the 26% raise over 6 years. You need to be responsible. D. Murray commented on the vacant positions in the School District. How can we attract teachers with low pay? We have teachers who are retiring. She said that her daughter has 32 students in her classroom. If you were in a business and had to manage 14 employees would you do it for \$43,000 a year. S.Peters commented that there are 14 open positions and the number changes weekly. K. Rustello agrees teachers should receive a raise based on performance. The whole system is a problem. S.Peters explained that anybody can form a Union. A. Cincotta of Richmond read from a website the teacher to student ratio. E. Kaplan of Swanzy commented that some of the teachers have a 1 on 1 student for Special Ed. and in his Chemistry Class he has 24 students. The number is easily manipulated. You say pay the teachers more but you argue about the contract. Walk the line in my shoes. C. Reynolds of Swanzy said her husband works at KHS and there are a lot of Special Ed. students. The number is astonishing. They need special infrastructure. **MOTION:** Man in Audience **MOVED** to call the question. **SECOND:** Man in Audience. **VOTE:** Voice vote yes. **Motion passes. Article Two will move to the Ballot as written. MOTION:** K.DeMasco **MOVED** to restrict reconsideration of Article Two. **SECOND:** D.Bersaw. **VOTE:** Voice Vote yes. **Motion passes.**

ARTICLE THREE: To see if the Monadnock Regional School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$120,000 to renovate a portion of the roof at the Monadnock Regional Middle High School. This is a Special Warrant Article in accordance with RSA 32:3 VI. This will be a non-lapsing warrant article per RSA 32:7 VI and will not lapse until the renovation projects are complete, or June 30, 2028, whichever is earlier. The School Board supports this article. The Budget Committee supports this article. (Majority vote required) MOTION: B.Bohannon **MOVED** Article Three to the Ballot as written. **SECOND:** B. Tatro. **DISCUSSION:**It was explained that this is to repair the leaking roof over the girls locker room at the MRMHS. A.Cincotta of Richmond asked how this is related to the current renovations. S. Peters said the current renovations are to the elementary schools. The budget includes the bond for the renovation project but there is a need for spot projects at the MRMHS. E. Sheldon mentioned the Building Maintenance Fund. L.Traeger said to withdraw the funds for the leaky roof. The Budget Committee and the School Board have an agreement to have an emergency fund. We need to replenish the fund. Diane Everson commented if we have the funds we need to tap into them, we are in hard times. S.Peters explained the account currently has \$88,000 in it. This account will need to be used for projects throughout the year. L.LeBlanc of Fitzwilliam asked if this body could make a motion to take the funds from the Expendable Trust for the roof. W.Hutwelker explained it cannot be done. R.Thackston of Troy commented that deferring the projects for another year or 2 will cost the District more. If you use all of the funds there will be none for smaller projects. It will not cost \$120,000 next year and we will have to fix whatever damage was done from the leaks. Save money and pass this motion. **VOTE:** Voice vote yes. **Motion passes. Article Three will move to the Ballot as written. MOTION:** E.Kaplan **MOVED** to restrict reconsideration of Article Three. **SECOND:** K.Tilton of Troy. **VOTE:** Voice vote yes. **Motion passes.**

ARTICLE FOUR: To see if the Monadnock Regional School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1 to be added to the Special Education Expendable Trust Fund previously established. This sum is to come from the June 30, 2025 unassigned fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2025. No new amount will be raised from taxation. The School Board supports this article. The Budget Committee supports this article (Majority vote required) MOTION:S. Peters **MOVED** Article Four to the Ballot as written. **SECOND:** B.Tatro. **DISCUSSION:** S.Peters explained that there are no new taxes with the passing of this article. This will be funded by an unallocated fund balance. The \$1 is a placeholder just in case a new student moved into the district and required Special ed. Services. A.Cincotta asked why does it say raise and appropriate. J. O'Shaughnessy explained that the language is used in warrants for 100 years. Raised is to find a source, the source is the fund balance. D. Coffman of Swanze asked about Special Ed.costs. S.Peters explained if a family moves into the District we are obligated to support that Special Ed.student. The administration has not asked to increase the \$1. Hopefully we will have enough to cover additional costs if they come up. This year the District had to tap into the Special Education Expendable Trust. **MOTION:** Man in Audience **MOVED** the question. **SECOND:** Man in Audience. **VOTE:** Voice vote yes. **Motion passes. Article Four will move to the Ballot as written.**

ARTICLE FIVE: To see if the Monadnock Regional School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 to be added to the District Vehicle Expendable Trust Fund previously established. This sum is to come from the June 30, 2025 unassigned fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2025. If there is an insufficient, unassigned fund balance as of June 30, 2025, to fund this appropriation and the appropriation in Article Four, then Article Four will be funded first, with any additional unassigned fund balance to be applied to this warrant article. No new amount will be raised from taxation. The School Board supports this article. The Budget Committee supports this article (Majority vote required) MOTION: H. Blood **MOVED** Article Five to the Ballot as written. **SECOND:** J. Morin **DISCUSSION:**It was explained that the Budget Committee had asked the Board to establish the District Vehicle Fund to purchase vehicles when the need arrives. A. Cincotta asked what is the alternative. S.Peters explained the Board could put a line in the budget for vehicles but there is no need to replace a vehicle every year. If the Article fails the funds are unspent they will be a credit for the next year. Tim would suggest moving Article Four where Article Five is and Article Five where Article Four is. S.Peters commented that they are in that particular order because of the Special Ed. Expendable Trust, just in case a student entered the District and we needed more funds to support that child. R.Thackston explained Special Ed. is required by law. The District will pay. **MOTION:** K. DeMasco **MOVED** to call the question. **SECOND:** B. Tatro. **VOTE:** Voice vote yes. **Motion passes. Article Five will move to the Ballot as written.**

ARTICLE SIX: To see if the Monadnock Regional School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$200,000 to be added to the School Grounds Expendable Trust Fund previously established. This sum is to come from the June 30, 2025 unassigned fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2025. If there is an insufficient, unassigned fund balance as of June 30, 2025, to fund this appropriation and the appropriations in Articles Four and Five, Four and Five will be funded first, with any additional unassigned fund

balance to be applied to this warrant article. No new amount will be raised from taxation. The School Board supports this article. The Budget Committee supports this article (Majority vote required) MOTION:D. LeClair **MOVED** Article Six to the Ballot as written. **SECOND:** B. Bohannon. **DISCUSSION:** S.Peters explained that there is a separate fund for the School Grounds and the Building Maintenance. **MOTION:** L.Traeger **MOVED** to amend Article Six to \$100,000. **SECOND:** A.Cincotta. **DISCUSSION:** A. Cincotta of Richmond said it is nice to have this but we need to tighten our belts and cut the budget. Have the school show an effort. **MOTION:**D. Bersaw **MOVED** to call the question. **SECOND:** K.DeMasco. **VOTE:** Voice vote yes. **Motion passes.** **MOTION:** D.Bersaw **MOVED** Article Six to the Ballot as amended. **SECOND:** K. DeMasco. **VOTE:** Voice vote yes. **Motion passes.** **MOTION:** L. Traeger **MOVED** to restrict reconsideration of Article Six. **SECOND:** D. Bersaw. **VOTE:** Voice vote yes. **Motion passes. Article Six will move to the Ballot as amended.**

ARTICLE SEVEN: To see if the Monadnock Regional School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1 to be added to the School Bldg. Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund previously established. This sum is to come from the June 30, 2025 unassigned fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2025. If there is an insufficient, unassigned fund balance as of June 30, 2025, to fund this appropriation and the appropriations in Articles Four, Five, and Six, then Four, Five, and Six will be funded first, with any additional unassigned fund balance to be applied to this warrant article. No new amount will be raised from taxation. The School Board supports this article. The Budget Committee supports this article (Majority vote required) MOTION: E. Stanley **MOVED** Article Seven to the Ballot as written. **SECOND:** H.Blood. **DISCUSSION:** S.Peters explained that this fund is tied to various projects in the CIP. The Board left \$1 if there was a need. The Board is not aware of making any adjustments. **MOTION:** A. Cincotta **MOVED** to call the question. **SECOND:** L. Traeger **VOTE:** Voice vote yes. **Article Seven will move to the Ballot as written.**

ARTICLE EIGHT: To see if the Monadnock Regional School District will vote to authorize the School Board to convey the parcel of land with the buildings thereon located at 31 South Winchester Street in West Swanzey, as identified on the Town of Swanzey's tax records as Tax Map 109, Lot 22 (current location of the Cutler School), and to further authorize the School Board to take such additional action as necessary to facilitate and/or consummate such conveyance, including securing the necessary approvals and the execution of any documents necessary or attendant thereto. The School Board supports this article. The Budget Committee supports this article (Majority vote required) MOTION: S.Peters **MOVED** Article Eight to the Ballot as written. **SECOND:** J. Morin. **DISCUSSION:** S.Peters explained that the renovations and additions to MTC are on track to move the students from Cutler. This article will empower the administration to sell the building and land at Cutler. W. Hutwelker said that the property will not be market value but a fair appraised value. There is no guarantee. A.Cincotta of Richmond is concerned that the district will not get as much as possible for the property. J. O'Shaughnessy commented on the word "convey" in the article. He said the intention is to sell the building and land for whatever the district can get and as much as they can. S.Peters said the hope is to sell it so the District does not have to maintain it. There is no one in line asking to purchase Cutler. R. Butko commented that this is public property and

should not be a special deal. O'Shaughnessy explained that it is State Law if the School Board has a purchase and sales agreement they must notify the State to offer it to a Charter School. They can have the right to purchase or right of refusal. **MOTION:** A.M. Osheyack **MOVED** to call the question. **SECOND:** Man in Audience. **VOTE:** Voice vote yes. **Motion passes. Article Eight will move to the Ballot as written.**

ARTICLE NINE: Shall the Monadnock Regional School District receive and approve the reports of the agents, auditors, committees, and officers chosen as printed and distributed in the Annual Report? (Majority vote required)

Moderator Hutwelker recessed the Deliberative Session at 11:45 AM until the vote on March 11, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording Secretary

By the Monadnock Regional School Board: Given under our hands and seal this 7th day of February 2025 Monadnock Regional School Board:		
NAME	POSITION	DATE
Eric Stanley	School Board	2/7/25
Elizabeth Gallo	" "	2-10-25
Hannah Burd	School Board	2-12-25
J.S. To	Board Chair	2-12-25
Lillian Sutton	District Clerk	2/14/2025

Lillian C Sutton
NOTARY PUBLIC
State of New Hampshire
My Commission Expires 5/3/2028