

**HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
PUBLIC HEARING
FEBRUARY 2, 2022
MEETING MINUTES**

A Public Hearing was conducted by the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District (COOP) Budget Committee on Wednesday, February 2, 2021 at 6:32 p.m. at the Hollis Brookline Middle School Library.

Darlene Mann, Chairman, presided:

Members of the Budget Cmte. Present: Raul Blanche, Vice Chairman
David Blinn
Matthew Maguire
Brian Rater (participated electronically)
Anthony Stanizzi
Cindy VanCoughnett, School Bd. Rep.
Tom Whalen

Members of the Budget Cmte. Absent:

Members of the School Board Present: Holly Deurloo Babcock, Chairman
Tom Solon, Vice Chairman
Beth Janine Williams, Secretary
Kate Stoll
Cindy VanCoughnett
Krista Whalen

Members of the School Board Absent: Elizabeth Brown

Also in Attendance: Andrew Corey, Superintendent
Gina Bergskaug, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
Kelly Seeley, Business Administrator
Linda Sherwood, Senior Assistant Business Administrator
Drew Mason, Moderator, Hollis School District

**HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
PUBLIC HEARING
FY23 BUDGET**

As Brian Rater was participating electronically, in accordance with the Right to Know Law, he was asked to state, for the record; where he was, why his attendance in person was not reasonably practical, who, if anyone, was with him, and whether or not he was able to hear the proceedings. He responded he was participating electronically from his home, attendance in person was not reasonably practical as he was recovering from an illness, no one was with him, and he could hear the proceedings. Those present at the meeting were able to hear Committee Member Rater and were reminded all votes would be taken by roll call.

Chairman Mann explained the purpose of the Public Hearing was to introduce the articles to be voted on at the District Annual Meeting and gather public input.

A brief synopsis of the Warrant Articles was provided.

Article 2

To see if the school district will vote to approve the cost items for the second year of a three-year collective bargaining agreement reached between the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board and the Hollis Education Support Staff Association for the 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years, which calls for the following increases in support staff salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Estimated Increase</u>
2022-23	\$88,523

and further to raise and appropriate a sum of **\$88,523** for the second fiscal year (2022-23 school year), such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in support staff salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels.

Estimated tax impact: Hollis \$0.03/\$1,000 and Brookline \$0.06/\$1,000

School Board Member Whalen stated this year the estimated increase is less than the increase in FY22. Last year the contract cost included a shift in the category for all custodial staff. Year 2 of the contract represents a step plus 2% increase. Those off-step will receive a 2.5% increase. The health insurance will be the same as it was last year; \$50 annual increase to the cap for a single and two-person plan and a \$25 increase for a family plan. The wage impact is \$70,523 and the insurance increase \$18,000.

Chairman Mann opened the floor for public comment at 6:35 p.m.

The public comment period was closed at 6:36 p.m.

Article 3

To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of **\$25,278,502** for the support of schools, for the payment of salaries for the school district officials and agents and for the payment of statutory obligations of the district. This appropriation does not include appropriations voted in other warrant articles.

Estimated tax impact: Hollis \$7.50/\$1,000 and Brookline \$11.28/\$1,000

The operating budget represents an increase from the current year's budget of \$772,744 or 3.2%. New item requests include FTE changes, maintenance/safety items, technology, academics, and athletics.

FTE changes include expanded hours for some staff, adding a social worker, and introducing shared positions either within the COOP or across the district (SAU directed food service substitute and SAU directed instructional substitute). Hours will be extended for paraprofessionals as students move from the middle to high school. Additional hours for the ESOL position to comply with State requirements. Maintenance/safety items run across the district and involve everything from paving and interior upgrades to doors and windows, replacement lighting at the middle school, and addition of bollards. From a technology perspective, being sought is the purchase of staff laptops, change and upgrade projectors, and wireless access points. From an academic perspective, various classroom resources across both schools that support languages, history, and other subject areas. In athletics, being sought are additions to wrestling and volleyball equipment.

Major increases include regular salaries (\$172,975 or 2.9%); contracted increases related to the HEA professional staff contract approved last year, Student Services (\$147,943 or 2.8%); includes programming changes necessary for students and some savings for special education transportation, retirement (\$179,725 or 8.2%); increases in payments to the New Hampshire Retirement System in addition to retirement benefits being paid out to retiring staff, and new items (\$633,235).

Major decreases include health benefits (\$55,035 or 2.5% reduction); the Guaranteed Maximum Rate (GMR) of increase is reduced from FY22 along with a change to healthcare benefits taken by staff, replacement computer equipment (\$168,180 or 68.6% decrease); phasing of major computer upgrades was able to be completed with some of the funds remaining at the end of last year, Principal's office (\$19,983 or 5.5% reduction); savings in copier leases at the HBHS (own copiers), and regular education equipment (\$11,710 or 31.5% reduction).

Chairman Mann opened the floor for public comment at 6:42 p.m.

The public comment period was closed at 6:43 p.m.

Article 4

Shall the District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1,070,947** as the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District's portion of the SAU budget of \$2,107,176 for the forthcoming fiscal year? This year's adjusted budget of \$2,018,210 with \$1,025,645 assigned to the school budget of this school district will be adopted if the article does not receive a majority vote of all the school district voters voting in this school administrative unit.

Estimated tax impact: Hollis \$0.42/\$1,000 and Brookline \$0.68/\$1,000

Board Member Whalen stated the proposed budget (\$2,107,176) represents an increase (\$149,919 or 7.7%) over the current year's budget. Of that, \$70,192 is related to salaries; proposed new position of Compliance and Communications Specialist (\$45,000), Board approved salary adjustments (\$16,000); to allow the ability to adjust salaries, as needed, based on comparisons found in local districts, and a 3.0% increase for all staff. In the area of benefits/healthcare, the \$64,042 increase represents benefits for the new position (\$32,555), health insurance GMR of 3.9%, and membership changes. Equipment and software increase of \$5,025 includes \$3,700 for 4 desktops and 1 laptop.

Addressing the proposed Compliance and Communications Specialist position, Board Member Whalen spoke of the increasing demands for compliance documentation and other communication matters absorbing a significant amount of time of senior district leadership and cutting into the time needed to carry out their primary functions. The goal of the position is to generate compliance documentation and aid the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent in conveying information regarding the district to the Department of Education, School Boards, school community and public.

Chairman Mann opened the floor for public comment at 6:45 p.m.

The public comment period was closed at 6:46 p.m.

Article 5

To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of **\$200,000** to be added to the previously established School Building and Facilities Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund. The sum to come from the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District's June 30, 2022 unassigned fund balance, available on July 1, 2022.

As the trust would be funded through unassigned fund balance, which would otherwise be returned to the tax base, the estimated tax impact represents a savings amount taxpayers would forego; \$0.08/\$1,000 for Hollis and \$0.13/\$1,000 for Brookline.

The fund currently has a balance of \$99,625. Proposed funding is \$200,000. Anticipated expenditures include Phase 7 of the HBHS roof (\$70,000), Phase 2 of the HBHS road paving (\$70,000), and the HBMS HVAC (\$60,000). The ending balance would be \$99,625.

Chairman Mann opened the floor for public comment at 6:47 p.m.

The public comment period was closed at 6:48 p.m.

Article 6

To see if the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District will vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of **\$25,000** to come from the June 30, 2022 unassigned fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2022 to be added to the previously established Special Education Expendable Trust Fund. No amount to be raised from taxation.

As the trust would be funded through unassigned fund balance, which would otherwise be returned to the tax base, the estimated tax impact represents a savings taxpayers would forego; \$0.01/\$1,000 for Hollis and \$0.02/\$1,000 for Brookline.

The \$25,000 allocation would be added to the existing balance in the fund (\$200,000).

Chairman Mann opened the floor for public comment at 6:48 p.m.

The public comment period was closed at 6:49 p.m.

Article 7 – Petition Warrant Article

Shall we adopt the provisions of RSA 40:13 (known as SB 2) to allow official ballot voting on all issues before the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District on the second Tuesday of March?

Article 8 - Petition Warrant Article

Shall the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District rescind authorization under RSA 198:4-b II so that the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District returns 100% of year-end unassigned general funds to the taxpayers?

Chairman Mann opened the floor for public comment at 6:49 p.m.

The public comment period was closed at 6:50 p.m.

Article 9 - Petition Warrant Article

Shall the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District direct the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board to adopt and implement a policy to ensure that each textbook or other assigned book used in the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District as well as a copy of all professional training materials provided to teachers, administrators, and staff of the district paid with school district funds be made available to the public at the Hollis Social Library and at the Brookline Public Library in hardcopy or electronic form, organized by grade or teacher?

Chairman Mann opened the floor for public comment at 6:50 p.m.

The public comment period was closed at 6:51 p.m.

Article 10 - Petition Warrant Article

Shall we adopt the provisions of RSA 32:5 V-b, requiring that the annual budget and all special warrant articles having a tax impact, as determined by the school board, shall contain a notation stating the estimated tax impact of the article? The determination of the estimated tax impact shall be subject to approval by the governing body.

Chairman Mann opened the floor for public comment at 6:51 p.m.

The public comment period was closed at 6:51 p.m.

Article 11

To transact any other business which may legally come before said meeting.

The Public Hearing was declared closed at 6:51 p.m.

Date _____ Signed _____