

**HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD
DECEMBER 14, 2022
MEETING MINUTES**

A meeting of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board was conducted on Wednesday, December 14, 2022, at 6:03 p.m. at the Hollis Brookline Middle School.

Holly Deurloo Babcock, Chairman, presided:

Members of the Board Present: Tom Solon, Vice Chairman (arrived at 6:05 p.m.)
Kate Stoll, Secretary
Tom Enright
Cindy VanCoughnett
Krista Whalen

Members of the Board Absent: Beth Janine Williams

Also in Attendance: Andrew Corey, Superintendent
Gina Bergskaug, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
Linda Sherwood, Senior Assistant Business Administrator
Tim Girzone, Principal, Hollis Brookline High School
Patrick West, Principal, Hollis Brookline Middle School

APPOINTMENT OF PROCESS OBSERVER

Tom Enright volunteered to serve as Process Observer.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS - None

NOMINATIONS / RESIGNATIONS / RETIREMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE - None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board [November 16, 2022](#)

The following amendments were offered:

- Page 2, Line 36; delete “and” before “are”
- Page 8, Line 9; insert “error” following “transcription” and “have” before “the”
- Page 9, Line 35; correct the spelling of “we”
- Page 11, Line 38; replace “are” with “do”
- Page 15, Line 16; delete “and some odd”

**MOTION BY MEMBER VANCOUGHNETT TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER STOLL
MOTION CARRIED**

6-0-0

Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board – **Non-Public** [November 16, 2022](#)

**MOTION BY MEMBER STOLL TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WHALEN
MOTION CARRIED**

6-0-1

Member Williams Abstained

PUBLIC INPUT

Chairman Deurloo Babcock opened the floor for public input at 6:06 p.m.

No members of the public were in attendance. Chairman Deurloo Babcock noted should members of the public arrive and wish to provide input they would be permitted to do so until 6:40 p.m.

The public input period was declared closed at 6:10 p.m.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned, and it was clarified, there is a 30-minute window, as is required by State RSA, during which public input can be provided.

PRINCIPAL/ATHLETIC REPORTS

Tim Girzone, Principal, Hollis Brookline High School (HBHS) and Patrick West, Principal, Hollis Brookline Middle School (HBMS) highlighted items from the report, which was included as part of the [agenda](#) packet.

Information was provided on the high school clubs and advisors for the 2022-2023 school year.

Phase II of the HVAC project is underway. As a result, portions of the library are currently unavailable.

On behalf of the Board, Chairman Deurloo Babcock congratulated the 2023 All State musicians.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock spoke of a prior discussion of a journalism student covering the meetings. Principal Girzone stated a student has expressed a willingness to view the meetings and prepare a report.

The Board discussed the protocol to be followed should there be the desire for additional input on a particular topic; the student would look to the Board Chair. Reports will be posted on ChavChron. Principal Girzone commented on having spoken with the Rotary, and remarked they are looking forward to the content.

Principal Girzone highlighted items from the report of the Athletic Coordinator. Winter sports teams are all up and running. Participation numbers were provided. There are significant increases in participation numbers in areas such as Unified Basketball, Indoor Track, and Wrestling.

Principal West commented on the Patriot's Pen Essay Contest; Sage Cospito finished in 1st place, Everett Bird in 2nd Place, and Bria Sheehy in 3rd Place. We are also excited to announce that Sage Cospito won 1st Place and Everett Bird 3rd Place in the District Round. Sage, Everett, and Bria will all receive cash awards and certificates from Post 11373. Sage's essay is now being judged at the state level.

There are currently 185 students registered for the 8th Grade Washington, DC trip and a few more registering in the next week after receiving more DC Scholarship donations. The itinerary is still being finalized. HBMS has been selected to participate in the Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Arlington National Cemetery. Through an essay entry contest, four HBMS students will be selected to represent HBMS to participate in the Wreath Laying Ceremony which is an incredible opportunity. Principal West commented on how incredible it has been to see the level of support from the community in terms of donations for this trip.

On behalf of the Board, Chairman Deurloo Babcock expressed congratulations to the essay contest participants and winners. Congratulations were extended to the band and chorus groups.

Asked about events in the library, Principal West noted night games occurring this and next week. This morning one of the activities/challenges for the ROCK group was to make a snowman out of anything that could be found in the ROCK classroom.

DISCUSSION

- Facilities Update – Renovations Future Planning

Work began in July. In August and September the Board was provided drawings of the two buildings. The architect and EEI were utilized to identify short and long-term needs. In November, the Board was provided more of a scope and sequence for renovations. At the end of last week, the Administration sat down with the architect to formulate the information provided tonight.

The committee consists of the Facilities Director, Business Administrator, and representatives from EEI (energy company), and Banwell Architects. They put forth four things they believe should be considered. Last month, Mike Leavitt from the Hollis Energy Committee spoke with the group and noted a number of the projects align with what the Energy Committee is seeing for areas to address.

The proposal includes addressing the lighting at the high school by replacing every fixture with LED lighting. LED lighting has been installed in the gymnasium and mini gym. The result would be a yearly savings of \$35,000. There would also be a rebate component (number not yet known).

The boiler at the high school is at end of useful life. That project would include replacement of all piping, removal of underground oil tanks and switch to propane. Doing so would provide economies of scale when it comes to purchasing (Town of Hollis and Hollis School District utilize propane). This would include all new control systems that would allow the Facilities Department remote control over the heating and ventilation (during snowstorms, etc.). The efficiency of the new boiler is projected to result in a yearly savings of \$47,670.

Superintendent Corey provided the example of savings achieved through energy projects by noting the total FY24 increase anticipated for the Hollis School District to be \$18,000 (electric and propane) where the Brookline School District is anticipating an increase of \$74,000 (electric and oil).

At the middle school, the recommendation is to change out the lighting (\$400,000 cost and \$35,000 savings). The middle school boilers are end of useful life and need to be replaced (\$914,500 and a savings of \$30,921/year). Part of the boiler work is related to recent State law requiring a change to the piping from the tank to the boiler (is required to be done by the next budget season). That expense would be \$150,000/building. That \$300,000 expense is equivalent to the first year of a lease payment.

A determination of the direction to be taken will come following discussion with the Budget Committee. It may be that both are done; put the \$300,000 in because we have to do that to meet the new requirements and at the same time propose a lease that would replace all of that. The lease would be the first of the items addressed on the warrant. Should it pass, the recommendation would be to remove the \$300,000 from the operating budget.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned if investments in either of the boiler line items absorb that or is it on top of that and was told it absorbs it. It was built into their pricing. Asked if any of the new paving would have to be torn up to address the change in piping, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the tanks are located outside the doors to the maintenance office.

The educational piece is the desire to look at the science wing and replace science labs; modernizing 4 aging classrooms and setting us up well. Superintendent Corey spoke of major shifts made to the elementary science and equipment purchased for high school science. The project would allow the district to elevate what it does for science at the middle school. It is likely in two years' time something could be done around the high school cafeteria and science robotics pieces.

There are plans to continue to narrow the proposal, obtain specifics, and bring information back to the Board in January.

As the majority of the recommended work is equipment, the Administration would be proposing a lease. Advantages of a lease include the ease in refinancing, an approximate \$300,000/year payment, and \$150,000 in savings that would offset the cost of the lease.

Vice Chairman Solon commented on electricity, as a power source, looks like it will be the long-term lower cost between renewables like solar and other choices. He questioned if there was discussion of heat pump technology. Superintendent Corey responded with heat pump technology it is very difficult to heat the size of the rooms that exist at the middle and high school. They only have about a 15-year lifespan. There would be nothing that would prevent the district from going to solar panels and hooking the LED lights up, etc. If specific areas, heat pumps could be utilized, e.g., there are heat pumps in the high school for the IT sections where the machines get very hot. The overall efficiency of the boilers is beneficial.

If, from a dollar point of view, the \$3.9 million is too great (entire project list), the projects are ranked in priority. Should the Board wish to reduce that amount, the science labs could be delayed. If having to rank the projects, he would look first to middle school boiler, high school boiler, and then a choice of the lights.

Asked, he stated his belief the high school cafeteria, robotics, entrance, etc. would come forward the year after next understanding next year there will be a teachers' contract to address.

Superintendent Corey remarked if a boiler were to go, the boiler itself would cost between \$500,000 and \$600,000. That level of funding would not be available in the operating budget.

Member Enright asked for clarification a payment on this lease would be \$300,000 and was told that would be correct. Member Enright commented with a \$300,000 payment discounted by the savings that would be achieved, if that is not saleable then we need to all go somewhere else.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock commented on the possibility of rebates reducing that cost even more.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned if the \$300,000 payment would include the science wing or just the first 4 items and was told it would include the science wing. Asked what the cost would be on just the first 4 items, he noted it would be proportional. Being used in determining approximate costs is a 6% interest rate. It is believed a better rate will be achieved with a lease.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned if all five of the items would be placed on a single warrant article for a municipal lease and was told that is the approach. He noted the first four items have associated savings. The controversy will be different between the maintenance related facilities items and the renovation. He would not want to see the entire thing sunk for one. He questioned if the approach of presenting two options would be beneficial.

Member Enright remarked he believes he has heard that the science program is starting earlier, and we need a different middle school component. Superintendent Corey stated that to be correct.

Vice Chairman Solon commented what will be voiced by the public is the difference between a need and a want. Member Enright spoke of it as a curriculum advancement. He would look at the number for a few seconds and then the payment amount for a long time and the savings for a long time.

Superintendent Corey stated, in January, he would bring the first four in rank order and what that looks like for that payment and then will add a second quote for the middle school science wing. While he does not disagree with either opinion, the immediate need is the boilers (\$2 million). The lights are a no brainer as they will pay for themselves over a period of time. If we can get oil tanks from underground now that is a great thing. He believes those standards will become more stringent as time goes on. The propane would be buried but propane does not have the same concerns as oil underground. If an oil tank leaks the environmental issues are costly. The propane tanks would be owned.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock asked for additional information on the question of the possible use of heat pumps. Although the first four items are equipment, facilities and maintenance, and the 5th one is not, she views them all as needs more than wants.

Vice Chairman Solon commented something will have to be articulated as to why we cannot meet our curricular needs with the current facility.

Member VanCoughnett asked if the interest rates were based on the size of the lease and was told that is typically the case. At times, if you exceed the \$2 million threshold you achieve better interest rates. When leases are sold, it is in groups of say \$50 million or \$100 million. At times you achieve a more favorable rate because a company is looking to pick up a lease that fits into their portfolio.

Superintendent Corey spoke of the lengthy work that was done with the Hollis Energy Committee and numerous others on the Hollis Schools, which resulted in only HPS having heat pumps. HUES is a high-efficiency, dual burner because that was the best solution for that school. Heat pumps do not work in every situation. What made them attractive in HPS was the age of the building and being a little over one story. There is a lot of piping to be run for heat pumps.

The hope is that the Board will be able to decide, at the January meeting, whether or not to put the project cost on the warrant, in what manner, e.g., lease or bond, the dollar amount, etc. That would require a public hearing prior to the district meeting (separate from the budget hearing). Superintendent Corey noted right up until the time of posting of the actual warrant the Board could decide it did not wish to move forward.

Member Enright spoke of the usefulness of the data obtained around lighting from the project in Hollis.

- FY24 Budget Update

- Contingency Fund Increase the Percentage Regarding the Retained Fund Balance

Understanding the concern for the potential expense associated with items such as an elevator, boiler, etc., the Budget Committee raised the matter of not having reserve funds. They discussed, once again, whether the district should look to have a contingency fund (\$125,000 discussed) and asked the District to consider an article proposing a change to the percentage of Retained Fund Balance (RFB) the district is permitted to retain (law has changed to now allow up to 5%). The COOP district is currently at 1%. The recommendation would be an increase to 2.5% (approx. \$500,000-\$600,000). The approx. cost of an elevator is a few hundred thousand. The largest items would be rooftops, boilers, etc. There is a requirement for the Board to conduct a public hearing prior to expenditure of those funds.

Asked where the Budget Committee stands, Member VanCoughnett the majority was supportive of changing the 1%. There was discussion of going up to 2.5% and adding the contingency fund. Five members of the committee were supportive of that direction, one member opposed, and one member was absent. The largest concern raised around increasing the percentage was that there is no longer the requirement to gain approval from the State to expend. Although a public hearing is required, monies can be expended on anything. A member spoke of concern that the funding mechanism could be used to increase salaries as was done at the SAU level and the suggestion that a retention bonus could have been utilized instead. It was explained the SAU does not have a contingency or other funding mechanism to utilize for such circumstances.

Superintendent Corey noted the SAU Governing Board discussed what would need to happen for hourly employees and informed the public that action would be taken in December. It is the same situation that is being looked at across the districts for food service, etc. The action was the result of votes taken at the SAU meeting. Increases were to wages that have fallen below the norm.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted the difference between the concern identified for the SAU Governing Board is the fact that there is no mechanism for those funds to be returned to the taxbase. At the district level, at year end, the funds return to the tax base in the absence of another vote by the legislative body to retain the funds.

At the next COOP meeting, the Board will discuss whether it supports having a contingency fund warrant article and/or raising the RFB to 2.5%.

The last day for the Budget Committee to deliver the budget and warrant article recommendations to selectpersons for posting is February 15, 2023.

- Capital Projects

At this point in the process, the operating budget shows an increase of \$896,543.66 or 3.5% (below guidance). If all warrant articles were to pass (does not include building aid projects) the increase would be \$1,353,424.66 or 5.03%.

Asked about the Round 4 review, Superintendent Corey noted \$227,175 included under Facilities/Maintenance to cover the cost of the rigging system replacement for the theater. That can be phased in. It may be that it is

done over the course of two years. The budget would include \$300,000 for the piping that is required to be done as that safeguard needs to be in place. If the bond/lease passes, the funds would be available for the rigging to be completed.

- High School Master Schedule

Vice Chairman Solon suggested there are specific elements the Board may want to consider in the near future regarding the schedule. Specifically, Advisory, the potential of having later periods in the day to provide some flexibility for students and staff, etc. Starting next fall we are likely to be entering contract negotiations, which are a major element of consideration for any schedule changes. He wished to understand the position of the Board regarding whether or not to be proactive, at this point, and start a large scale committee inclusive of school and community members to look at the question of revamping the schedule. He is of the belief it will take a year or more to complete that work.

Superintendent Corey commented the way the contract is written there is nothing that stops us from extending the school day now. Principal Girzone and his staff have put a great deal of time into reviewing Advisory, and he would like to support the recommendation of that group, which he believes will be to pilot advisory in one more CavBlock added during the week. He believes adding Advisory would assist the students in many ways. However, the COOP has always been a traditional academically focused high school, and whenever we take instructional minutes away from classes that worries him. When we say 5 minutes that is times 180 or 900 minutes divided by classes resulting in the loss of 15 hours (3 days). That worries him from a curriculum standpoint.

He is uncertain he could support a drastic change. When looking at the profile, we are getting the results we want, and he would hesitate to make a major shift. Once you do that you cannot know what the result will be for other areas. Everything we have done has been a gradual process with a long-term goal, e.g., start time, moved middle school to PLC Fridays.

He spoke of all that has been accomplished to date and this being the next logical question. We have the right leadership at the high school to take us there, and he would like to give that group more time. If addressing this from a negotiation standpoint, he believes there is the need to talk at the table about Advisory and how the curriculum is structured and will be delivered.

Member Whalen commented 10 years ago she was on the committee that looked at CAVBlock. They reviewed every schedule they could. If the Administration is considering schedule(s) that may work and would like to see the formation of a committee for future consideration, she would be supportive of that. When CAVBlock was formed it was to help students that were struggling and had a lot of difficulty getting help during the school day. The desire was to provide an opportunity to get the help needed. In addition, for the very high achieving students that were pushing themselves and wanting to be involved in many activities, it was to give them an opportunity to get homework done or perhaps relax for a few minutes, and it was there so that there could be class meetings, school-wide events, etc. She believes it has changed since inception. She believes that Advisory could be fit into the schedule somewhere. She understands people will say they do not want to lose CAVBlock, but honestly when it was started no one wanted it. Within a year people were really enjoying it. She does believe the schedule can be adjusted to make Advisory happen.

She would be open to talking about schedules and a committee if she felt the Administration had ideas of directions believed would be helpful. At this point, for Advisory she feels the time is there. She agrees taking educational minutes away is a tricky issue.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock stated her opinion it is two steps too far too soon. Her understanding is there was a pilot idea coming out of the sub-committee on Advisory that went through the Instructional Practices Steering Committee and that pilot program has not yet started. This Board has not yet reached consensus on whether or not to have a significant Advisory. We need more information on whether or not Advisory works in our school, which is what the pilot program is for. She would like to reach consensus on whether or not the Board wishes for an Advisory before talking about the schedule.

Member Stoll commented from what she has heard it was a huge undertaking the last time the schedule was changed, and she would expect this to be the same. Having been on the Advisory Sub-committee, she would like to see what happens with the pilot before deciding about changing the schedule.

Member VanCoughnett stated agreement with the desire to see how the pilot goes. She understands the point made regarding the timing of contract negotiations, she is uncertain there is sufficient time to get to that point. She spoke of the amount of review they went into start time and how the district is restricted because of the bus contract. If wanting to do any kind of extension to the school day, we will have to address the teacher and bus contracts. If someone is going to stay for an 8th period, we would have to provide transportation.

- COOP Stipends

The discussion was around the potential to stipend the COOP Moderator position. The current district Moderator is also the Town of Hollis Moderator. He does run elections for the Town. The role being discussed is that of district Moderator; preparing for the Annual Meeting, which is scheduled for two nights, and special meetings. She suggested utilizing the same model that is used for the COOP Secretary, which is a per meeting stipend.

Member Whalen stated the desire to provide a stipend commenting on the amount of time and work that goes into the responsibilities of the position. Asked, Superintendent Corey stated the district pays the District Clerk \$200/evening. Asked if the Moderator receives a stipend from the Town, Superintendent Corey was uncertain. Chairman Deurloo Babcock stated her belief that is not the case. Superintendent Corey noted the District Clerk is responsible for ensuring all ballots are ready for the elections of officers (School Board members), when the update to the Articles of Agreement were done, the District Clerk was required to come in, go through those with legal counsel, and sign off on the changes, and she does the meeting minutes for the meeting.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock commented the Moderator prepares the script, does the PowerPoint presentations, leads the meeting, attends Board meetings, etc.

Member Stoll stated support for providing a stipend for the position. She questioned if there is room to discuss whether the stipend could be put into play in the current year and was told it could be supported by the current budget.

MOTION BY MEMBER ENRIGHT TO APPROVE AN ANNUAL STIPEND FOR THE COOP DISTRICT MODERATOR OF FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$500.00) BEGINNING IN THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER STOLL

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-1

Member Solon voted in opposition

DELIBERATIONS

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the Administration's Recommendation to adjust the school calendar

MOTION BY MEMBER STOLL TO AUTHORIZE THE SUPERINTENDENT, IF DEEMED NECESSARY, TO ADJUST THE SCHOOL CALENDAR SO THAT STUDENTS AND STAFF RETURN FROM THE DECEMBER BREAK ON JANUARY 3, 2023
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER VANCOUGHNETT

ON THE QUESTION

Superintendent Corey explained when the calendar was created last year, the original plan was to return to school on Monday with the holiday being on Sunday. The reality is that staffing is a challenge every day, and the Administration has heard from staff members the inability for them to secure daycare for that Monday as it is a holiday for many places. Should staffing become an issue, there is always the ability to call a snow day that morning, but that would not provide advance notice as some will still need to secure daycare.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned and was told the day would be the equivalent of a snow day so the last day of school would be impacted for both students and staff.

MOTION CARRIED

6-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Policy **ECAD** – Security Camera System
Given its first reading;

MOTION BY MEMBER WHALEN TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY ECAD - SECURITY CAMERA SYSTEM, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER VANCOUGHNETT

ON THE QUESTION

A recommendation was made for review based on updated legal references. After review, the only changes proposed are additional legal references.

AMENDED MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING, WAIVE SUBSEQUENT READINGS, AND ADOPT POLICY ECAD - SECURITY CAMERA SYSTEM, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WHALEN

MOTION CARRIED

6-0-0

Vote on the main motion.

MOTION CARRIED

6-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Policy **EHB** – Data/Records Retention
Given its first reading;

MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY EHB – DATA/RECORDS RETENTION
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER STOLL

ON THE QUESTION

Additional legal references have been added.

MOTION WITHDRAWN

MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING, WAIVE SUBSEQUENT READINGS, AND ADOPT POLICY EHB – DATA/RECORDS RETENTION, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER STOLL

MOTION CARRIED

6-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Policy **JLCB** – Immunizations of Students
Given its first reading;

MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY JLCB – IMMUNIZATIONS OF STUDENTS, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER VANCOUGHNETT

ON THE QUESTION

The policy has been amended to include reference to “guardians” as well as an update based on current law whereby the form stating a child has not been immunized because of religious beliefs is no longer required to be notarized.

The Policy Committee will be asked to clarify if the form utilized is one provided by the State or simply a parent notification to the District.

MOTION CARRIED

6-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Policy **GEA** – Extra-Curricular and Co-Curricular Advisors and Athletic Coaches
1st Reading – 11-16-22
Given its second reading;

MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON TO ACCEPT THE SECOND READING OF POLICY GEA – EXTRA-CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR ADVISORS AND ATHLETIC COACHES, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER STOLL

ON THE QUESTION

The policy has been amended, in the last sentence of the fifth paragraph, by deleting the words “as necessary”.

MOTION CARRIED

6-0-0

REPORT OUT BY PROCESS OBSERVER

Member Enright remarked the meeting was well run and included a great deal of productive conversation.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY MEMBER VANCOUGHNETT TO ADJOURN

SECONDED BY MEMBER WHALEN

MOTION CARRIED

6-0-0

The December 14, 2022 meeting of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board was adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Date _____ Signed _____