

Town of Mason, New Hampshire

Mason School District

2025 Deliberative Session

February 01, 2025

The First Session, The Deliberative Session, of the Mason School District was held in the Mason Elementary School Multi-Purpose Room, 13 Darling Hill Road, Mason New Hampshire on February 01, 2025.

At 0900 Moderator Dotsie Millbrandt asked attendees to take their seats. All voters and nonvoters are requested to wear appropriate credentials and be seated after signing in with the Supervisors of the Checklist at the back table. Nonvoters are to be seated to the Moderators right in the front row.

There were twelve voters and one nonvoter present.

Moderator Dotsie Millbrandt recognized the coordinated efforts of individuals to prepare for this meeting including School District Personnel, Supervisors of the Checklist, Physical Plant Staff, Police, and Emergency Personnel.

Moderator Dotsie Millbrandt reviewed safety procedures, calling attention to the emergency exits.

There were no requests for Interpretative Services.

**Roll Call and Introductions:**

Chairman Dr. Christopher Guiry

Vice Chairman Colin Robinson

School Board Member Nate Choquette

School Board Member Mike James Judge

Absent: School Board Member Tim Leak

Accounts Payable Brenda Wiley

School District Clerk / School Board Secretary Becky Partridge

Superintendent of Schools Kristen Kivela

Approved March 17, 2025

At this time, the Board would like to honor Chairman Dr. Christopher Guiry for his many years of service. The Moderator recognizes Vice Chairperson Colin Robinson to present the plaque.  
<see attached public speech>

## **Procedure**

The purpose of the Deliberative Session is to inform the voters about each proposed article, allow voters to ask questions, discuss and possibly amend the article to decide its final wording. When discussion is complete, the Moderator will call for a vote. This vote in the affirmative will move the final form of the article to the Official Ballot to be voted on at the Town and School District Elections on March 11, 2025.

After each article is read and seconded, there will be an opportunity for voters to comment on the article. When the Moderator recognizes you, please state your name and address. All comments and questions will be directed to the Moderator.

All amendments and substantive motions are to be in writing and signed by the maker and seconder. Any five voters present may request a secret ballot vote if the request is made before the voice vote on an article. For a secret ballot vote, voters will proceed down the center aisle and be given a paper with the words, **YES** and **NO**. Tear it in half and place the appropriate half in the ballot box.

## **Call To Order**

**Moderator Dotsie Millbrandt:** By the powers vested in me by the State of New Hampshire, I now call to order the First Session, The Deliberative Session of the Mason School District Annual Meeting at 0908h.

## **Opening Exercises**

The Moderator asked for School Board Members and the public to join in The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

The first order of business is reading of the warrant. There was no objection to waive the reading of the warrant.

*On Motion of Moderator Dotsie Millbrandt, duly seconded, it was **VOTED** to allow Superintendent Kristen Kivela to speak. Motion passed*

*On Motion of School Board Member Tim Leak, duly seconded, it was **VOTED** to place on the official ballot Article 1*

*To choose the following School District Officer: School Board Member (3 years)*

*School Board Member (3 years)*

*School District Treasurer (3 years)*

On Motion of School Board Member Tim Leak, duly seconded, it was **VOTED** to place on the official ballot Article 2

To accept the reports of agents, auditors, committees or officers chosen as printed in the Annual Mason School District Report.

Warrant Article 3 read by Moderator Dotsie Millbrandt.

On Motion of Chairman Dr. Christopher Guiry duly seconded, it was **VOTED** to place on the official ballot Article 3

Shall the Mason School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the First Session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling **Three Million, Nine Hundred Thirty Six Thousand, Thirty Two Dollars** (\$3,936,032.00). Should this Article be defeated, the default budget shall be **Three Million, Eight Hundred Twenty Six Thousand and Two Hundred and Seventy Two Dollars** (\$3,826,272.00) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Mason School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only? **NOTE: This operating budget warrant article does not include appropriations contained in any other warrant article.** The School Board recommends this warrant article 3-0. (Majority Vote Required)

**Discussion:**

Reflects increase of only .16%.

Kristen Kivela explained that the largest increases are tuition numbers, medical and dental insurance, as well as workers comp and disability. Student costs are also increased with an increase in speech therapy and hiring of a paraeducator. With the building aging, the cost of maintenance and repairs are increasing.

Default budget is \$109,760.00 less than the proposed budget. If the proposed budget fails and the default budget is to pass it would be a challenge to fund many areas of the budget.

Warrant Article 4 read by Moderator Dotsie Millbrandt.

On Motion of School Board Member Mike Judge, duly seconded, it was **VOTED** to place on the official ballot Article 4.

Shall the Mason School District vote to change the intent and purpose of the preexisting Unanticipated Tuition Cost Capital Reserve Fund from “the unanticipated cost associated with students either moving into the district or resident students transferring from private to public school” to “tuition cost associated with an increase school enrollment or unexpected tuition costs,” and further to name the school board as agents to expend from the fund. Said fund to

be known as the Tuition Capital Reserve Fund. **This is a change in wording only and will not cost the taxpayers any money.** The School Board recommends this article 3 - 0. ( $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote required.)

**Discussion:**

In 2010 this fund was created to help fund tuition of unanticipated students moving into the district. We have continued to fund this and currently have \$153,275.00. We have a large increase in the tuition costs to Milford due to larger classes going to middle school and we are graduating smaller classes from the high school. The board would like to access the funds in the reserve to help reduce what we need to collect from the taxpayers. We were hoping to take \$80,000.00 from the fund but were informed by legal counsel that we can not use said money for this reason as it was anticipated increases. This wording change would allow us to use the funds for these anticipated increases as well as any unanticipated increases in the future.

If this article was to fail these funds could not be accessed until a large number of students moved into the district.

Warrant Article 5 read by Moderator Dotsie Millbrandt.

*On Motion of School Board Member Mike Judge,, duly seconded, it was **VOTED** to place on the official ballot Article 5*

Contingent upon the passing of Warrant Article 4, to see if the Mason School District vote to raise and appropriate up to Eighty Thousand Dollars (\$80,000.00) to be added to the previously established Tuition Capital Reserve Fund, with such amount to be funded from the June 30, unreserved fund balance available for transfer on July 01? No amount to be raised from taxation. The School Board recommends this warrant article 3-0. (Majority vote required.)

**Discussion:**

The next three years there will be large increases in regular education tuition to Milford. We would like to continue to fund the reserve with any money that we may have left over at the end of the year so we can access said funds for the 2026 / 2027 year.

Warrant Article 6 read by Moderator Dotsie Millbrandt.

*On Motion of Vice Chairman Colin Robinson, duly seconded, it was **VOTED** to place on the official ballot Article 6*

Shall the Mason School District vote to raise and appropriate up to Forty Five Thousand Dollars (\$45,000.00) to be added to the previously established Educating the Educationally Disabled Children Capital Reserve Fund (established in 2010), with such amount to be funded from the June 30, unreserved fund balance available for transfer on July 01? No amount to be raised from taxation. The School Board recommends this warrant article 3-0. (Majority vote required.)

**Discussion:**

Currently \$213,570.00. As we have seen in previous years this may or may not be enough to cover a year's tuition depending on the student's needs.

Warrant Article 7 read by Moderator Dotsie Millbrandt.

*On Motion of School Board Member Nate Choquette, duly seconded, it was **VOTED** to place on the official ballot Article 7*

Shall the Mason School District vote to raise and appropriate up to Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) to be added to the previously established School Building and Grounds Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund (established in 2010), with such amount to be funded from the June 30, unreserved fund balance available for transfer on July 01? No amount to be raised from taxation. The School Board recommends this warrant article 3-0. (Majority vote required.)

**Discussion:**

Currently we have \$84,300.00 in the fund. Building is getting older and we have seen unanticipated repairs increasing over the last few years.

There being no further business to come before the First Session, The Deliberative Session of the Mason School District a motion is in order to adjourn Sine Die. *Motion by Dr. Christopher Guiry, duly seconded and **Voted**.*

Adjourned Sine Die at 0932h.

Respectfully Submitted,



School District Clerk

Rebecca L. Partridge

Honorary Speech by Vice Chairman Colin Robinson to outgoing Chairman Dr. Christopher Guiry.

"I know I speak for all of us when I say we will miss your guidance rooted in being an original member of this board dating back to 2009 and even before that being on the Mascenic School Board.

Your leadership helped create this district as well as achieve the recognition as the number one elementary school in the state.

This community benefitted not only from your more than 15 years serving on two school boards but also from your 9 years as a Selectman, 5 years on the Planning Board and 7 years on the Forestry Committee.

At times holding 3 positions simultaneously.

This community is better because of your, your wife Colleen and your children's countless hours of service and sacrifice.

We are surrounded by towns with shrinking populations while our town grows, while schools are shuttering, ours remains well funded and thriving.

I believe your success and your accomplishments can in large part be credited to your being an honorable man who cares deeply for others especially children. I am proud to have served under your leadership. You have set a high bar for all who come after you.

With that I am honored to present to you this plaque."