

[Heath voters OK \\$1.6M town budget, school spending](#)

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HEATH — After much discussion at Saturday’s Town Meeting, voters approved a \$1.6 million fiscal year 2025 spending plan for town services and a \$1 million assessment for Heath’s share of the \$26.7 million Mohawk Trail Regional School District budget.

Although the Finance Committee did not recommend it, voters agreed to spend the \$1 million town assessment requested by the school district, as well as paying Rowe \$6,667 for shared transportation costs for a late bus which transports students home from Mohawk Trail Regional School in Buckland, following after-school activities. Voters also approved a transfer of \$24,443 from free cash to the district’s FY22 Operating Assessment Error Account.

The votes took place after Mohawk Regional School superintendent Sheryl Stanton spoke during the meeting. She explained how the budget was created, which included providing a wider range of programs to students and targeted initiatives for students who need additional support after the COVID-19 pandemic, balancing funds to keep assessments to the towns within the Mohawk district low and to contain costs.

“We recognize that our smallest towns bear burden,” said Stanton, addressing residents’ concerns about the \$1 million cost. “One of the largest pieces of research here that we have managed without it coming back to the towns is a \$600,000 increase ... for students in special education. That is a direct result of COVID, We are seeing many more students with trauma, many more students with a lack of support but it’s needed so that we can be productive in classrooms.”

After passing the \$1 million assessment, voters quickly approved other articles pertaining to Mohawk’s shared transportation costs for the late bus and a final payment to error account. They then approved the town budget, which represents a \$104,115 increase over the current year’s spending plan and a tax rate of \$20.43 per \$1,000 of property valuation.

Near the end of the meeting, residents were supposed to vote on the regional agreement amendment which would change the school enrollment formula used to calculate town assessments by adding in students who attend charter schools or who have used school choice to attend other districts. Heath voters requested a quorum for this topic, however only 54 residents were still present at the meeting, two short of the 56 voters needed for a quorum.

A vote was then held to adjourn, and to continue discussing the amendments on Monday, June 17 at 7 p.m. at the Jacobs Road Municipal Center, in hopes that enough residents will attend to hold a quorum.

Town election

Of the 552 registered voters in Heath, 230 ballots were cast. The results are as follows:

- Selectboard, one seat with three-year term — William Emmet, 122 votes, Michael Smith, 108 votes.
- Finance Committee, three seats with three-year term — Edwin Wolf, 172 votes, Robert McGahan, 148 votes, Dena Briggs 67 votes, Karen Brooks, 58 votes.
- Town Clerk, one seat with three-year term — Mary Sumner, 222 votes.
- Assessor, one seat with three-year term — Robyn Provost-Carlson, 14 write-in votes.
- Planning Board, one seat with five-year term — William Fontes, 202 votes.
- Library Trustee, one seat with three-year term — Rebecca Johnson, 201 votes.
- Constable, one seat with three-year term — Steven Thane, 203 votes.
- Municipal Light Board, two seats with three-year term — Arthur Schwenger, 204 votes, Edwin Wolf, 176 votes.
- School Committee, one seat with three-year term — Budge Litchfield, 188 votes.
- School Committee, one seat with one-year term- Tucker Jenkins, 49 write-in votes (town still needs to confirm if Jenkins accepts the position).

Source: <https://www.recorder.com/HeathAnnualTownMeeting-051324-55075481>