

1 **SPECIAL HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD**
2 **FEBRUARY 20, 2023**
3 **MEETING MINUTES**
4

5 A special meeting of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board was conducted on Monday, February 20,
6 2023, at 6:01 p.m. at the Hollis Brookline Middle School Library, Hollis, NH.
7

8 Holly Deurloo Babcock, Chairman, presided:
9

10 Members of the Board Present: Tom Solon, Vice Chairman
11 Kate Stoll, Secretary
12 Krista Whalen
13

14 Members of the Board Absent: Tom Enright
15 Beth Janine Williams
16 Cindy VanCoughnett
17

18 Also in Attendance: Andrew Corey, Superintendent
19 Gina Bergskaug, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
20 Darlene Mann, Chairman, COOP Budget Committee
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22
23 **AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS** - None
24

25 **PUBLIC INPUT**
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27 Chairman Deurloo Babcock noted public input would be accepted for the meeting of the School Board during
28 which the Board would be discussing the organization of how the annual district meeting warrant would be
29 presented.
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31 At 6:30 p.m. the public hearing for the bond article will occur. At that point, public comment will be accepted
32 on the issue of the bond. At the conclusion of that public hearing, a public hearing on petition warrant articles
33 will be conducted.
34

35 *The period for public input was opened at 6:02 p.m.*
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37 Chairman Deurloo Babcock noted no member(s) of the public were present to provide input and that the period
38 for public comment would remain open until 6:33 p.m. At that time, should member(s) of the public be in
39 attendance and wish to provide input, it would be permitted.
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41 **DISCUSSION**
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- 43 • Organization for the Annual Meeting
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45 The purpose of the discussion was to determine who would make the presentations for the Annual Meeting and
46 whether the Board wished to provide comment on the petition warrant articles.
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48 Article 1 – Bond Proposal Superintendent Corey

1 Vice Chairman Solon questioned the information that would be available during the presentation, e.g.,
2 comparative costs of propane versus oil, and was told usage information from the current year would be
3 available. He requested information on cost per BTU be provided noting a concern that propane has, in the
4 past, been one of the highest costs per BTU. He is uncertain if that landscape has changed. A suggested a
5 question that will likely come up is the option for refinancing, e.g., would that require moving to a private bond
6 versus the bond bank.

7
8 Superintendent Corey will present the article at the Annual Meeting.

10 Article 2 - HESSA Contract	Krista Whalen
11 Article 3 - COOP Budget	Darlene Mann, Chairman, Budget Committee
12 Article 4 - SAU 41 Budget	Chairman Deurloo Babcock
13 Article 5 - Maintenance Expendable Trust	Chairman Deurloo Babcock
14 Article 6 - Retain Unassigned Fund Balance	Chairman Deurloo Babcock
15 Article 7 - Special Education Expendable Trust	Chairman Deurloo Babcock
16 Article 8 - Contingency Fund	Chairman Deurloo Babcock

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18 Petition Warrant Articles

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20 Article 9 - Amend Articles of Agreement

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22 Chairman Deurloo Babcock questioned if legal counsel would address the article based on concerns expressed.
23 Superintendent Corey stated he would reach out to counsel noting the concern over the 2/3 super majority
24 required. That is asking for a standard that is higher than the remainder of the Articles of Agreement (AoA)
25 (majority or 3/5). It would add a new component to the AoA and, from a legal standpoint, there is the question
26 of which is the driving force.

27
28 Vice Chairman Solon noted Article 8 of the AoA states it is a 50% majority.

29
30 Chairman Deurloo Babcock remarked, if the petition warrant article were to pass, it would be in conflict with
31 another article that would not change.

32
33 Legal counsel will provide relevant legal information and Vice Chairman Solon will present a rebuttal to the
34 article.

35
36 Asked if the article is binding or advisory, Superintendent Corey stated his belief, if passed, the language would
37 be binding.

38
39 Article 10 - Tax Cap

40
41 Chairman Deurloo Babcock questioned if members of the Budget Committee planned on providing rebuttals to
42 petition warrant articles and was told the Budget Committee would provide rebuttals to Articles 10 and 12.

43
44 Article 11 - Zero out Line Item "Fees School Board"

45
46 Vice Chairman Solon will provide rebuttal.

1 Article 12 - Rescind Retained Fund Balance

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3 Budget Committee will provide rebuttal.

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5 Article 13 - Tax Impact Notation

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7 The Budget Committee may provide rebuttal. Asked, Budget Committee Chairman Mann noted supporting
8 documents for the articles would be provided by the Board. Because there will be rebuttal to some of the
9 petition warrant articles, there will be documents that go along with that, which have not yet been prepared. A
10 bond is close to maturity. A chart identifying that timeline will be added to the presentation.

11
12 To provide an update on how the Board arrived at the point of the bond hearing, Superintendent Corey stated at
13 the end of 2021, a notification was received from the Department of Education (DOE) informing of the
14 potential for building aid returning to the State, and that it would be necessary to file a letter of intent shortly
15 into 2022. That was done. Following that, notification was received that the package that goes along with
16 filing would have to be completed. The decision was made to file. Coming out of COVID and with the
17 transitions going on across the State, it was not anticipated many would put in for bonds. To that end, there
18 were 17 proposals submitted of which 4 were from SAU 41.

19
20 That was followed up by the DOE performing onsite visits and review of the proposals. In the winter, notice
21 was received that the SAU's 4 proposals were ranked 14-17. There were other priorities. A large piece of this
22 will always fall on need base, e.g., free and reduced lunch statistics, which are not always favorable to this
23 district.

24
25 When the process originally started at the COOP, there was a project for the middle school and the high school
26 and what was submitted was at a cost of approximately \$8.5 million (each), with building aid providing 30%
27 reimbursement. To get to that \$8.5 million, a process was undertaken with Banwell Architects, a company
28 familiar with the buildings in the district. Work began by interviewing the Principals to identify the needs of
29 each building. When they started at the high school, they were looking at the cafeteria, which has always been
30 a concern, the need for four additional classrooms, and another look at the library as there is a usable classroom
31 that is accessible only through there. The infrastructure around lighting and boilers was another aspect.

32
33 The same process was undertaken at the middle school. Once the representatives gathered all of their
34 information, the district reached out to EEI, which is an energy consulting firm that worked with the SAU last
35 year on the unit ventilators at the high school and currently working on the Brookline RMMS project with a
36 multitude of space pieces.

37
38 Realizing state aid was very unlikely, the need to reprioritize became clear. That process set up the Capital
39 Improvements Plan (CIP) for the next several years as the needs were identified, the architects had drawn up
40 plans, etc. We also knew, with the economy the way it is and the unknown factors, that approximately \$17
41 million was unlikely to pass the voters.

42
43 The Administration went back in reverse order and concluded that as much as we desperately need a new
44 cafeteria, we have survived for 20 years. The cafeteria and the four classrooms were removed from the
45 immediate plan. The next review was of the library commons at the high school. Although a door opening
46 from the corridor to the classroom makes a great deal of sense, we have survived without it.

1 The next look was at the middle school and the plan to repurpose a lot of the library space for educational
2 needs. From a code standpoint, you would no longer be allowed to have the corridor through the educational
3 space. The minute we do something to the building we have to address code issues. The library, administrative
4 offices, and front entrance were all looked at extensive and removed.

5
6 What remained were boilers, lights, and science labs. They went through the science labs. From a square
7 footage point of view they do not meet code for 24 students. At some point, we need to do something to them
8 (located in the back left hand corner of the building). It was felt a more comprehensive look at that space is
9 required so that when looking to repurpose whether it is science rooms or to serve other purposes, that time is
10 dedicated to produce the most well thought out plan for moving forward. They then began to look specifically
11 around essential items that need to be addressed.

12
13 Superintendent Corey stated the desire to provide some clarification before heading into the bond hearing as
14 many have asked him questions comparing the Hollis School District project to that of the COOP School
15 District. While they are similar and a lot of the reasons that we did the projects in Hollis are also the driving
16 force behind the COOP project, they are not the same.

17
18 The Hollis Primary School (HPS) has its primary heat source as heat source pumps. However, it has a backup
19 heating system of a new boiler and propane. At the Hollis Upper Elementary School (HUES), heat source air
20 pumps were not a viable option (cost prohibitive). What differs at HUES is the cafeteria, gym, and a multitude
21 of corridors. Heat source air pumps make it difficult to get heat into corridors. When reviewing HUES, it was
22 realized that the infrastructure (unit ventilators, blowers, etc.) was in very good shape. The decision was
23 reached to go in the direction of a new state-of-the-art commercial boiler that is offset, so that they are not both
24 running at the same time and buried propane tanks. The transition to propane was the result of studies done that
25 indicated it to be the most efficient. It also resulted in economies of scale as there is buying power with the
26 Town of Hollis for propane.

27
28 In terms of LED lighting, that was done at HPS and HUES. Were the bond to pass, that would be done at the
29 middle and high schools. Those lighting changes will immediately show drastic savings. What is being looked
30 at for the COOP is also moving to solar power. What we do now will automatically be hooked into the solar
31 with the new panel. The question at the COOP that is different is uncertainty with whether it is best to install
32 solar on the roofs as was done in Hollis, given there is a wealth of property in the COOP. It may be beneficial
33 to go with a solar farm because of the magnitude of what will be needed for solar panels to address the needs to
34 these two large buildings.

35
36 The control system is where the COOP is fortunate as it is relatively modern compared to what was the case at
37 HPS.

38
39 Superintendent Corey commented he does not like to use HPS as an example as that building was constructed in
40 the 1950s and heating pieces had to be removed as they were no longer useful. The HPS still had fuse boxes in
41 use. A lot of the infrastructure at that building was changed over, at a large cost, and are not necessary at either
42 of the COOP schools.

43
44 The desire was to provide some history. If the bond passes, what would typically be done is a construction
45 committee would be formed. The Administration is confident with the dollar amounts arrived at for the bond.
46 It is felt what is planned to be done will serve us for decades and at the same time allow the flexibility, if so
47 desired, to make a move to solar.

1 The period for public input was declared closed at 6:33 p.m.
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3 **ADJOURNMENT**
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5 **MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON TO ADJOURN**

6 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER STOLL**

7 **MOTION CARRIED**

8 **4-0-0**
9

10 *The February 20, 2023 special meeting of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board was adjourned at*
11 *6:33 p.m.*
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15 Date _____ Signed _____

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