Minutes of the Monson School Committee
Working Meeting
Date March 17, 2026

Present: Karen Nothe-Valley, Alison Morgan, Jamie Murphy, Kate Peterson, Leah Zippin, Paul Foster, Colette Bidus, Jordan Wissinger, Chris Fontaine, Penny Manteria

Alison Morgan called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM

Meeting information:

FY 2027 Budget Update

At the Tri-board, the Town Administrator asked for us to look at the level service budget and reduce by 7.5% or by what is "possible," as an exercise. As a group, within the context of the exercise, we discussed the following items.

- Unemployment and severance pay comes out of our budget (School Department) despite the rest of the town departments having these items covered by the town and not part of each department's operating budget.
- The School Committee reviewed the first exercise that the School Department's administrative team provided of possible cuts to get to the 7.5% reduction and discussed the impact.

- For the next working meeting, we will discuss 3 tiers of cuts.
    - Tier 1: cuts we discussed that have high impact but will consider;
    - Tier 2: assumption adjustments (including understanding what costs are in the school dept. budget versus other town dept. budgets; and
    - Tier 3: cuts that will have the highest impact on student learning and families staying in town for their education and that the Committee has expressed they are NOT in favor of but could be necessary if the Town does not approve the School Committee's requested budget.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 PM
Documentation for this meeting: Agenda; Distributed at meeting: Monthly Budget Variance

Approved by Committee:

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Peter Wiggins, Secretary