

**HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
PUBLIC HEARING
FEBRUARY 20, 2023
MEETING MINUTES**

A Public Hearing was conducted by the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board on Monday, February 20, 2023 at 6:33 p.m. at the Hollis Brookline Middle School Library, Hollis, NH.

Holly Deurloo Babcock, School Board Chairman, presided:

Members of the School Board Present: Tom Solon, Vice Chairman
Kate Stoll, Secretary
Krista Whalen

Members of the School Board Absent: Tom Enright
Beth Janine Williams
Cindy VanCoughnett

Members of the Budget Cmte. Present: Darlene Mann, Chairman
Raul Blanche, Vice Chairman
Brian Rater
Anthony Stanizzi
Tom Whalen

Members of the Budget Cmte. Absent: David Blinn
Matthew Maguire
Cindy VanCoughnett, School Bd. Rep.

Also in Attendance: Andrew Corey, Superintendent
Gina Bergskaug, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
Kelly Seeley, Business Administrator

**PUBLIC HEARING
BOND**

Chairman Deurloo Babcock explained the purpose of the Public Hearing was to receive input on the proposed bond for Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District Warrant Article for the energy efficient purchase and installation of boilers and LED lighting for both the middle school and high school.

The proposed warrant reads:

To see if the School District will vote to appropriate the sum of **\$3,076,806** (gross budget) to finance the acquisition and installation of energy efficient LED lighting and propane boilers with associated costs for oil tank removal for both the Hollis Brookline High School and Middle School; to authorize the issuance of not more than \$3,076,806 in bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); to authorize the School Board to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; and to raise and appropriate an additional sum of **\$76,920** to pay debt service on such bonds or notes in the 2023-2024 fiscal year. (3/5 ballot vote required)

A presentation was provided by Superintendent Corey (can be viewed [here](#) beginning at tape counter 34:14).

Superintendent Corey went over the items that would be addressed as part of the project for which the bond is proposed. At the Hollis Brookline High School (HBHS), proposed is LED lighting with an estimated cost of \$558,603 and a projected yearly savings of \$42,036 (potential for \$40,000 in rebates) and propane boilers consisting of oil tank (underground) removal for \$52,000, installation of tanks \$75,000 and installation of boilers \$1,053,000. Projected yearly savings is \$47,670 (potential rebate of \$16,000).

Removal of underground tanks is favorable from an environmental standpoint. Environmental agencies in the State have changed piping requirements for oil tanks. As a result, the oil tank into HBHS itself would require approximately \$150,000 of piping change to meet the new standards coming out. That happens whether or not a bond is the direction taken. Superintendent Corey commented were the piping changes to be done outside of this project, he is uncertain how quickly he would want to make adjustments. A new boiler would still be needed, but if that were the scenario, consideration would have to be given to the cost of moving to a new system. For the proposed propane tanks, it will be determined whether above or below ground is the best approach.

The boiler at the HBHS dates back to 1996. The oil tank was put in on January 6, 1997.

At the Hollis Brookline Middle School (HBMS) the project consists of LED lighting with an estimated cost of \$423,702 and projected yearly savings of \$26,810 (potential rebate of \$30,000) and propane boilers consisting of oil tank removal for \$48,500, installation of tanks at \$60,000, and installation of boilers at \$806,000 with a projected yearly savings of \$30,921 (potential rebate of \$16,000).

Total cost of project is estimated at \$3,076,805 with a projected yearly savings of \$147,437 and potential rebates of \$102,000.

The boilers at the HBMS were installed in 1987 and mid '90s. There would also be a consolidation at the HBMS resulting in going from 3 to 2 boiler rooms. The oil tank was installed on August 31, 1987.

The requirement for new piping at the HBMS would result in a cost of \$150,000. Total cost required to address new environmental requirements is \$300,000.

A ten-year bond at 3.8% interest would result in a payment of \$364,000/year and a fifteen-year bond at 5.0% interest \$291,272/year.

The warrant would allow the Administration to go out to bid and for results of the bidding process to go before the Board for review and selection of interest rate and vendor.

The LED lighting would have the ability, if so desired, for future connection to solar. The Administration has looked at the roofs as well as the potential of a solar farm on the property. Moving in that direction would result in yearly savings. The example was provided of the savings in the electric bill (75-85%) achieved in the Hollis School District as a result of solar. The boilers that would be able to be installed could be hooked up to solar as well.

Studies conducted a few years back in Hollis considered wood pellets, wood, oil, propane, and electric. Not much has changed in that data. Energy bills are increasing as a result of the economy. This is a good time for consideration of these projects as the savings estimates may be increased because of increasing costs.

If the bond article is approved, the Administration would move forward with a construction committee (would include the Facilities Director, Business Manager, Assistant Superintendent, and Superintendent) and with the participation of the energy experts from EII, would refer back to the information that Banwell Architects provided and hold bi-weekly meetings to coordinate the completion of the project.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock opened the floor for public input at 6:43 p.m.

Steve Ettelson, 52 Crestwood Drive, Hollis

Is the new Chair of the Hollis Energy Committee and is just coming up to speed on the work related to this bond. He believes there to be opportunities, if combining the solar with possibly heat pumps, to come up with a solution that is cashflow positive year one. With the proposal, the payback period goes beyond the life expectancy of the equipment. He would like to see the group work with the Hollis Energy Committee as there is historical knowledge there. He would suspect there would be a recommendation for another review of the proposal.

Venu Rao, 37 Arbor Lane, Hollis

Member of the Hollis Energy Committee. The committee has a history of working on sustainable energy solutions and has saved over \$1.5 million for the Town of Hollis. Suggested the COOP work with the committee to find a better solution than that which is proposed; one which would be clean, cheaper and provide a return on investment in approximately 10-12 years rather than 35 and 42 years.

Adam Jacobs, 15 Crestwood Drive, Hollis

Member of the Hollis Energy Committee. Is aware a lot of time has been spent looking at this complicated system. The energy world is evolving. It is no longer new stuff, it is very mainstream and the way of the future and if you make an investment now that will lock you in for the next 25 years, that is when you want to make these investments; at the end of a useful life of a system. If you lock us into a 25 year fossil fuel system you will not have the benefits of having these costs that could be used in alternative ways. The committee believes there are at least partial if not full solutions that take care of these space issues that are being experienced. Insulations and new equipment are coming out all the time. The committee wishes to have input.

With solar systems you have current electricity use, the heat pumps increase that a lot. You have to look at the long term. Nobody is putting in these kinds of systems anymore because they are not as cost effective as solar and heat pumps.

Eric Ryherd, 150 Witches Spring Road, Hollis

Was on the committee that did the work on the Hollis Schools. The problem he had then was that the involvement began too late in the process. It was after the money had been approved and a plan in place for propane. There is no reason the Hollis schools, even now, should be using propane. They have solar and electric. Why isn't everything electric? Ask any of the teachers at HPS what they like about it; it is quiet and cool in August, September, and June. They get comfort, can control it themselves, and everything is modern.

He has been through the middle and high schools extensively. The HBHS has all sorts of huge fans to take all of the heat created in this room with those giant propane boilers and immediately throw it outside with no ability to try to capture that. Let's look at a plan that recovers that energy and uses what we have at HUES (VFD

drives), which is much more efficient and allows you to dial the speed of these giant fans so that we can have a smaller system in general, buildings that are more efficient and electric powered by solar.

Just on the other side of the field at the high school is upwards of almost 3 acres of empty field that cannot be seen except from the air. We can use that field for solar to power likely both schools. The roofs on these buildings are also probably useful.

Eitan Zeira, 31 Mill Road, Hollis

A member of the Hollis Energy Committee. In 2012 we replaced lighting for more efficient lighting. Vice Chairman Solon responded lighting was replaced in the multi-purpose room.

There is already efficiency. Rather than taking all of the lighting out now, it might be worthwhile to do it incrementally as replacements are needed. The savings will not be huge if replacing CFLs with LED.

Steve Ettelson, 52 Crestwood Drive, Hollis

Spoke of an organization called [Undaunted K12](#). There are 30-40% government subsidies under the inflation reduction act for heat pumps. That should be a big factor when evaluating these systems.

The Public Hearing was declared closed at 6:54 p.m.

Date _____

Signed _____