

1. Can you clarify why the membership fee is listed as both earnings and expenses?

The membership fee is essentially a security deposit. McMaster Marching Band strives on its ability to provide free music education for all. At the beginning of each band season, all members pay a \$40 fee to the band to get their instrument and uniform that we provide them with. Then at the end of the season, assuming all The Band's equipment gets returned in good condition we give members back their \$40.

2. Why is the referendum amount not included in the calculations? How do you plan to utilize your funds for the upcoming year?

Even though on paper, we receive this money during the current fiscal year, in practice, it is received too late for it to be any good. Which is why it doesn't make sense for it to be included in any budget calculations

For instance, the fee levied in September 2023 was technically a part of the Band's budget for the May 2023 – April 2024 fiscal year, but since the Band received the money in April, last year's Executive was not able to make any purchases with those funds. As a result, the September 2023 fee is the foundation of our May 2024 – April 2025 budget, and we expect that the September 2024 fee will form the basis for the Band's May 2025 – April 2026 budget.

This has been the case for at least the past five years, which has led to seemingly yearly large carryovers on paper. If the MSU is able to provide The Band the money from the fee sooner, we would gladly increase spending, for instance, making purchases of drum major's maces, practice pads for our tenor drums, and more uniforms from our wishlist. However, since this funding is received so late in the fiscal year, we are unable to plan to purchase these items.

3. There seems to be a significant carryover. How do you plan to utilize such a large amount in the coming year?

Even though on paper, we receive this money during the current fiscal year, in practice, it is received too late for it to be any good.

For instance, the fee levied in September 2023 was technically a part of the Band's budget for the May 2023 – April 2024 fiscal year, but since the Band received the money in April, last year's Executive was not able to make any purchases with those funds. As a result, the September 2023 fee is the foundation of our May 2024 – April 2025 budget, and we expect that the September 2024 fee will form the basis for the Band's May 2025 – April 2026 budget.

This has been the case for at least the past five years, which has led to seemingly yearly large carryovers on paper. If the MSU is able to provide The Band the money from the fee sooner, we would gladly increase spending, allowing the band to cover more of the band trip for members and also making more purchases off of our wishlist such as practice pads for our tenor drums, more uniforms pieces, some extra instruments, new music scores. However, since this funding is received so late in the fiscal year, we are unable to plan to purchase these items.

4. Band Trip

- a. Could you provide more details about the band trip? When, and approximately how much did it cost? Also, where did you go, and what was the purpose of the trip?**

This seems to be a communication error, we haven't gone on the band trip yet, The Band is currently in the process of planning a band trip for this band season. We are still planning the trip but we are looking at going to either Kingston, Ottawa, Quebec City, or Montreal for the beginning of February. We are currently looking into performance opportunities to plan our band trip around. Once we finalize where we will be performing, we will have a better idea of where we will be going. The purpose of this trip is like any of our events, to showcase the McMaster community to surrounding communities. The band trip will also allow band members a unique bonding experience.

b. Can you clarify what you mean by "lots of money"? How much are we talking about?

We have not ironed out all of details of the trip. However, we project it will be for 2-3 days, with 25-30 members, with the main expenses coming from the Hotel and bus. In that case, the cost will be from \$12,000-\$15,000.

Why is there such a significant discrepancy between your projected budgets and the actuals? Is there something specific that's causing the difference, and do you think you need the full amount if it's consistently underspent?

The reason why there is a significant difference between my projected budgets and actuals is because the current actuals shown are not the final actuals. I am constantly updating this budget adding more to the actuals throughout the year whenever there is a new finance. This lessens the discrepancy between the projected budget and actual. There is nothing specific causing the difference, the main reason is the total actual amounts are unknown and the current actual totals are not the final actual quantities. Since the budget needed to be finished during June before the current school year, it was very difficult to gauge (even with the aid of the previous budget) what all the expenses will be, all the events we will perform at, and accurate projected budgets. I did the best I could adhering to the executives and entire bands needs, trying to plan all our events and projected budgets in advance to the submission date of my budget. I absolutely believe that I need the full amount in case of any emergency situations. Furthermore, as I mentioned above, the current actuals are not the final actuals, those will show at the end of the year when all the finances are accounted for.

5. Could you provide the actuals for the band rehearsals in 2023-2024?

The actuals for the band rehearsals in 2023-2024 were in total \$4280.00. It appears as though the breakdown is in its entirety in the Rehearsals (Winter) on row 65. Here it is, "Rehearsals (14 x \$40 x 3 x 3) MaySon (Jan-Feb \$980), Rich (Nov-Feb \$1820), MaySon (March \$840), Paul (Dec-Mar \$640)".

6. There's nothing about transportation in the new budget—could you be more specific about that?

I have three separate sections in the new budget where the transportation expenses are accounted for. The section "Buses" (for the Santa Claus Parades), as well as the row "Transportation" in the section for the band trip, and it is also in the breakdown for OMEA expenses in the general Promotion row.

7. Moving forward, could you please follow the template and include a more comprehensive transition report for your team? It appears that some recommendations from last year's budget reviews weren't fully addressed, as the budget seems differently formatted and doesn't follow the same expense breakdowns as last year's actuals.

I believe I did follow the template as much as possible in relation to revenues and expenses, keeping the vast majority the same as last years. However, I did not include some events, since we are not doing them this year (ie. Forge FC) and combined some expenses together (ie. Space Rental). As the year goes on I will fill out a more comprehensive transition report for my team. It is difficult to do so at this point in the year since guidelines and other financial responsibilities change during the year, of which I do not know now. We get asked to do last minute events during the year, and so I cannot predict that, when making the budget in June. I communicated with each current executive member and the past finance director about making the budget as comprehensive and accurate as possible. As I mentioned above, I followed the expense breakdown as similarly as possible except for some events that we are not performing in this year and some new events that we plan to perform in, (ie. Take Back the Night and Hamilton Welcome Party).