

**Monadnock Regional School District
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
September 23, 2025
Monadnock Regional School Library**

Members Present: Steven Sawyer, Wayne Lechluder, Nancy Carney, Robert Audette, Jon Hoden, Sarah Burgess, Anne Marie Osheyack, Jack Gettens and Betty Tatro, liaison for the School Board, **Absent:** Doug Bersaw, Ed Sheldon, Bruce Murphy and Unassigned from Roxbury and Fitzwilliam.

Also Present: J. Rathbun, Superintendent and J.Morin, Business Administrator.

1. **Call the Meeting to Order:** N. Carney called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.
2. **Public Comments:** There were no public comments.
3. **Approval of the August 25, 2025 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes: MOTION:** J. Hoden **MOVED** to approve the August 25, 2025 Budget Committee Meeting Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** R. Audette **DISCUSSION:** J. Gettens would like the minutes to state where the surplus on the expense side and the revenue side came to the final number. J. Morin will provide that information for the next meeting. The unexpended fund balance on the expense side looked like \$800,000 but ended at around \$85,000 due to the lack of revenues and other items. She said it was due to warrant articles, Trust Funds, lack of Medicaid and lack of revenues. She will supply the detailed list at the next meeting. The Board voted not to retain any funds from the unexpended fund balance. **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**
4. **Administration Reports:**
 - a. **Monthly Financial Report:** J. Morin provided the Monthly Financial Report and the Detailed Report to the committee prior to this meeting. She asked if there were any questions. She explained that there were two budget transfers approved by the Board at their last meeting. The transfers were for the new Autism Program at Emerson which allowed the district to bring students back from out of district. J. Morin explained that in FY 26 there are some salaries and benefits that have been encumbered. The schools with the larger percentage have more vacancies. The Troy Pre-K has moved to Emerson while the renovations are being done.
 - b. **Revenue Sources Report: Expectations versus actual for last school year:** J. Morin explained that at the end of the year the district ended up with less cash in the bank due to declining rates. J. Morin explained the Medicaid revenue offset the taxes and whatever is left is raised by the taxpayers. All of the towns are ready to set their tax rates. Adequacy and State Aid are also being reduced. She explained that the previous billing company stopped providing services so the new company took over and it was too late when we realized we were not getting the Medicaid reimbursement. The new Student Services Director is looking into this situation. The rules keep changing regarding Medicaid.

c. **Staffing:** J. Rathbun reported that the district is in very good shape. The district is still looking for paras, a Tech Ed. position and school counselors a total of 12 vacancies. The paras start at \$15.00 an hour. J. Rathbun explained that there is no Tech ed. class because we cannot find an instructor. He would like to be an ascending district like KHS and Fall Mtn regarding the CCC. He would like to have a welding class for the kids. It is easier to hire a CTE Center position than a certified teacher.

5. **Detailed budget tracking report/pivot table:** J. Gettens presented information he obtained and put in a pivot table to the committee. He also presented it on the screen. He explained that there are over 900 accounts within the budget as well as function object codes. He reviewed the mission and the duties of the Budget Committee. J. Gettens looked at the FY 24 actuals and compared the FY 24-FY 27 but did not have the FY 25. He took the 900 line items and put them in object codes and manageable categories. R. Audette would like to know the reduction in State Aid over the past 10 years. J. Morin explained that all employees contribute to NH Retirement, the employee and the employer. J. Gettens was trying to come up with the best guess for the 2026 actuals. He took the 2025 actuals and added the drivers. The committee reviewed his proposed actual. J. Rathbun commented that the Staff Development was way too small at \$10,905. J. Morin commented on adding the \$970,000. In FY 26 the Building and Grounds Expendable Trust for \$100,000 and the Vehicle Expendable Trust for \$50,000 were raised and appropriated even though they came from the unexpended fund balance. J. Rathbun commented that the fund balance is getting tighter. Vacancies are the only place to pull from but it is a very hard day not to cover those positions. J. Morin will bring the Trust Fund Balances at the next meeting. W. Lechlinder commented if we did not have the drivers and the revenue loss we would have an increase. He commented that we do not have control at the State level but we have control of our expenses. J. Rathbun commented that 75%-80% is staff costs. We can only cut so far. If you cut staff too deep you hurt the culture of the school district. The classes are getting bigger now. W. Lechlinder is not saying to do that but asked about the number of administrators when Cutler joins MTC. J. Rathbun said we need a principal and a vice principal and 2 nurses for the amount of students that will be in the school. This is required by law. He said we will not inflate and the administration will let you know the staff that we do not need. We do not want to increase the budget. W. Lechlinder asked what are the steps to offset the lack of revenue. J. Morin commented that we are fighting with the State and the adequacy should go up.

6. **Communication Strategy Brainstorm-Planning for Upcoming Budget Cycle:** J. Rathbun explained the new driver that the Board is asking for is for a study of the SAU to consolidate the SAU buildings for \$7500.00. The Board had asked for an ELO position but we have a current staff member in that position. J. Gettens asked where the FY 26 MDEA increases are. J. Morin explained they are under the salaries.

7. **Construction Update:** J. Rathbun updated the committee on the school renovations. He said that he is able to give individual tours but not as a group. Emerson is near completion. The building will be ready for Harvest Night in October. The Board Meeting on November 4 will be

at Emerson with a small ribbon cutting ceremony. January 6 the Board will hold their meeting at MTC. The CRC is starting the conversation on the upcoming budget. R. Audette would like the committees to do marketing for the budget so we do not fall on our faces in February.

8. Superintendent Comments: J. Rathbun invited the Budget Committee to Homecoming which will be held October 6-11. There will be sporting events, a parade, food and other events. Emerson is near completion. It should be done by Columbus Day. MTC is scheduled to be completed at the end of November or December. Troy is moving along and all are well within budget. It was asked if the administration has to report out on any changes to the public. J. Morin explained that any changes are all within budget. She explained that half of the project is State funded and half as a bond. The State needs to know the cost and we will receive the 20% of the remaining balance. Some things qualify and some do not. J. Morin said that she has State reports that can be explained. J. Rathbun said it would be too deep on specific items and the budget. J. Morin explained that when we did the estimates for the renovations we did not have all of the engineer designs. We had to follow State guidelines. The planning was so far in advance. We also had no idea about the tariffs but we were fortunate that it did not affect us. We are happy that we are within budget. J. Morin said that things always change in construction. J. Rathbun explained if Hutter goes over we do not pay them. The softball field is 90% better than most. We are currently correcting the issue.

9. School Board Liaison Report: B. Tatro explained that the Board has decided to name the Emerson Library, the Winston Wright Library. The MESSA and the Board have come to an agreement for the upcoming contract. She also explained that a realtor has approached the district about Cutler. This has been discussed with the attorney and will require the 3-bid process. J. Morin explained that she attended a meeting in Concord today and the RSA now states that the School Board liaison is not a voting member. She will send the RSA to E. Sheldon to review.

10. Vice Chairperson's Comments: N. Carney asked about holding the next meeting at Emerson. J. Rathbun would suggest the November meeting at Emerson.

11. Next Meeting's Agenda: The next meeting is on October 28, 2025.

12. Public Comments: There were no public comments.

13. Motion to adjourn: MOTION: J.Hoden **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 PM. **SECOND:** R.Audette. **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
MRSD Recording Secretary