

# Approved

## HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET COMMITTEE

A regular meeting of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District Budget Committee (BC) was conducted on Thursday, August 27, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. at the Hollis Brookline Middle School.

**Members of the Committee Present:** Darlene Mann, Chair

**Members of the Committee Participating Elect.:** Raul Blanche, Vice Chair  
Matt Maguire, Secretary  
Brian Rater  
Lorin Rydstrom  
Tom Enright  
Cindy VanCoughnett

**Members of the Committee Absent:** David Blinn

**Also Participating Electronically:** Kelly Seeley, Business Administrator

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Darlene Mann called the Meeting of the HB COOP BC to order at 6:34.

In accordance with [NH RSA 91-A:2, III \(b\)](#), due to the COVID-19 / Coronavirus crisis, and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this Committee is authorized to meet electronically.

Chairwoman Mann, Cindy VanCoughnett and Brian Rater were present at Hollis Brookline Middle School. Committee Members Matt Maguire, Tom Enright, Lorin Rydstrom, and Raul Blanche as well as Business Administrator Kelly Seeley participated electronically via Zoom.

All members that were participating electronically could be heard and all votes were taken by Roll Call.

**AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS**

None

**Meeting Observer**

Member Maguire was appointed the meeting Observer

**Approval of Minutes**

Hollis Brookline Cooperative Budget Committee ..... June 25, 2020

Motion by member Lorin Rydstrom to accept, As Amended

Brian Rater seconded.

*A Viva Voice Roll Call was conducted, which resulted as follows:*

Yea: 5 (Matt Maguire, Brian Rater, Lorin Rydstrom, Darlene Mann, and Cindy VanCoughnett)

Nay: 0

Abstain: 2 (Raul Blanche and Tom Enright)

**PUBLIC INPUT**

None

**General Business**

Typically, the BC would have a discussion on the District Audit results as part of the August meeting. This year with all the activities focused on the re-opening of the schools the Audit discussion will be delayed until the September meeting.

**SB Update - Reopening Plan Overview**

The BC engaged in discussion on the District’s re-opening plans. Cindy VanCoughnett provided an overview of the SB meeting that was held on August 12<sup>th</sup>. As of August 12<sup>th</sup>, 86% of the Middle School and High School students have completed the registration process that included the selection of attending school in person or participating in remote learning. Approximately 81% (563 students) of the high school students that

responded have requested in-person and 125 Students have requested remote learning. The Middle School also had 81% (282 students )request in-person and 65 students request remote learning.

Teachers have started to return as of Monday of this week. Additional Professional Development (PD) days have been added. The administration is looking forward to the students returning the week of 9/7/2020. It was reported that there were 12 to 15 transfer students over the summer.

The administration and SB have been working to update the policy for the Mask Language. Students will be required to wear masks on the busses, going in/out of the buildings and in classrooms. Masks will be worn for most of the day, but students will have breaks if social distancing permits.

Some teachers have had plexiglass installed in the classrooms to provide a barrier. It was reported that the classroom sizes support the required requirements of proper distancing between desks.

There will be a mix of some teachers that will be 100% remote and some 100% in person. Some teachers will be in-person in the building but will be teaching to students that are remote. At the SB meeting earlier in the month the administration asked for an additional 6 substitute teachers. There will be some teachers that will be teaching remotely while the students are in-person. The substitute teachers are needed to be with the students that are in-person while the teacher is remote.

The administration is still working on plans for Athletics. At the high school level, the plan would be to have 6 games at the varsity level. The divisions would be structured as Pods that would allow the schools that play each other that are in the same general geographical area. (A pod is a group of schools that are in the same geographical area) For example, Hollis/Brookline, Milford and Souhegan would be part of the same Pod.

There will also be no practice prior to the start of school. Spectators at games would be limited to only 2 people per athlete. Students would not be able to attend games to watch. Transportation is still being investigated and the plans may involve parents driving their students to the games.

The plan for athletics at the Middle school is still being worked out.

The plan for dealing with positive COVID-19 cases is still being discussed and issues will be handled on a case by case basis following the CDC guidelines.

The district is working to stockpile enough PPE to cover providing all students and staff. It has been requested that teachers and students bring their own masks, but the district will be able to provide the PPE/masks if needed. The cleaning protocols are being enhanced. The district is also looking into using additional cleaning services to cover shifts that are short of janitors.

It is expected that there will be ~ 20% less people in the building. The district has also been making updates to the building such as auto flush toilets and auto on/off sink faucets to help with mitigating the risks due to Covid.

The BC engaged in the discussion on the cost impact related to addressing COVID-19. The auditors are not done yet with the yearly audit of the district, but the preliminary estimate is that the district will return ~ \$900k to the taxpayers.

The BC asked what the plan was for taking the temperature of students. Infrared Sensors were investigated, but they are very costly. The district is moving forward with a process that requires parents to check their children and fill out a form on Power School every morning (Power School is the district web access portal for parents).

The district will also be staggering the arrival times to help with social distancing.

It is expected that the plans will continue to evolve as the school year progresses.

### **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

The BC engaged in discussion on the unreserved fund balance.

The ~ \$900k of anticipated funds to be returned is the amount after all the various trusts from the warrant articles are funded.

This year there will be ~\$189K of approved funds allocated to the retained fund. This is about \$50k higher than usual. Typically, the district has ~ \$140k of retained funds. It was noted that while the state allows districts to allocate 2.5% to retained funds, SAU41 limits this to 1%. It was also noted that the retained fund additions come out of the UFB.

Some of the drivers for the higher unreserved fund balance include:

- Lower Transportation costs due to remote learning. (~ \$350k less due to contract agreement with STA)

- Savings due to not needing substitute teachers.
- Professional Development was less than expected due to the shift to remote learning and things shutting down.

The BC asked what the status was with the unions and if they are on board with all the changes that need to be done due to COVID-19. It was reported that negotiations are still on-going and there are issues that need to be resolved. It is not expected that there will be a large additional expense to the district.

The BC asked about what the Federal guidelines are related to COVID-19 and the staff. It was reported that some of the staff have requested Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations due to COVID-19.

A new SAU facilities director was hired, and started on 8/17. The new facilities director, Lance Finamore, came from the Berkley School of Music where he worked as the Life Safety Director. Mr. Finamore has education, facility, and life safety experience.

The summer work on the facilities was not impacted due to Covid and includes:

- Paving at HS and MS
- Intercom at HS and MS
- Roof at HS (Per budget line item)
- Asbestos abatement at MS

The district received additional funding from the Public School Infrastructure Fund (PSIF) from the state. The additional funds will go towards the cameras that will be installed. The grant pays for 80% while the district will cover 20% of the system's expense. The district contribution of 20% was in the budget.

#### **Athletic Fees:**

The BC engaged in follow-up discussions from last month's meeting on the athletic fees. The auditors and legal council were consulted to determine if the district could do something different for protecting the funds that are collected via the additional out of pocket athletic fees. Currently the district uses the athletic trust fund that requires voters to approve the funding via a warrant article. If the voters do not approve that warrant article, those funds, that are not taxpayer funds, would be returned to taxpayers via the unreserved fund balance. The feedback was that RSA 194:3-C provides a method for addressing the athletic funds that may work better than the current method:

#### **194:3-c Revolving Funds for Self-Supporting Programs. –**

I. A school district may establish a revolving fund for the purpose of providing moneys for school programs which are self-supporting, in whole or in part. The purposes for which such fund is established shall be specified by the district.

- II. (a) A school district may raise revenues from and appropriate funds for such self-supporting school programs.
- (b) Revenue may include, but is not limited to, moneys derived from the sale of goods or services associated with such programs or tuition charged for such programs. Such revenue shall be appropriated to fund only the program from which it was derived.
- (c) A school district may establish a line item in its budget to supplement revenue derived from such programs. No supplemental appropriation may be made except by such budget line item.
- (d) A school district shall establish regular intervals for disbursing funds to such programs for program costs approved by the local school board.
- III. The revolving fund shall be subject to annual audit, and all records regarding the programs and revenue derived from such programs shall be public.
- IV. Moneys in the revolving funds may be nonlapsing, if so specified by the district.
- V. Upon termination of a school program funded under this section, moneys derived from such program remaining in the revolving fund shall be returned to the pupil if derived from tuition, or used as local general funds to reduce the tax rate if derived from the sale of goods or services associated with the program.

Turf Field re-finance:

The BC engaged in discussion on the re-finance of the turf field. There will be ~ \$95K of net savings. The spreadsheet below was discussed.

<b>COOP Athletic Field Financing Summary</b>												
	ESTIMATED 1.66M, 2.5%, 10 yrs			APPROVED 1.66M, 3.8%, 10 yrs			REFINANCE 1.55M, 2.0%, 9 yrs			ACTUAL PAYMENTS		
	Principal	Interest	Total	Principal	Interest	Total	Principal	Interest	Total	Principal	Interest	Total
Feb-19		\$24,324										
Aug-19				<b>\$166,000</b>	<b>\$43,603</b>	<b>\$209,603</b>		\$ -		\$166,000	\$43,603	\$209,603
Aug-20				\$166,000	\$56,772	\$222,772	<b>\$183,695</b>	<b>\$3,279</b>	<b>\$186,975</b>	\$183,695	\$3,279	\$186,975
Aug-21				\$166,000	\$50,464	\$216,464	<b>\$159,581</b>	<b>\$27,394</b>	<b>\$186,975</b>	\$159,581	\$27,394	\$186,975
Aug-22				\$166,000	\$44,156	\$210,156	<b>\$162,773</b>	<b>\$24,202</b>	<b>\$186,975</b>	\$162,773	\$24,202	\$186,975
Aug-23				\$166,000	\$37,848	\$203,848	<b>\$166,028</b>	<b>\$20,947</b>	<b>\$186,975</b>	\$166,028	\$20,947	\$186,975
Aug-24				\$166,000	\$31,540	\$197,540	<b>\$169,349</b>	<b>\$17,626</b>	<b>\$186,975</b>	\$169,349	\$17,626	\$186,975
Aug-25				\$166,000	\$25,232	\$191,232	<b>\$172,736</b>	<b>\$14,239</b>	<b>\$186,975</b>	\$172,736	\$14,239	\$186,975
Aug-26				\$166,000	\$18,924	\$184,924	<b>\$176,190</b>	<b>\$10,784</b>	<b>\$186,975</b>	\$176,190	\$10,784	\$186,975
Aug-27				\$166,000	\$12,616	\$178,616	<b>\$179,714</b>	<b>\$7,260</b>	<b>\$186,975</b>	\$179,714	\$7,260	\$186,975
Aug-28				\$166,000	\$6,308	\$172,308	<b>\$183,308</b>	<b>\$3,666</b>	<b>\$186,975</b>	\$183,308	\$3,666	\$186,975
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,660,000</b>	<b>\$230,724</b>	<b>\$1,890,724</b>	<b>\$1,660,000</b>	<b>\$327,463</b>	<b>\$1,987,463</b>	<b>\$1,553,374</b>	<b>\$129,397</b>	<b>\$1,682,771</b>	<b>\$1,719,374</b>	<b>\$173,001</b>	<b>\$1,892,375</b>
<b>Net Savings</b>												<b>\$95,089</b>
Legal Fees/Right of Way												
Anticipated project underrun												

The donations from HB Elevates are in process of transitions to the SAU. The BC discussed the additional cost of the lighting due to the ledge that was encountered. The donors increased their donation to cover the additional expenses. The BC expressed their gratitude to the donors for their very generous donation. So far, ~ \$550K in donations have been identified.

FY22 Budget Planning-Budget/guidance process, planning assumptions:

The BC is planning to discuss the FY22 Budget during the September meeting. The June BC meeting has typically been used to provide the BC with a facilities overview and update from the Superintendent. With the focus on the re-opening of the schools those topics were postponed, and the BC will discuss them during the September meeting.

FY22 will include the bi-annual rate change for NH Retirement Systems (NHRS). This will be discussed at the next BC meeting as well.

Legislative Update

The BC engaged in discussion on several legislative updates. Two of the notable updates include:

- Currently SB2 requires a 3/5 majority for all bonds and a traditional town meeting requires a 2/3 majority for all bonds. One of the proposed legislative changes will make the 3/5 majority apply to SB2 and Traditional Town Meetings for Bonds and a 60% threshold for all non-bond items.
- Proposal to change the max retained fund balance from 2.5% to 5% (SAU41 has a self-imposed cap of 1%).

Raul Blanche left the meeting at 7:30.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The next BC meeting will be September 24th.

**PROCESSOR OBSERVER**

Member Maguire reported that it was an Efficient Meeting. Good Info discussed tonight.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Member Rater to adjourn

Member Rydstrom seconded.

*A Viva Voice Roll Call was conducted, which resulted as follows:*

Yea: Matt Maguire, Brian Rater, Lorin Rydstrom, Darlene Mann, Cindy VanCoughnett, Tom Enright

6

Nay:

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MOTION CARRIED

Meeting Adjourned at 7:35

Video Archive of Meeting: