

Public Notice of Meeting
WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, October 5, 2026
Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative M/H School
7:00 PM

Videoconferencing: meet.google.com/mzh-iews-jhy

Audio: [+1 929-282-1047](tel:+19292821047)PIN: 426 740 766#

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- I. CALL TO ORDER**
- II. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA**
- III. RULES OF PROCEDURE**
- IV. INFORMATION REQUEST GUIDANCE DOCUMENT**
- V. FOLLOW-UP ON MOTION FOR DISCUSSION WITH ADMINISTRATION**
- VI. BUDGET WALK THROUGH & REVIEW DRAFT 1**
- VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS**
- VIII. REVIEW PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**
- IX. BUDGET COMMITTEE VACANCY**
- X. PUBLIC COMMENTS**
- XI. BUDGET COMMITTEE COMMENTS**
- XII. NEXT MEETING**
- XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Below is a reorganized replacement document followed by an amendment crosswalk and proposed motions for adoption.

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District

Budget Committee Rules of Procedure and Operating Protocols

Originally adopted December 3, 2024

Revised: September 13, 2026

Article 1 — Purpose and Legal Authority

1.1 Purpose

The Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District Budget Committee is an official budget committee established under the District's Articles of Agreement and New Hampshire law.

Under RSA 32:1, the purpose of an official budget committee is to assist voters in the prudent appropriation of public funds. The Committee carries out that responsibility by independently reviewing financial information, preparing and recommending the operating budget, conducting required public hearings, reviewing expenditure-related warrant articles, and providing voters with information necessary to make informed decisions.

1.2 Governing authority

The Committee is governed by:

1. Applicable New Hampshire statutes, including RSA 32, RSA 91-A, and RSA 195;
2. The Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District Articles of Agreement;
3. These Rules of Procedure; and
4. Other applicable federal and state laws.

If these Rules conflict with controlling law or the District's Articles of Agreement, the controlling authority shall govern.

1.3 Independent statutory body

The Budget Committee is a separately organized statutory public body. It is not a subcommittee of the School Board.

The School Board governs the District. The superintendent and administration manage District operations. The Budget Committee exercises the financial and budgetary authority assigned to it by law.

1.4 Rescission

The legislative body may rescind the establishment of the official Budget Committee in the manner authorized by RSA 32:14 and RSA 195:12-a.

Article 2 — Membership

2.1 Composition

Subject to the District's Articles of Agreement and RSA 195:12-a, the Committee consists of nine elected members and one School Board representative.

Elected representation is presently allocated as follows:

- Wilton: five members elected by Wilton voters;
- Lyndeborough: two members elected by Lyndeborough voters; and
- At-large seats representing Lyndeborough: two members elected by voters of both towns.

Elected members serve staggered three-year terms unless otherwise provided by controlling law or the Articles of Agreement.

2.2 School Board representative

The School Board chair shall appoint one School Board member to serve as an ex officio, nonvoting member of the Budget Committee, as provided by RSA 195:12-a.

The School Board representative may participate in discussion, provide information, and facilitate communication between the two bodies but shall not vote.

2.3 Domicile

Each elected member must maintain the domicile required for the seat held. A member who ceases to meet the applicable domicile requirement shall cease to hold office as provided by law and the Articles of Agreement.

2.4 Officers

At its first meeting following the annual election, the Committee shall elect from among its elected members:

- A chair;
- A vice-chair; and
- A secretary.

Officers shall serve until their successors are elected.

2.5 Duties of officers

The chair shall:

- Preside over meetings;
- Prepare agendas in consultation with the vice-chair and secretary;
- Facilitate orderly, fair, and efficient deliberations;
- Serve as the primary channel for Committee information requests;
- Coordinate the annual budget calendar;
- Enforce these Rules consistently and without regard to viewpoint; and
- Perform other duties assigned by law or the Committee.

The vice-chair shall perform the chair's duties in the chair's absence and assist with meeting and budget-process coordination.

The secretary shall prepare or oversee the preparation of minutes, maintain records of Committee action, and coordinate the transmission of records for public access and retention.

2.6 Other assignments

Members may volunteer to serve as liaisons to or participants in other District committees when invited by the School Board or other authorized body.

Such service does not authorize an individual member to represent that the Budget Committee has adopted a position unless the Committee has done so by vote.

2.7 Attendance

An elected member shall cease to hold office upon missing four consecutive scheduled or announced meetings for which the member received reasonable notice, unless excused by the chair, as provided by RSA 32:15.

When reasonably possible, a member anticipating an absence should notify the chair and vice-chair at least 24 hours before the meeting. The chair's decision to excuse an absence should be recorded in the minutes.

2.8 Vacancies

When a vacancy occurs in an elected Budget Committee position, the departing member should provide written notice to the Committee chair when reasonably possible. The chair shall notify the Committee and the appropriate District officials promptly.

In accordance with RSA 671:33, IV, the remaining Budget Committee members representing the same town or towns as the departed member shall fill the vacancy, provided that at least two such members remain. A member-at-large shall be included as a representative of the same town for this purpose.

If fewer than two eligible members remain, or if the eligible members are unable by majority vote to agree upon an appointment, the select boards of the town or towns involved shall fill the vacancy by majority vote in convention. If the select boards are unable to fill the vacancy, the Cooperative School District moderator shall make the appointment.

A vacancy in the School Board representative position shall be filled by the Cooperative School Board.

A person appointed to an elected Budget Committee vacancy shall serve until the next District election, at which time voters shall elect a replacement for the remainder of the unexpired term, as applicable.

The appointing members or body may use a reasonable public process to solicit interested candidates, provided the vacancy is filled in accordance with RSA 671:33, IV.

Article 3 — Duties, Authority, and Limitations

3.1 Statutory duties

Subject to the statutes applicable to cooperative school districts, the Committee shall:

1. Prepare and recommend the District's operating budget;
2. Confer with the School Board, administration, officers, and other officials concerning estimated costs, anticipated revenues, and services performed;
3. Obtain pertinent information reasonably necessary for budget preparation;
4. Conduct the public hearings required by law;
5. Review and recommend action on warrant articles and supplemental appropriations involving expenditures;
6. Record its votes on expenditure-related warrant articles as required by RSA 195:12-a;
7. Deliver and post the final budget and recommendations as required by law; and
8. Periodically review comparative statements of appropriations and expenditures.

3.2 Scope of financial review

The Committee may examine matters reasonably related to an appropriation, expenditure, anticipated revenue, financial risk, staffing cost, warrant article, or service funded by the budget.

The Committee may consider:

- Historical and proposed expenditures;
- Anticipated revenues;
- Budget-to-actual variances;
- Staffing levels, vacancies, compensation, and benefits;
- Enrollment and service levels;
- Program costs and participation;
- Facility, transportation, technology, and contractual costs;
- Cost allocation and cost-per-pupil information;
- Financial consequences of School Board policies;
- Aggregate performance or outcome information relevant to funding;
- Special-education costs, reimbursements, and financial risks;
- Recurring and nonrecurring costs; and
- Reasonably available alternatives and their financial effects.

3.3 Operational boundaries

The Committee may evaluate the financial justification for a position, program, or service. It does not administer District operations.

The Committee shall not:

- Hire, fire, discipline, supervise, or evaluate employees;
- Direct the superintendent, administrators, teachers, or other staff;
- Investigate individual employee performance as a personnel matter;
- Establish or replace curriculum;
- Select instructional methods or assessments;
- Determine individual special-education eligibility, services, or placements;
- Resolve individual parent, student, or employee complaints;
- Adopt, repeal, or administer School Board policies;
- Direct how lawfully appropriated funds must be spent;
- Disclose or request information prohibited from public disclosure; or
- Exercise authority assigned by law to the School Board, administration, or another official.

3.4 Review of current expenditures

The Committee may request and periodically review comparative statements of appropriations and expenditures, including subaccounts, under RSA 32:22.

This review does not authorize the Committee or an individual member to direct, dispute, or challenge officials' lawful discretion over current expenditures, except through a remedy expressly provided by law.

3.5 Authority belongs to the Committee

The Committee exercises its authority collectively at a properly noticed meeting.

An individual member may propose an action or information request but shall not:

- Direct a District employee;
- Assign work to the administration;
- Require creation of a report;
- Represent a personal position as the Committee's position;
- Communicate a request as an official Committee directive; or
- Commit the Committee to a course of action.

Nothing in this section prevents a member from independently reviewing publicly available information or submitting an individual request under RSA 91-A.

Article 4 — Annual Budget Process

4.1 Budget calendar

The Committee shall establish an annual budget calendar sufficiently early to allow the School Board and administration reasonable time to prepare and present the required information.

The calendar should identify:

- Submission dates;
- Presentation dates;
- Department or program reviews;
- Dates for questions and responses;
- Preliminary decision dates;
- Public-hearing deadlines;
- Final voting dates; and
- Statutory posting and delivery deadlines.

4.2 Illustrative calendar

The following is an approximate planning schedule and may be adjusted annually:

Period

Principal activity

June–July	Establish budget calendar and anticipated information needs
August–September	Discuss strategy, assumptions, format, and presentation expectations
October–December	Review proposed budget, revenues, programs, and departmental information
December–January	Conduct final review and approve the Committee’s recommended budget
January–February	Hold required public hearing or hearings
March	Present the budget at the annual District meeting
July 1	Fiscal year begins
June 30	Fiscal year ends

4.3 Budget format

The Committee shall confer with the School Board and administration regarding:

- Budget formats;
- Line-item and subaccount detail;
- Comparisons with prior budgets and actual expenditures;
- Anticipated revenues;
- Material assumptions;
- Change tracking; and
- Supplemental supporting materials.

Information required under RSA 32:17 shall be provided in a format acceptable to the Committee. The statutory obligation may be satisfied through assistance from a knowledgeable staff person with access to the required information.

4.4 Information-request process

Questions seeking clarification of material already presented may be asked during a meeting through the chair.

A request requiring research, creation of a new report, legal review, individualized analysis, or substantial staff time shall ordinarily be submitted in writing to the chair. The request should identify:

1. The appropriation or budget decision to which it relates;
2. The specific information requested;
3. The fiscal year or period involved;

4. The requested response date; and
5. Why existing information is insufficient.

The chair may consult with the superintendent or School Board representative regarding availability, confidentiality, workload, format, and a reasonable response date.

Material requests shall be presented to the Committee for prioritization and approval. Approval may be by consensus if there is no objection or by majority vote if requested by any voting member.

4.5 Reasonable scope and timing

The Committee shall balance its right to obtain pertinent information with the need to avoid unnecessary duplication, unreasonable deadlines, excessive administrative burden, or interference with employees' primary duties.

Whenever practicable, the administration shall:

- Identify information that already exists;
- Explain when requested information is not maintained in the requested form;
- Propose a reasonable alternative;
- Identify confidentiality or legal concerns; and
- Provide an estimated completion date.

4.6 Communication channel

Official Committee information requests shall be transmitted through the chair or, in the chair's absence, the vice-chair.

Responses shall be distributed to all members and maintained as governmental records when required by law.

Article 5 — Meetings and Deliberations

5.1 Meeting location

Meetings shall ordinarily be held in the school library or another publicly accessible location with appropriate technology.

The chair may select another suitable location when reasonably necessary.

5.2 Meeting schedule and notice

Meetings shall be scheduled as needed to complete Committee business.

The Committee should establish its regular meeting schedule in advance. When practicable, members should receive an agenda and supporting materials at least two calendar days before a meeting.

Legal notice of the time and place of each meeting shall be provided in accordance with RSA 91-A:2. Except in an emergency, notice shall be posted in two appropriate places, one of which may be the public body's website, or published in a newspaper of general circulation, at least 24 hours in advance, excluding Sundays and legal holidays.

5.3 Agenda preparation

The chair shall prepare the agenda. A member may request that an item be placed on a future agenda by submitting the request to the chair.

A requested item should identify:

- The subject;
- Its relationship to Committee authority;
- The action or discussion requested; and
- Any supporting material.

The chair may schedule the item on a reasonable future agenda based on deadlines, available meeting time, preparedness, and relevance.

The Committee may amend the agenda at a meeting by majority vote, subject to applicable notice requirements and the public's reasonable expectation concerning the meeting's announced business.

5.4 Quorum and voting

A quorum shall be determined under applicable law and the District's Articles of Agreement based on voting membership.

Unless otherwise required by law or these Rules, action requires a majority vote of the voting members present and voting.

The School Board's ex officio representative shall not vote and shall not be counted as a voting member when determining the outcome of a vote.

No vote in open session shall be taken by secret ballot.

5.5 Recognition by the chair

A member shall be recognized by the chair before speaking.

Members shall:

- Address their remarks through the chair;
- Refrain from interrupting;
- Allow questions and answers to be completed;
- Remain on the pending agenda item; and
- Comply with reasonable directions from the chair.

A member may interrupt only to raise a recognized point of order or an immediate legal or safety concern.

5.6 Fair opportunity to participate

The chair shall provide members with a reasonable and substantially equal opportunity to participate.

The chair may use speaking rounds, reasonable time limits, alternating viewpoints, or other neutral procedures to prevent one or more members from dominating the discussion.

The chair may recognize a presenter or official to answer a question before permitting follow-up questions.

5.7 Standards of debate

Members may question expenditures, challenge assumptions, criticize proposals or official decisions, and advocate for a different budget recommendation.

Members shall focus discussion on the pending financial issue, supporting evidence, proposal, or official decision. Members shall avoid:

- Personal attacks;
- Ridicule, insults, or demeaning remarks;
- Accusations of dishonesty, incompetence, manipulation, malfeasance, or improper motive without a specific factual basis;
- Inflammatory labels used in place of financial analysis;
- Questions that assume genuinely disputed facts;
- Public evaluation of an identifiable employee;
- Disclosure of confidential information; and
- Conduct that materially interferes with the Committee's ability to complete its business.

These provisions regulate conduct, relevance, and meeting order—not the viewpoint expressed. Strong criticism or disagreement shall not be ruled out of order merely because it is unwelcome or opposed by a majority.

5.8 Facts, opinions, and assumptions

Members shall make reasonable efforts to distinguish among:

- Verified facts;

- Estimates;
- Assumptions;
- Allegations; and
- Personal opinions.

If a material factual assertion is disputed, the chair may:

- Ask the member to identify its source;
- Request that the assertion be restated as an opinion or question;
- Refer it for verification;
- Permit an immediate factual response; or
- Defer further discussion until supporting information is available.

5.9 Budget relevance

The chair may ask a member to explain how a question or statement relates to:

- An appropriation;
- An expenditure;
- Anticipated revenue;
- A financial risk;
- A warrant article;
- A funded service; or
- Another matter within the Committee's authority.

If the connection is not reasonably apparent, the chair may rule the discussion out of order or refer the matter to the School Board, administration, or another appropriate forum.

5.10 Repetitive discussion

After a question has been reasonably answered or a position has been stated, the chair may limit substantially repetitive discussion unless the member identifies:

- New information;
- A material unanswered question; or
- A different budget implication.

Disagreement with an answer does not, by itself, require the question to be answered repeatedly.

5.11 Confidential and individualized matters

The Committee shall ordinarily discuss positions, staffing structures, aggregate services, program costs, and financial effects rather than identifiable employees, students, or families.

Questions involving special education shall generally use aggregate information that reasonably protects student confidentiality, particularly when grade, disability, placement, or cost information could identify a student in this small District.

Individual complaints and personnel or student matters shall be referred to the appropriate process.

5.12 Enforcement by the chair

The chair shall enforce these Rules consistently and without regard to the member's position or viewpoint.

When a rule is not followed, the chair may progressively:

1. Remind the member of the applicable rule;
2. Ask the member to restate the question or comment;
3. Direct the member to return to the pending subject;
4. Rule the comment or line of inquiry out of order;
5. Withdraw recognition for the remainder of that discussion;
6. Call a brief recess; or
7. Ask the Committee to address continued disorder through an appropriate motion.

The chair should ordinarily identify the rule being applied and give the member a reasonable opportunity to comply before withdrawing recognition.

5.13 Appeal from a ruling

A voting member may appeal a procedural ruling of the chair.

The appeal shall be decided by a majority of the voting members present and voting. The chair's ruling shall remain in effect unless overturned.

5.14 Parliamentary procedure

For procedural matters not addressed by law, the Articles of Agreement, or these Rules, the chair may consult the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* as a guide.

Failure to follow an informal parliamentary formality shall not invalidate Committee action when the action and vote are otherwise clear and lawful.

5.15 Remote participation

Remote participation may be permitted only in accordance with RSA 91-A:2.

When a member participates remotely:

- The minutes shall state why physical attendance was not reasonably practical;

- A quorum must be physically present at the noticed meeting location except in a legally recognized emergency;
- All participants must be able to hear and communicate contemporaneously;
- The remote member shall identify all persons present at the remote location; and
- All votes taken during the meeting shall be by roll call.

5.16 Public comment

When public comment is included on the agenda, the chair shall announce the applicable procedures, including any neutral time limits.

Speakers shall address the Committee through the chair. The chair may require comments to relate to matters within the Committee's authority or identified on the agenda.

Public comment is not Committee deliberation. Members should not engage in extended debate with speakers. A matter raised during public comment may be referred for factual follow-up or placement on a future agenda.

Article 6 — Code of Ethics

6.1 Purpose

Budget Committee members hold positions of public trust. Each member shall perform their duties in a manner that promotes informed decision-making, responsible stewardship of public funds, lawful government, and public confidence in the Committee.

This Code does not require members to agree with one another, the School Board, or the administration. Members are expected to exercise independent judgment and may vigorously question, criticize, support, or oppose any budget proposal within the Committee's authority.

Ethical service requires that disagreement remain fact-focused, honest, fair, and directed toward the Committee's public responsibilities.

6.2 Commitment to the public interest

Members shall:

1. Place the interests of the District's voters, students, and communities above personal advantage;
2. Consider both the District's obligation to provide lawful and appropriate educational services and the effect of expenditures on taxpayers;
3. Exercise independent judgment based on the information reasonably available;
4. Avoid using office to advance a private financial or personal interest;

5. Consider the District as a whole while remaining attentive to the interests of both member towns; and
6. Refrain from promising a particular vote in exchange for a benefit, favor, appointment, or other consideration.

A member does not violate this section merely by favoring a higher or lower budget, advocating a particular fiscal philosophy, representing constituent concerns, or disagreeing strongly with another official.

6.3 Faithful performance of statutory duties

Members shall make reasonable efforts to understand and comply with:

- RSA 32;
- RSA 91-A;
- RSA 195:12-a;
- RSA 671:33;
- The District's Articles of Agreement;
- These Rules of Procedure; and
- Other laws applicable to Committee business.

Members shall remain within the Committee's financial and budgetary authority and shall not knowingly represent that the Committee possesses administrative, personnel, curriculum, or policymaking authority that the law assigns to another body or official.

6.4 Preparation and diligence

Members should:

1. Attend scheduled meetings regularly;
2. Review agendas and supporting materials before meetings;
3. Become reasonably familiar with the budget, revenues, financial reports, and applicable legal requirements;
4. Ask timely and reasonably focused questions;
5. Consider responses and contrary information in good faith;
6. Avoid unnecessarily duplicative requests; and
7. Participate sufficiently to cast informed votes.

A member should not reach or publicly announce a final conclusion before reasonably considering the information presented during the Committee's process.

6.5 Honesty and accuracy

Members shall not knowingly make a materially false statement concerning Committee business.

Members shall make reasonable efforts to:

- Distinguish facts from estimates, assumptions, allegations, and opinions;
- Identify the source of material factual assertions when requested;
- Correct a material factual statement after learning that it was inaccurate;
- Avoid presenting incomplete data in a materially misleading manner;
- Avoid attributing statements or positions to another person inaccurately; and
- Refrain from alleging misconduct, dishonesty, manipulation, or improper motive without a reasonable factual basis.

An honest error shall not constitute an ethical violation. A member who learns that a material statement was inaccurate should correct the public record promptly.

6.6 Fair and respectful treatment

Members shall treat fellow members, School Board members, employees, students, families, presenters, and members of the public with dignity.

Members shall not engage in:

- Personal attacks;
- Threats, intimidation, or harassment;
- Ridicule or degrading remarks;
- Discriminatory conduct;
- Persistent interruption;
- Public humiliation of an employee, student, family, or other person;
- Accusations used as a substitute for budget analysis; or
- Conduct intended primarily to disrupt or prevent the Committee from completing its business.

Nothing in this section prohibits fact-based criticism of a budget, expenditure, program, financial assumption, official recommendation, or decision.

6.7 Conflicts of interest

A member shall disclose any actual or reasonably apparent conflict of interest concerning a matter before the Committee.

A conflict may exist when a member, the member's immediate family, employer, business, or close financial associate could receive a particular and direct financial benefit or detriment from the Committee's action that is distinguishable from its effect on the public generally.

Potential conflicts may include:

- A financial interest in a vendor or contractor whose funding is under consideration;
- An employment or business relationship materially affected by the decision;
- A pending contract or claim involving the member or an immediate family member;

- Receipt of compensation or a promised benefit connected to the matter; or
- A personal or financial relationship that would reasonably call the member's impartiality into question.

The following circumstances do not, standing alone, constitute a conflict:

- Being a District taxpayer;
- Residing in Wilton or Lyndeborough;
- Having a child or family member enrolled in the District;
- Having expressed a prior policy or budget opinion;
- Belonging to a community organization; or
- Supporting or opposing a general category of District spending.

6.8 Disclosure and recusal

When a potential conflict exists, the member shall disclose its nature on the record before participating in the matter.

The member shall refrain from participating and voting when recusal is required by law or when the member determines that participation would create an actual conflict that materially impairs independent judgment.

When the circumstances present only a potential appearance of conflict, the member may disclose the circumstances and request guidance from the chair, Committee, or legal counsel.

The minutes shall record:

- The disclosure;
- Whether the member recused;
- The member's departure and return, if applicable; and
- Any Committee action concerning the issue.

The Committee should obtain legal advice when the applicable standard is uncertain. A majority vote should not be treated as a substitute for a controlling legal disqualification standard.

6.9 Gifts and personal benefits

A member shall not solicit or accept money, services, discounts, favors, entertainment, gifts, or other benefits when:

- The benefit is offered because of the member's office;
- The giver has or is reasonably likely to have a financial interest in Committee action;
- Acceptance could reasonably appear intended to influence the member; or
- Acceptance is prohibited by law.

Ordinary informational materials, publicly available items, nominal refreshments offered to all participants, and benefits arising from a relationship unrelated to the member's office are not

prohibited unless acceptance would create an actual conflict or reasonable appearance of improper influence.

When uncertain, the member should decline the benefit or disclose it to the chair.

6.10 Confidentiality and privacy

Members shall protect information made confidential by federal or state law.

Members shall not:

- Disclose confidential student, special-education, medical, personnel, legal, or family information;
- Use confidential information for personal, political, financial, or other unauthorized purposes;
- Seek individualized confidential information when aggregate information is sufficient for budget review;
- Attempt to identify students or families from small statistical groups; or
- Disclose information from a properly convened nonpublic session unless disclosure is authorized or required by law.

The obligation to protect confidential information continues after a member leaves office.

Confidentiality shall not be invoked to conceal information that is lawfully public or to prevent lawful discussion of aggregate costs, staffing levels, services, or financial trends.

6.11 Transparency and public records

Members shall conduct Committee business openly as required by RSA 91-A.

Members shall not:

- Deliberate through email, text messaging, social media, or serial communications outside a properly noticed meeting;
- Use personal communication methods to evade public-record or open-meeting requirements;
- Destroy, conceal, or improperly alter a governmental record;
- Represent an individual communication as official Committee action; or
- Participate knowingly in an unposted meeting of a quorum.

Members should assume that communications created, received, or maintained in furtherance of Committee business may constitute governmental records. [RSA 91-A](#)

6.12 Use of office and Committee identity

A member shall not use the title, authority, staff access, records, or resources of the Committee for private gain or to imply Committee endorsement of a personal position.

When communicating outside a meeting, a member should distinguish among:

- A position formally adopted by the Committee;
- A matter currently under Committee consideration; and
- The member's personal opinion.

Unless authorized by vote, an individual member shall not:

- Speak on behalf of the Committee;
- Direct District staff;
- Issue an official Committee information request;
- Promise Committee action;
- Use Committee letterhead for personal advocacy; or
- Represent that another public body or employee reports to the member.

Members remain free to identify themselves accurately as Budget Committee members and express personal views, provided they do not falsely imply Committee authorization.

6.13 Relationship with employees and other public bodies

Members shall respect the distinct statutory responsibilities of the Budget Committee, School Board, superintendent, and administration.

Members may question and criticize financial recommendations but shall not attempt to:

- Supervise or evaluate employees;
- Direct daily operations;
- Conduct a public personnel investigation;
- Circumvent the superintendent or established communication process to assign work;
- Pressure an employee to provide confidential or unauthorized information; or
- Retaliate against a person for providing accurate information or expressing a lawful viewpoint.

Disagreements between public bodies should be addressed through official communications and public deliberations rather than personal accusations.

6.14 Treatment of information requests

Members shall use the information-request process in Article 4.

A member proposing a request shall make a good-faith effort to ensure that it:

- Relates to a matter within the Committee's authority;
- Is reasonably calculated to assist a budget decision;

- Is sufficiently specific to permit a response;
- Does not unnecessarily seek confidential or personally identifiable information;
- Allows a reasonable response period; and
- Does not impose work disproportionate to the anticipated value of the information.

The Committee may request substantial analysis when reasonably necessary. Administrative burden is a factor for the Committee to evaluate—not an automatic basis to deny relevant information.

6.15 No retaliation

A member shall not retaliate against another member, employee, official, or member of the public because that person:

- Expressed a lawful opinion;
- Disagreed with the member;
- Provided truthful information;
- Declined to disclose confidential information;
- Reported a suspected violation;
- Requested a public record; or
- Exercised another lawful right.

Disagreement, criticism, an adverse vote, or enforcement of a neutral procedural rule does not by itself constitute retaliation.

6.16 Stewardship of public resources

Members shall use Committee time, District resources, staff assistance, technology, and public funds only for legitimate public purposes.

Members should consider:

- Whether a requested analysis is reasonably necessary;
- Whether existing information will answer the question;
- Whether a less burdensome alternative is available;
- Whether a proposal shifts costs rather than reduces them;
- Whether short-term savings create material long-term liabilities; and
- Whether the Committee has considered both financial and legally required service consequences.

6.17 Individual expression and viewpoint neutrality

Nothing in this Code shall be interpreted to:

- Require agreement with the School Board or administration;
- Prohibit advocacy for increased or reduced spending;

- Prevent a member from questioning program effectiveness;
- Restrict criticism merely because it is forceful or unpopular;
- Require a member to vote with the majority; or
- Prevent disclosure of suspected unlawful conduct through an appropriate process.

These Rules shall be applied consistently without regard to whether a member supports or opposes a budget proposal.

6.18 Raising an ethics concern

A member who believes that this Code may have been violated should ordinarily:

1. Identify the specific provision involved;
2. Describe the conduct objectively;
3. Provide any supporting information;
4. Raise the matter with the chair or vice-chair; and
5. Allow the affected member a reasonable opportunity to respond.

If the concern involves the chair, it should be directed to the vice-chair.

An ethics concern involving confidential information, alleged unlawful conduct, or potential legal liability should be referred to appropriate legal counsel or another authority rather than publicly investigated by the Committee.

6.19 Response to a violation

This Code does not create an independent power to remove an elected member, impose a fine, or take another action not authorized by law.

For conduct occurring during a meeting, the chair may use the procedural measures authorized under Article 5, including:

- A reminder;
- A request to restate a comment;
- A direction to return to the pending matter;
- A ruling that discussion is out of order;
- Withdrawal of recognition;
- A recess; or
- Referral of a procedural ruling to the Committee.

For conduct outside a meeting, the Committee may, after notice and an opportunity for the member to respond:

- Clarify the Committee's actual position;
- Direct that unauthorized use of Committee identity cease;
- Request corrective action;
- Refer a legal issue to counsel or the proper authority; or

- Adopt a public statement concerning its own standards and actions.

Any response shall be lawful, proportionate, based on identified conduct, and applied without regard to viewpoint.

6.20 Annual acknowledgment

Following the annual election and organization of the Committee, each member should receive:

- These Rules;
- The District's Articles of Agreement;
- Relevant sections of RSA 32, RSA 91-A, RSA 195, and RSA 671; and
- Available training materials.

Each member should acknowledge receipt. An acknowledgment confirms receipt and does not waive any legal right or create a condition for holding elected office.

Article 7 — Minutes and Records

7.1 Responsibility

The secretary shall prepare the minutes. In the secretary's absence, the chair shall designate another member or appropriate person to prepare them.

7.2 Required contents

Minutes shall include, at minimum:

- Date, location, start time, and end time;
- Names of members present;
- Names of persons appearing before the Committee;
- Name of the person who prepared the minutes;
- A brief, accurate, and balanced description of the matters discussed;
- Motions and final decisions;
- Names of members making and seconding motions;
- Vote results; and
- Any additional information required by law.

As a local practice, the minutes may record each member's vote. A roll-call vote shall be recorded when required by law or requested and approved by the Committee.

Minutes are not intended to be transcripts. They should record the substance of official discussion and action without editorial characterization.

7.3 Availability of draft minutes

Draft minutes shall be promptly prepared and made available for public inspection no later than five business days after the meeting, as required by RSA 91-A:2.

Draft minutes shall be clearly marked “Draft—Subject to Approval.”

7.4 Approval and correction

Draft minutes shall ordinarily be considered at the next meeting.

Proposed corrections should address accuracy, completeness of legally required information, or clarity. Approval of minutes shall not be used to restart the underlying policy or budget debate.

Approved minutes shall be transmitted for posting and permanent retention. When the Committee maintains or uses a website, approved minutes shall be posted or made accessible as required by RSA 91-A:2, II-b.

7.5 Recordings

Any person may use a recording device at an open meeting, subject to reasonable measures necessary to prevent disruption.

A recording made by or on behalf of the Committee shall be managed as a governmental record in accordance with applicable retention and disclosure requirements.

A recording does not replace the requirement to prepare written minutes.

7.6 Electronic communications

Members shall not use email, text messages, or other communications to deliberate outside a properly noticed meeting.

Administrative communications—including scheduling, distributing agendas, and circulating documents—may occur electronically as permitted by RSA 91-A. Replies expressing positions or engaging in substantive discussion should be avoided outside a meeting.

Article 8 — Public Hearings and Final Budget

8.1 Required hearing

The Committee shall conduct the public hearing or hearings required by RSA 32 and other statutes applicable to the cooperative school district.

The chair shall establish an orderly process that permits public participation while allowing the Committee to complete all legally required business.

8.2 Final budget

The final operating budget shall contain the amount recommended by the Budget Committee and shall be completed, transmitted, and posted in accordance with applicable statutory deadlines.

The Committee shall separately review and vote upon expenditure-related warrant articles as required by RSA 195:12-a.

8.3 Presentation materials

The Committee should ordinarily provide:

1. The proposed line-item budget;
2. Comparisons with the prior approved budget and actual expenditures;
3. Anticipated revenues;
4. Proposed warrant-article language;
5. Estimated tax effects prepared or approved by the proper authority;
6. Explanations of material increases, decreases, and financial risks;
7. Relevant long-term trends; and
8. The Committee's recorded recommendations.

Materials should distinguish clearly among:

- The School Board's recommendation;
- The Budget Committee's recommendation;
- Administrative estimates;
- Anticipated revenues; and
- Estimated tax effects.

8.4 Advance availability

The Committee should make final hearing materials available as early as reasonably possible. The Committee's planning goal is to post the materials by the Friday preceding the public hearing and to provide a reasonable number of printed copies at the hearing.

This planning goal does not modify any controlling statutory deadline.

Article 9 — Adoption, Amendment, and Review

9.1 Adoption and amendment

These Rules may be adopted or amended by majority vote of the voting members present and voting at a properly noticed meeting.

Proposed substantive amendments should be provided to members in writing before the meeting at which action is expected whenever reasonably practicable.

9.2 Annual review

The Committee should review these Rules after the annual election and whenever a material change in law occurs.

9.3 Suspension

A procedural rule that is not required by law may be suspended for a particular matter by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present.

A statutory requirement, confidentiality obligation, or provision protecting public access shall not be suspended.

9.4 Severability

If a provision is determined to conflict with controlling law or the Articles of Agreement, the remaining provisions shall continue in effect.

Amendment Crosswalk

Substantive amendments

No.	Existing provision	Proposed change	Reason
1	Background and citations presented in a long introductory paragraph	Replaced with Articles 1.1–1.4	Separates purpose, authority, independence, and conflicts of law
2	“All ten representatives are voting members”	School Board representative is ex officio and nonvoting	Required by the 2025 amendment to RSA 195:12-a
3	Officers selected from “members” generally	Officers elected from elected members	RSA 195:12-a requires the Committee to choose officers; nonvoting representative should not control Committee leadership
4	School Board may assign members to other District committees	Made such service voluntary and clarified that an individual liaison cannot speak for the Committee without authorization	Preserves separation between the two public bodies
5	Chair may excuse four consecutive absences, but documentation not addressed	Added notice and recording of excused status	Creates a clear record for application of RSA 32:15
6	Remaining Budget Committee members representing the affected town or towns select the replacement	Retain this authority and add the statutory fallback process involving the select boards, moderator, or School Board, depending on the circumstances	Conforms the provision to RSA 671:33, IV and clarifies who acts if the eligible Budget Committee members cannot make the appointment
7	Authority section primarily reproduces statutory text	Reorganized into duties, permissible inquiry, operational boundaries, expenditure review, and collective authority	Makes the Committee’s actual powers and limits easier to apply

8	No express statement that individual members lack authority	Added 3.5	Important distinction under RSA 32: authority belongs to the Committee collectively
9	Information requests must pass through chair and vice-chair, but approval process is unclear	Added written-request and Committee-prioritization procedure	Prevents individual members from assigning extensive work to staff
10	Administration contact broadly prohibited	Limited prohibition to official Committee work directives; preserved individual RSA 91-A rights	Avoids overbroad restriction on an elected member's individual rights
11	Meeting must occur in library	Changed to "ordinarily" in library or another accessible location	Preserves operational flexibility
12	Seven-day agenda rule and 24-hour legal notice are combined	Separated planning goal from statutory notice	Avoids implying that a seven-day agenda is legally required
13	Any member may add agenda items without a stated process	Added written request, relevance, requested action, and reasonable scheduling	Helps prevent surprise or unfocused agenda items
14	No quorum or voting rule	Added 5.4	Necessary because School Board representative is now nonvoting
15	General expectation of respect	Added detailed, viewpoint-neutral debate standards	Gives members notice and the chair an objective enforcement basis
16	Chair may "move on" at the chair's discretion	Replaced with structured recognition, fair participation, relevance, repetition, enforcement, and appeal rules	Provides authority while limiting arbitrary chair action
17	No procedure for disputed factual assertions	Added 5.8	Separates verified facts, assumptions, allegations, and opinions

18	No provision addressing repeated questions	Added 5.10	Allows the chair to manage repetition while preserving new questions
19	No confidentiality provision	Added 5.11	Particularly important for special education and a small district
20	No progressive enforcement procedure	Added 5.12	Gives the chair practical, graduated tools
21	No appeal from chair's decision	Added 5.13	Protects members and ensures viewpoint-neutral enforcement
22	No parliamentary authority	Added 5.14	Supplies a guide for procedural questions not covered elsewhere
23	No remote-participation procedure	Added 5.15	Incorporates current RSA 91-A requirements
24	No public-comment procedure	Added 5.16	Distinguishes public input from Committee deliberation
25	Code of Ethics	Revised Article 6 to Code of Ethics	Establishes Code of Ethics within the rules of procedure
26	Draft minutes due in seven calendar days	Changed to no later than five business days	Current RSA 91-A:2 requirement
27	Minutes require a broad "summary of meeting conversations"	Changed to a brief, accurate, balanced description of matters discussed	Reflects statutory standard and avoids transcript-like minutes
28	Minutes do not require preparer's name or seconds	Added both	Required by current RSA 91-A:2
29	Every vote must show how each member voted	Preserved as optional local practice; roll call required when legally necessary	State law does not require individual attribution for every ordinary in-person vote
30	Recordings mentioned briefly	Added disruption, retention, disclosure, and written-minutes provisions	Clarifies legal and records consequences

31	No electronic deliberation provision	Added 7.6	Addresses RSA 91-A risks involving email and text exchanges
32	Public-hearing and final-budget provisions dispersed	Consolidated into Article 8	Makes end-of-process responsibilities easier to follow
33	No process for future amendments or annual review	Added Article 9	Establishes maintenance, suspension, and severability rules

Primarily editorial changes

No.	Change
E1	Corrected numbering error: existing Membership section jumps from item 3 to item 5
E2	Replaced “members-at-large” where “elected members” is clearer in the cooperative-district context
E3	Shortened lengthy statutory quotations and cited the governing statutes
E4	Converted dense paragraphs into numbered provisions, bullets, and a calendar table
E5	Corrected grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spacing, and inconsistent terminology
E6	Consistently uses “Committee,” “School Board,” “District,” “chair,” and “administration”
E7	Removed obsolete references to italicized language added in 2003 and explanatory legislative history from the operating rules
E8	Removed the stray “image” placeholder
E9	Corrected references to “RSA 195:12” where RSA 195:12-a is the more relevant Budget Committee provision
E10	Distinguished binding requirements using “shall” from goals and preferred practices using “should”

Recommended voting structure

Motion 1 — Statutory corrections

Move to approve Amendment Group 1, consisting of the revisions to membership, voting status, officer eligibility, attendance, vacancies, meeting notice, minutes, and remote participation necessary to conform the Protocols to current law.

This covers crosswalk items 2, 3, 5, 6, 12, 14, 23, 26, 28, and 29.

Motion 2 — Authority and boundaries

Move to approve Amendment Group 2, consisting of revised Articles 1 and 3 defining the Committee's purpose, collective authority, permissible financial inquiry, and operational limitations.

This covers items 1, 7, and 8.

Motion 3 — Budget process and information requests

Move to approve Amendment Group 3, consisting of revised Article 4 governing the annual calendar, budget format, information requests, reasonable response expectations, and official communications.

This covers items 9 and 10.

Motion 4 — Meeting management and conduct

Move to approve Amendment Group 4, consisting of revised Article 5 governing agendas, recognition, participation, debate, factual assertions, relevance, repetition, confidentiality, chair enforcement, appeals, parliamentary procedure, and public comment, as well as, Article 6 Code of Ethics

This covers items 11 and 13–25, except remote participation if included in Motion 1.

Motion 5 — Records, presentation, and administration

Move to approve Amendment Group 5, consisting of revised Articles 6 through 8 and all nonsubstantive editorial and formatting corrections.

After the groups are approved:

Move to adopt the Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District Budget Committee Rules of Procedure and Operating Protocols, as amended tonight, with an effective date of [date], subject to correction of citations, numbering, formatting, and other nonsubstantive clerical errors.

The five-question test

1. What budget decision will this support?

Complete this sentence:

“The Committee needs this information to determine whether _____ should be funded at _____.”

A request may also support broader budget planning, but its relationship to the Committee’s financial work should be reasonably clear.

2. Is it within our authority?

The request should relate to one or more of the following:

- Appropriations or expenditures;
- Anticipated revenues;
- Budget assumptions or variances;
- Staffing, compensation, or benefits;
- Program or service costs;
- Enrollment or service levels;
- Financial trends, risks, or obligations;
- Warrant articles;
- Cost allocation; or
- Results reasonably connected to a funded activity.

3. Are we seeking information—or trying to manage?

Appropriate financial inquiry	Outside the Committee’s role
What does the program cost?	Change how the program operates
How many positions are funded?	Direct, discipline, or evaluate staff
What service does the expense purchase?	Direct how the service is provided
What aggregate outcomes are available?	Select curriculum or teaching methods
What would an alternative cost?	Order the administration to implement it
What are aggregate special-education costs?	Review an individual student’s program
What are the financial effects of a policy?	Adopt or repeal School Board policy

4. Is the request proportionate?

Consider:

- Does the information already exist?
- Has it already been provided?
- Could an existing report answer the question?
- Can the request be narrowed?
- Does it require a newly created report or extensive analysis?
- Is the expected benefit proportionate to the staff time?
- Is the deadline reasonable?

Administrative burden is a legitimate consideration, but it does not automatically defeat a necessary request.

5. Does it protect confidentiality?

Request aggregate information whenever possible. Do not request identifiable student records, individual education programs, employee evaluations, confidential personnel information, or small-group data that could identify someone.

This is particularly important in a small district, where combining grade, disability, placement, or cost information may indirectly identify a student.

Final test

Before approving a request, ask:

Will this information materially help the Committee make or explain a budget recommendation without requiring it to manage the schools, evaluate identifiable people, or disregard confidentiality?

If yes, approve a clear and proportionate request. If the answer is uncertain, revise the request before assigning the work.

Committee review checklist

Relevance

- ☐ It relates to budget preparation, an appropriation, revenue, expenditure, warrant article, or funded service.
- ☐ The information could reasonably affect or explain a Committee recommendation.
- ☐ The purpose has been clearly stated.

Authority

- ☐ It seeks information rather than an operational directive.
- ☐ It does not ask the Committee to supervise or evaluate an employee.
- ☐ It does not attempt to establish curriculum or educational policy.
- ☐ It does not seek to determine an individual student's services or placement.
- ☐ It respects the responsibilities of the School Board and administration

Clarity and proportionality

- ☐ The information, period, scope, and requested date are identified.
- ☐ Existing materials have been reviewed first.
- ☐ The request is not unnecessarily duplicative.
- ☐ A narrower request would not adequately answer the question.
- ☐ The anticipated value justifies the work involved.
- ☐ The response period is reasonable

Accuracy and neutrality

- ☐ The request distinguishes facts, assumptions, allegations, and opinions.
- ☐ It does not assume disputed facts.
- ☐ It does not attribute an improper motive without evidence.
- ☐ It uses neutral terminology.
- ☐ It seeks information before drawing a conclusion

Confidentiality and process

- ☐ Aggregate information is requested when possible.
- ☐ The request avoids protected or identifiable information.
- ☐ The request will be transmitted through the chair.
- ☐ Material responses will be distributed to all members.
- ☐ The request represents Committee action—not an individual directive.

Quick decision guide

Green — Ordinarily appropriate

- Budgeted and actual spending by major category;
- Explanation of a material increase or decrease;
- Number and cost of funded positions;
- Vacancy, overtime, and turnover costs;
- Enrollment and staffing trends;
- Program cost and aggregate participation;

- Contract prices, terms, and escalation provisions;
- Revenues and reimbursement assumptions;
- Financial effects of identified alternatives;
- Aggregate special-education costs;
- Technology inventory, cost, purpose, and renewal schedule;
- Athletic and co-curricular costs and participation; and
- One-time versus recurring expenses
- "Explain why test scores are low."
- "Tell us whether staffing is efficient."
- "Analyze whether the schools should be consolidated."
- "Break down special-education enrollment by grade and disability."

Yellow — Clarify or narrow

- "Provide evidence that this program works."
- "Give us a complete cost-benefit analysis."
- "Calculate the cost of educating each town's students."
- "Show the capacity of every school."

Ask what decision the request supports, what definitions should be used, whether the information exists, how much work is involved, and whether the data could identify someone.

Red — Inappropriate as written

- Identify underperforming teachers.
- Provide individual employee evaluations.
- Identify students receiving special-education services.
- Provide individual education programs or placement decisions.
- Direct the superintendent to eliminate a position.
- Order a curriculum or operational change.

- Require the administration to prove it is not manipulating voters.
- Request confidential records to investigate an individual complaint.

Wilton-Lyndeborough Cooperative School District
FY 2027-2028 BUDGET CALENDAR

August 25, 2026	JOINT SCHOOL BOARD/BUDGET COMMITTEE SESSION – Recap of FY26 budget/actual; FY27 Updates/concerns; FY28 anticipated contract negotiations; District Goals discussion; Legislative review
September 14, 2026	BUDGET COMMITTEE WORKSHOP – Review upcoming budget calendar, process & expectations
September 28, 2026	DEADLINE/NO MEETING – FY28 Draft #1 due to Budget Committee
October 5, 2026	BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING – FY28 Draft #1 Presentation by Administration
October 12, 2026	DEADLINE/NO MEETING – Anticipated questions/requests from individuals due to chair.
October 19, 2026	BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING – Review questions & requests, discuss & vote on directives for the administration.
November 9, 2026	BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING – Discuss Nov. 3rd election results; Questions/concerns for SAU
November 20, 2026	DEADLINE/NO MEETING – FY28 Draft #2 due to Budget Committee
November 23, 2026	BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING – Review and Discuss Draft #2 changes/updates
December 7, 2026	BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING – Department Presentations (SAU, IT, Food Services, Facilities, CIP)
December 21, 2026	BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING – Department Presentations (LCS, FRES, WLC, SPED, Curriculum, other)
January 5, 2027	JOINT SCHOOL BOARD/BUDGET COMMITTEE SESSION – School Board district presentation requests; Warrant article discussions (in needed)
January 11, 2027	BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING – Finalize & vote on recommended budget for Public Hearing; vote on warrant article recommendations; public hearing/district meeting presentation discussion
January 19, 2027	JOINT SCHOOL BOARD/BUDGET COMMITTEE SESSION – Tentative: If needed
February 4, 2027	PUBLIC HEARING
February 8, 2027	BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING – Final District Meeting presentation discussion and revisions
March 6, 2027	DISTRICT MEETING

PERIOD FOR FILING FOR ELECTIVE OFFICE (RSA 671:19;RSA 669:19)	January 20, 2027 – January 29, 2027 till 5 PM
POST NOTICE OF SCHOOL BOARD BUDGET HEARING (7)	January 28, 2027 (Last Day)
DEADLINE FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING ITEMS (RSA 273-A:1,III)	*February 1, 2027
DEADLINE FOR PETITIONED WARRANT ARTICLES (RSA 197:6) (30)	*February 4, 2027 at 3:00 p.m.
FINAL INPUT PREPARED FOR PUBLIC HEARING	
WLC BUDGET (25)/BOND & NOTES HEARING (15) (RSA 32:5,I)	Thursday, February 4, 2027 (Snow Date 2/5/27)
POST WARRANT & MS-27 (14 DAYS PRIOR) (RSA 197:7; RSA 195:13)	*February 19, 2027 (Last Day)
ANNUAL REPORTS DISTRIBUTED	*February 27, 2027 (Last Day)
WLC DISTRICT MEETING (RSA 197:1)	Saturday, March 6, 2027 9 AM (Snow Date 3/8/27)
WLC DISTRICT VOTING (RSA 671:2)	Tuesday, March 9, 2027 Wilton-8AM-7PM Lyndeborough 10AM-7PM

*Last day by law for school district meeting is March 24, 2027

WILTON-LYNDEBOROUGH COOPERATIVE SCHOOL

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING

WLC-Library; WLC Conference Room

DRAFT MINUTES - 2nd Draft

Tuesday, May 13, 2026

Committee Present: Alyssa Lavoie (Chair), Phil Brooks (Vice Chair)

Bri Lavalley (SB Rep), Kellie-Sue Boissonnault, Kate McClure, Bob Newton, Bob Silva, Chris Conway (IT)

Absent: Bridget Mooney (Secretary), Craig Alley

Chair Chair Lavoie Lavoie called the Budget Committee to order. Time was not noted in original draft minutes.

1. Minutes

- Chair Lavoie made a motion to approve the 2/5/2026 minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. McClure. motion passed

2. Rules of Procedure and Code of Conduct

- Chair Lavoie opened discussion of the draft rules of procedure and code of conduct. Printed copies were available.
- Mr. Newton said he had received the draft late that afternoon and proposed tabling consideration so members would have adequate time to review it. He identified two initial areas for revision:
 - **Email use:** The rules should state that members must not use email for substantive discussion outside public meetings, to help comply with New Hampshire's Right-to-Know Law, RSA 91-A.
 - **Use of committee email accounts:** Members should use their SAU email accounts for committee business. Mr. Newton said keeping communications on the SAU server would make responding to RSA 91-A requests easier and reduce the risk of relevant communications being overlooked in private accounts.
 - **Legal deadlines:** The rules should identify required lead times for hearings and document submissions, expressed as the number of days before the relevant meeting or event—not calendar dates. Mr. Newton cited the public hearing deadline of 25 days before the district meeting as an example.
- Chair Lavoie noted that the draft refers to a schedule of meetings being provided by October 1 and suggested attaching or referencing the schedule prepared by the business administrator. Mr. Newton said the procedure itself should also state the required lead times.

Motion — Bob moved to table the rules of procedure and code of conduct until the next meeting so members would have time to review and comment. The motion was seconded by Ms. Boissonnault. Motion passed

3. Wilton Budget Committee Vacancy

- Chair Lavoie reported an unfilled budget committee seat for Wilton. The term would run through the end of the current season, with the position up for reelection in March.
- No expressions of interest had been received. Chair Lavoie said the vacancy would remain on future agendas until filled.
- Mr. Newton asked whether the procedure was correct in stating that vacancies are filled by the

school board chair. After further discussion, it was stated that the budget committee would vote to appoint someone in a vacant seat.

4. Mr. Newton's Management-Budget Proposal

3.1 Purpose and rationale

- Mr. Newton distributed a short memo to committee members and explained its purpose for the public. He proposed that, alongside the legally mandated state budget format, the committee request a separate “management budget” presentation using the same underlying data in a format that better reveals the district’s cost structure and operations.
- Mr. Newton argued that the state-required spreadsheet format does not make it easy to assess how effectively public funds are being used. In his view, the committee needs information that helps evaluate both **cost** and educational quality—not simply the cheapest possible budget.
- He said requests for information should be made before the summer so the administration has time to prepare it before formal budget discussions begin in September.
- Mr. Newton framed the committee’s role as scrutinizing whether the district is doing the right things and whether better results can be achieved for the same or lower cost. He contrasted:
 - Efficiency: doing things right.
 - Effectiveness: doing the right things.
- He criticized a budget process that, in his view, accepts the organization and its cost structure as presented and then spends extensive time examining small line items, sometimes under \$1,000, instead of examining broader assumptions and operations.
- Mr. Newton said his memo contained 10 requested information items.

3.2 Data format and possible support

- Mr. Silva said improved data organization could answer roughly half of the memo’s questions. He suggested coding and arranging the data to allow it to be viewed by school and other categories and then analyzed with filters or pivot tables.
- Mr. Silva said he had been able to reorganize the existing data in about 30 minutes. He suggested guiding the business department on how to provide data in a more useful format.
- Mr. Newton praised Mr. Silva’s data skills.
- Chair Lavoie cautioned that the administration’s time must be respected and said the committee should work with staff to improve the data presentation without creating unnecessary work.
- Mr. Silva emphasized that the data structure should be designed around the questions the committee wants answered.
- Chair Lavoie noted that at least some of the requested information had already been presented or discussed. As an example, the administration had provided a memo on the total cost of school sports, costs by sport, and participation numbers during the prior year.

3.3 Budget Committee authority and policy boundaries

- Chair Lavoie said requests must remain within the committee’s authority under the relevant RSA, which she described as including reviewing current expenditures and obtaining comparative statements of appropriations and expenditures in the detail the committee requires.
- She said the committee could review past and proposed expenditures but should be careful not to cross into setting school policy or controlling spending.

- Chair Lavoie identified the memo's request for an analysis of technology use for teaching in each grade—including applications, uses, and costs—as potentially beyond the committee's scope, in her opinion, because it could involve educational policy.
- Mr. Newton questioned how requesting information could exceed the committee's authority and asked Chair Lavoie to identify the specific legal basis. Chair Lavoie said she would research the RSA and NHMA guidance and would provide more specific information at the next meeting.
- Ms. McClure agreed that the technology item could reach into decisions about whether the district should use technology, which she viewed as a policy matter.
- Chair Lavoie clarified the process for any eventual requests: specific information requests would be presented as motions, require a second, be discussed, and go to a vote. The committee would need to consider both legal authority and majority support.

3.4 Whether the district is accountable and what the committee's role should be

- Chair Lavoie disagreed with parts of Mr. Newton's memo, including its claim that she had not heard the committee ask the relevant questions. She said related topics had been discussed in the previous year, including district goals, i-Ready, program decisions, and requests for the school board to consider broader issues.
- Ms. Lavallee described school board work that she said addressed costs and educational effectiveness:
 - Restructuring at the middle school and FRES following the prior year's budget.
 - Earlier consideration of middle-school restructuring, after which taxpayers restored a teaching position.
 - Quarterly curriculum reports and discussion of programs, materials, and student data.
 - Ongoing consideration of i-Ready, including possible changes because the board is unsure it is producing the desired results.
 - Review of the district technology plan, including possible movement away from a one-to-one technology model, particularly in light of concerns about technology's effects on younger students.
 - Work to establish relationships with two towns to receive tuitioned students under an open-enrollment warrant article that had passed.
- Ms. Lavallee said these discussions happen over time through budget, curriculum, and board meetings rather than all at once in one document. She also disputed the characterization of the district as non-accountable, saying it is accountable to the state, parents, and taxpayers.
- Ms. McClure referred to a recent strategic-planning meeting and the group's roadmap, which she said was being broken down into more specific work areas. Technology was one of those areas.
- Ms. McClure also reiterated her disagreement with comparing public-sector obligations to those of a corporation. She said public-sector and corporate duties and goals are fundamentally different, though she was open to further discussion of what the memo should include.
- Mr. Newton said the committee was independent—not merely “worker bees” for the school board. He said he intended the memo to start a continuing discussion, not to be resolved immediately.
- Mr. Newton argued that the committee should be willing to criticize the school board's goals, structures, and operations if it believes they do not provide adequate value for taxpayers. He said the committee cannot force changes but has a responsibility to express its view.
- Ms. McClure objected strongly to Mr. Newton's characterization of the district and its staff as potentially self-interested or oriented toward mediocrity. She said she believed staff and board members acted in good faith and disagreed with the memo's framing.
- Chair Lavoie paused the disagreement and said the committee would return to the memo at a later meeting with more time and context.

3.5 Intended outcome and timing

- Chair Lavoie asked whether Bob's memo was meant to prompt general discussion or lead to a concrete action.
- Mr. Newton said he ultimately wanted a formal document from the committee to the school board and administration requesting specified information, but he did not expect the committee to vote on it immediately.
- Mr. Newton hoped the committee could make a request after or at its next meeting and said, ideally, the administration should receive the request before summer to allow adequate preparation.
- Ms. McClure cautioned that the proposal was extensive and that she did not expect it to be resolved after just one more meeting. She stressed wanting to handle it properly.
- Chair Lavoie agreed that the committee should move deliberately, considering the committee's authority, the school board's goals, practical workload, and the need to work constructively with the administration and community.

4. School Board Goals and June 9, 2026 Joint Meeting

- Chair Lavoie recalled that the committee had discussed a joint meeting with the school board on June 9, 2026. Ms. Lavallee confirmed there was a school board meeting that day but said she had not known that a joint meeting had been requested.
- Chair Lavoie clarified that the prior discussion had left open whether to request one. She read from the minutes that Dennis Golding had agreed it would be beneficial for the Budget Committee and school board to meet before summer so the board could explain its goals for the coming year.
- Ms. Lavallee said the school board would discuss its goals at its Tuesday meeting and hoped to reach a consensus. She expected the June 9 meeting could provide an opportunity to present those goals and answer the Budget Committee's questions.
- Chair Lavoie proposed holding the joint meeting at 7:00 p.m., then immediately following it with a separate Budget Committee meeting. The committee meeting could:
 - Discuss the school board's goals in greater depth.
 - Continue considering Mr. Newton's management-budget memo.
 - Review and advance discussion of the rules of procedure and code of conduct.
- Chair Lavoie suggested that the committee then decide whether its usual next meeting in **September** would be sufficient or whether additional meetings were needed before the budget process began.
- Mr. Silva said the board's objectives were an important context for deciding what expenditure data to examine. He noted that, in the prior year, he had lacked clarity on whether the district was seeking to keep the budget flat, increase it, or reduce it.
- Ms. Lavallee asked how specific the board's goals should be. As an example, she asked whether a goal such as improving math test scores by 5% would be adequate or whether the board should also explain how it planned to achieve the goal.
- Mr. Silva said goals did not necessarily need extensive detail but should include enough context to show how they might affect decisions and analyses. She said a goal to maintain a flat budget would lead to a different analytical approach from a goal to cut spending by 10%.
- Ms. Lavallee said the board would aim to provide as much direction as possible, including whether it was considering adding or reducing programs, while noting she could not speak for the full board before its discussion.
- Chair Lavoie said clear short- and long-term school board goals should guide administration, inform staff and community members, and help the Budget Committee assess whether expenditures support the board's objectives. She said the Budget Committee does not set those goals but must also consider prudent use of taxpayer funds.

- Mr. Newton disagreed that the Budget Committee's role was to accept the school board's goals. He said the committee should independently assess whether those goals and the district's structure provide value for taxpayers, and should criticize them if it believes they are wasteful.
- Chair Lavoie said the committee would return to the discussion after meeting with the school board and after further consideration of the relevant legal authority and the memo.

5. Public Comment

- Lyndeborough resident Geoffrey Allen thanked the committee members and said their comments were "spot on" and that they were on the right track.
- Ms. Lavallee of Lyndeborough, speaking as a mother and a volunteer who regularly visits the schools, especially WLC, respectfully disagreed with Mr. Newton's comments about staff motivation and accountability.
 - She said most staff members she encounters appear to care genuinely about students rather than acting for personal benefit.
 - She thanked staff and praised students who have gone on to serve their communities, attend college or vocational programs, enter the workforce, or take jobs in New Hampshire and elsewhere.
 - She offered alumni outcomes as one indicator of the district's success.

6. Adjournment

- Chair Lavoie said the next meeting would be June 9, 2026, with the time to be confirmed with the school board chair and Kristina. Her stated plan was to hold the Budget Committee meeting immediately after the joint meeting.

Kate McClure made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Bob Newton. Motion carried

The time of meeting adjournment was not noted on original draft minutes.

Minutes prepared by Alyssa Lavoie

WLC-Library; WLC Conference Room
DRAFT MINUTES
Monday, September 14, 2026

Committee Membership: Alyssa Lavoie (Chair), Phil Brooks (Vice Chair)
Bridget Mooney (Secretary), Craig Alley, Kellie-Sue Boissonnault, Kate McClure, Bob Newton,
Bob Silva

Present: Brooks, Lavoie, McClure, Mooney, Newton, Silva, Dennis Golding (SB rep).

Absent: Alley, Boissonnault, vacant Wilton seat

Chair Lavoie called the meeting to order at 6:23

The meeting was live streamed, but due to a miscommunication, it was NOT recorded.

Adjustments to the Agenda:

A new category "Budget Committee Comments" will be added to the agenda this meeting
and all meetings going forward.

Review Previous Meeting Minutes:

Alyssa Lavoie motions to approve the February 5, 2026 Budget Committee Minutes

Bridget Mooney seconds the motion. All ayes. The motion passes.

Kate McClure motions to table the approval of the May 13, 2026 Budget Committee Minutes
until they have been revised for spelling errors and content clarification. Phil Brooks seconds
the motion. All ayes. Alyssa Lavoie will revise the 5/13/26 minutes.

The August 25, 2026 Budget Committee Minutes garnered much lively and at times heated
discussion. Chair Lavoie presented a revised version of the minutes. Bob Newton presented a
memo titled "Corrections to the August 25 Meeting Minutes" which highlighted the paragraphs
he wanted corrected.

Bob Newton stated that his motion made at the joint meeting regarding supporting the straw
vote by the school board was misstated and made the motion that it should be corrected to
his actual words. Alyssa Lavoie seconds the motion. All ayes.

Initially motions were made to accept certain changes to the original minutes (paragraph by
paragraph) with discussion following each motion. It became evident that this approach was
unproductive and could potentially take hours.

Alyssa Lavoie made the motion to accept all of her edits. Phil Brooks seconded the motion.
Discussion followed with Kate McClure questioning removing the words that were spoken
noting that the record should reflect the speakers actual words. Alyssa Lavoie said that some
of the words spoken could hurt the reputations of of the people being spoken about and
therefore should be altered.

Bob Newton made a motion to amend Alyssa Lavoie's motion. There was no second.

Alyssa Lavoie motion passed with four ayes, one nay and one abstention.

49 Bob Newton makes the motion to table the acceptance of the August 25, 2026 minutes until
50 the two absent board members have had the opportunity to express their opinions.
51 There was no second.

52
53 Alyssa Lavoie motions to approve the August 25, 2026 minutes as amended. Phil Brooks
54 seconds the motion. The motion passes with four ayes, one nay, one abstention.

55
56

57 **Committee Reports:**

58 **Strategic Planning:** Kate McClure stated that the committee was meeting tomorrow
59 (9/15/26) and she would have something to report following that meeting.

60 **Facilities:** Phil Brooks expressed how impressed he is with the facilities director. He
61 reported that the committee had a presentation by an Energy Management Company.

62 **Technology:** Bob Silva stated that the committee was meeting next week.

63 **School Board:** Kate McClure said the school board discussed priorities and goals at
64 their meeting and also expressed their concerns about the content of the budget
65 committee minutes.

66

67 **Budget Committee Protocols:**

68 A discussion was had about the start time of the budget committee meeting.

69 Bob Newton motions to begin all meetings of the budget committee at 7:00pm

70 Bob Silva seconded the motion. All ayes. The motion passes.

71

72 Alyssa Lavoie motions to begin the budget committee meetings to be held on December 7,
73 2026 and December 21, 2026 at 5:30pm

74 Bob Silva seconds the motion.

75 Five ayes, one nay. The motion passes.

76

77 Alyssa Lavoie makes the motion to approve the revised Budget Committee Rules of
78 Procedure and Operating Protocols.

79 Kate McClure seconds the motion.

80 Phil Brooks asks if the changes are highlighted in some way so the board can understand the
81 where the changes occur. Alyssa Lavoie explains that there are six pages in the back of the
82 document explaining every change.

83 No vote is taken.

84

85 Bob Newton makes the motion to table the approval of the Budget Committee Rules of
86 Procedure and Operating Protocols until the next meeting.

87 Kate McClure seconds the motion.

88 Five ayes, one abstention. The motion passes.

89

90 Bob Newton makes the motion that all future budget committee meetings be held here,
91 recorded and live streamed to the public.

92 Bob Silva seconds the motion.

93 Alyssa Lavoie points out that this issue is addressed in the Budget Committee Rules of
94 Procedure and Operating Protocols which we will be voting on in the next meeting.

95 Three ayes, three nays. The motion fails.

96

97 **Bob Newton's Memo:**

98 Bob Newton explains that he put out his memo in May and is open to corrections and
99 comments. Kate McClure states that she has read the memo and rejects the two pages of
100 explanation that precedes his list of ten requests for information from the Administration.

101 Alyssa Lavoie says some of the ten requests make sense, but all the preceding talk is very
102 offensive and unprofessional. It represents Bob Newton's opinions, is very adversarial and
103 makes it difficult to be on board with his memo. There is general agreement that those two
104 pages do not represent the board as a whole. Bob Newton removes those pages and asks
105 that the board only consider his list of ten items.

106
107 Bob Newton makes the motion that we request from the School Board and Administration in
108 writing, based on a vote by this committee, comments on this list from the Bob Newton memo.
109 Phil Brooks seconds the motion.

110
111 Phil Brooks suggests that Bob Newton could have a discussion with the Administration to
112 decide how to get this done. He notes that these ten items would require a lot of time and
113 research and wonders who would do that work. Phil Brooks suggests the School Board and
114 Administration give a directive on the feasibility of fulfilling this request.

115 Bob Newton suggests presenting the ten point memo at a School Board meeting.

116 Alyssa Lavoie points out that the School Board has no authority over the Budget Committee.

117
118 Bob Newton rescinds his motion.

119
120 Bob Newton makes the motion that the Budget Committee authorize Bob Newton and one
121 other member of the committee to meet with the School Board and the Administration at a
122 School Board meeting to discuss items on the list and any other items that would be relevant
123 and useful to the Budget Committee's work.

124 Phil Brooks seconds the motion.

125
126 Bob Newton rescinds his motion.

127
128 Bob Newton makes the motion that the Budget Committee authorizes and instructs members
129 Bob Newton and Bob Silva to meet with representatives of the School Board and the
130 Administration for the collaborative discussion based on the items of page three of Bob
131 Newton's May 13th memorandum.

132 Alyssa Lavoie seconds the motion

133 All ayes. The motion passes.

134
135 Alyssa Lavoie explains the five question test which is a tool she developed to assist board
136 members in evaluating the relevance and usefulness of any questions they have for the
137 Administration.

138
139 **Public Comment:**

140 Bill Crouse – *Lyndeborough*- requests that the Budget Committee request from the
141 Administration a budget number reflective of what the departments feel is providing the
142 greatest benefit for the students. If we need to subtract monies later it will highlight what it is
143 we're giving up if HB1300 is instituted and will help justify to the public what we want to do.

145 He also would like to see items which end up being purchased with unexpended funds be put
146 into the budget.

147

148 Adam LaVallee – *Lyndeborough*- makes the request that the Golf team, a growing and
149 popular sport, be fully funded.

150

151 No online public comments.

152

153 **Budget Committee Comments:**

154 Kate McClure speaks to the research she did regarding the comment at the last meeting that
155 in the private sector a 5% surplus would not be acceptable. Her research found this statement
156 to be untrue and pointed out that the last three years show the school district's budget was
157 under 5%.

158

159 Bob Newton states that sports are highly useful and supports fully funding them.

160

161 Alyssa Lavoie fully supports Bill Crouse's comments.

162

163 The next meeting is on October 5th at 7:00 in the WLC Library.

164 We will review the first draft of the budget which will be released on September 28th.

165 All member should review the budget before the meeting.

166

167 Kate McClure makes the motion to adjourn the meeting.

168 Phil Brooks seconds the motion.

169 All ayes.

170

171 The meeting adjourns at 8:55pm

