

BROOKLINE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANNUAL MEETING
FIRST SESSION (DELIBERATIVE)
FEBRUARY 8, 2023
MEETING MINUTES

The First Session (Deliberative) of the Annual Meeting of the Brookline School District was conducted on Wednesday, February 8, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy.

Moderator Peter Webb presided.

Members of the School Board Present: Kenneth Haag, Chairman
Karen Jew, Vice Chairman
Colleen Micavich, Secretary
Alison Marsano
Kelly Zakar

Members of the School Board Absent:

Also in Attendance: Andrew Corey, Superintendent
Gina Bergskaug, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
Lauren DiGennaro, Director of Student Services
Kelly Seeley, Business Administrator
Daniel Molinari, Principal, Richard Maghakian Memorial School
James O'Shaughnessy, Esq., School District Attorney
Brian Rater, Chairman, Brookline Finance Committee
Tracy Perry, Secretary, Brookline Finance Committee
Cindy LaCroix, Brookline Finance Committee

Moderator Webb introduced members of the School Board and Administration. Members of the Administration are not members of the Town, and, therefore, technically not permitted to participate. However, given what they could add to the discussion, the Moderator requested anyone objecting to allowing them to speak make that objection known. No objections were stated.

Moderator Webb noted this to be an SB2 meeting under RSA 40:13 also known as the Official Ballot Referendum System. The Board has created a Warrant having 10 Articles. Under SB2, the Warrant is effectively the Ballot. Before the voters was the opportunity to discuss each of the Warrant Articles and to consider any amendments. Although the Ballot could be changed, it could not be approved until before the voters on Tuesday, March 14, 2023.

Article 1 – Election of Officers

To elect all necessary School District officers for the ensuing terms by official ballot vote on March 14, 2023, Captain Samuel Douglass Academy, 7:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.:

- To choose a Moderator for the ensuing year.
- To choose a Clerk for the ensuing year.
- To choose a Treasurer for the ensuing year.
- To choose two (2) members of the School Board for the ensuing three (3) years.

Article will be placed on the official ballot as written.

Article 2 – Professional Staff Contract

To see if the Brookline School District will vote to approve the cost of items included in a three-year collective bargaining agreement reached between the Brookline School Board and the Brookline Teachers Association for the 2023-2024, 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years, which calls for the following increase in professional staff salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Estimated Increase</u>
2023-2024	\$241,337
2024-2025	\$287,648
2025-2026	\$289,609

Total: \$818,594

and further to raise and appropriate a sum of **\$241,337** for the first fiscal year (2023-2024 school year), such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in professional staff salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels. **The School Board recommends this article 5-0-0. The Finance Committee recommends this article 3-0-0.**

Estimated Net Tax Impact - \$0.34/\$1,000

Colleen Micavich, School Board member, stated this to be a 3-year sanbornized contract (voting on the costs of all 3 years). The salary grid includes on-step table increases for 31 teachers; 5% in year 1 and 4.5% in years 2 and 3. For off-step (26 teachers) it would be a 5% increase in year 1, 4.5% in year 2, and 4% in year 3. For the on-step teachers, the increase represents that indicated in the chart, plus movement of 1 step on the grid, which is 3% between the steps. For those off-step, the increase is what is listed only in the grid.

Negotiations continued over a period of approx. 5 sessions and a full day of mediation in an attempt to find a balance between making the district more competitive with neighboring districts (not there yet), and balancing the needs of the taxpayers.

In terms of health insurance, a chart was displayed providing information on monthly district paid insurance caps. The goal was to maintain our costs, as health insurance costs increase, with the hope of eventually decreasing costs. For a single person, the premium Cap is \$869. It will remain the same in years 1 and 2 and increase to \$898 in year 3. For a two-person plan, the current \$1,570 would remain the same in year 1, increase by \$10 in year 2, and in year 3 it would be \$1,630. For a family plan the current \$2,053 would remain the same in year 1, increase to \$2,085 in year 2 and in year 3 it would be \$2,135.

In year 1 of the contract, the combined total cost is \$241,337. In year 2 it is \$287,648, and in year 3 it is \$289,609. The total cost of the three-year contract is \$818,594.

Moderator Webb noted State Statute: “No cost agreed to by the public employer and the employee organization shall be modified by the Legislative Body of such public employer.”

The Legislative Body does not vote on the article. The discussion continues until completed.

Richard Cunha, 1 Baldwin Drive

Questioned the competitive analysis and the details.

Board Member Micavich responded districts similar to ours as well as neighboring districts were looked at, e.g., Milford, Amherst, Bedford, Hollis, the COOP, Oyster River.

Mr. Cunha asked how other districts are more competitive, and was told, even with the proposed increases, we have not equalized with the salaries of a lot of them. This proposal is a show of good faith to our teachers that we are trying to get there with the understanding that we might not always be able to give this level of increase.

Mr. Cunha asked if teachers would be at a comparable level with the proposed increases and was told they will be more comparable. They will still be lower than some districts.

Asked if they would be comparable 3 years out, Board Member Micavich spoke of the efforts to balance the needs of the taxpayers. Asked if the same song and dance would be presented in 3 years, she noted the need to negotiate every 3 years. Other districts are also in the process of negotiating. Some districts have failed in negotiations. Teachers not having a contract is not what you want when you are a supportive town. The goal was to come out of negotiations with a fair contract. Although not able to predict the future, there may still be inequities, but at least we have made a strong move towards equalizing to some comparable districts.

Asked if she has an idea of what the number would be were we to be completely comparable, she stated there to be data available; however, it is a moving part. Some districts are in the process of negotiating now and some have already negotiated and will negotiate again next year.

Mr. Cunha commented as they are negotiating now, we could potentially be negotiating this and actually be in the same situation that we are in right now.

Board Member Micavich stated her hope we would not be in the same situation because we have given very fair and a little larger than normal increases. That is where we closed that gap. We are not going to close the gap with all of those districts. In the process of negotiating, concentration is on the now. The best we can do is predict where this will take us for the next 3 years.

Mark Andrews, 35 West Hill

Spoke of academic data; comparisons for Brookline and the State for mathematics, English Language Arts, etc. It appears for each metric and grade level we exceed State average with the current pay scale. He asked if a performance increase could be quantified with the proposed salary increase.

Board Member Micavich responded she is not a mathematics person, but in a broad sense, she would like her children to continue to learn like this and to support the teachers that are helping us excel in that way.

Asked if it is accurate to assume that if salaries remain equal performance will still continue to exceed state average, she stated it would not. We will have teachers likely leaving us to go to other districts. We will bring in new teachers who often take 3 years to grow. We will have more administrative needs to train those teachers. You want to support your teachers who are doing a good job. If they can go to the town over and make much more money than they make here, they may. History shows they will.

Karen Jew, School Board Vice Chair, remarked the district has done a comparison with those same towns identified, and their Cost Per Pupil (CPP) is generally higher than ours, and our scores are in line with those districts. All of those exceed the state standard. We all strive to achieve a higher standard than the state average.

Ed Perry, 4 Muscatanipus Road

Is very excited to hear that our averages are so good and that this Board decided to take the time to look into today's employment climate and consider such things as inflation and market value adjustments that are happening across the board in every sector of employment. In general employment it is widely accepted that when you have an employee leave the cost to a company is generally about 33% of that person's salary, and that does not take into consideration the breakage, e.g., starting over with another, the experience loss. He asked if the 33% is comparable to the cost that we could expect if losing people, and if the Board had a chance to consider the breakage of having to start with brand new people all the time.

School Board Member Micavich reiterated the Board does not quantify it numerically necessarily, but that was part of the discussion that when you have to train a new person, they need a lot of supervision and oversight. When things go well it is great. When they do not there is even more time expended. We do not have a hard and fast number like the business world might. We want to keep administrator costs down too to the extent we can while also keeping our kids safe. It is that fine balance of when you have a lot of new teachers in a building it takes up a lot of time from an administrative perspective and from other teachers who are constantly mentoring their peers. Right now it seems we have a balance of newer teachers and more experienced teachers, but if the balance goes the other way it does end up costing in many different ways.

Kenneth Haag, School Board Chair, commented it is important to add that this summer we had a lot of feedback from the community around resourcing, how we are supporting our staff and teachers. That will be seen here. We pulled that thread in the negotiations for the contract. It will be seen in the operating budget as well. There were 3-4 different sessions where a good deal of community input was provided and discussion of resourcing, staffing, and supporting our schools. The Board heard that input loud and clear.

Brady Halligan, 17 Birch Hill

If you torture numbers long enough, they will confess to anything. Do recall when you are looking at statewide statistics that our region is not the state as a whole. We tend to skew a little higher due to competition, salaries to the south, etc.

Alyson Manion, 4 Macintosh Road

Thanked the negotiating team for their efforts to support the teachers. As someone who has been in public education as an educator for 17 years, she has watched teachers leave because of stalemates, to go to districts with higher pay, and watches very closely the crisis faced in this country of public school teachers leaving by the droves. She has two children in the town and wants them exceeding standards at all levels and to see our teachers supported. We need to constantly show good faith in contract negotiations to retain those teachers.

Dennis Skey, 54 Averill Road

Questioned the attrition rate. School Board Member Micavich stated she was uncertain of the rate, but commented it seems that at every meeting there is attrition whether through retirement, leaving the district or situations where it just did not work out after training. That was a big topic discussed at the May meeting last year.

Mr. Skey remarked the conversation is about attrition, but we don't know what that number is, we just know it is high.

School Board Member Micavich remarked we are preventing attrition by hopefully putting out a reasonable contract that is well balanced. We have had some attrition of senior and newer teachers recently. As a newer Board member, it seems to her as not only a current issue but more so when we are looking for the next 3 years, a contract issue of knowing that people can go elsewhere and comparing that to other communities nearby.

Mr. Skey commented people can always leave a job because of money, but that is not always why they leave or stay. It would be nice to know the attrition rate.

School Board member Micavich remarked that data can be provided. Later in the discussion Chair Haag will discuss other solutions that are more in line for administrative support understanding that people leave for multiple reasons, and currently the district is lacking in a few areas where we are looking to improve.

No further discussion was offered on Article 2.

Article will be placed on the official ballot as written.

Article 3 – Operating Budget

To see if the Brookline School District will vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling **\$11,283,450**. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be **\$11,125,878** which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the school district or by law or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. **The School Board recommends this article 5-0-0. The Finance Committee recommends this article 3-0-0.**

Estimated Net Tax Impact - \$10.57/\$1,000

The increase in the proposed FY24 operating budget over that of the approved FY23 operating budget is \$758,102 or 7.2%. New items fall under the categories of academics for \$29,325, regular education personnel \$13,713, special education personnel \$78,447, computer equipment replacement \$28,000, shared services/software \$2,511 and facilities/safety \$9,369 for a total of \$161,365. The new item requests were identified after 4-5 rounds of discussion over new item requests and the overall budget.

Major changes, based on program needs, include reductions in areas of special education contracted services \$178,095 and regular education MTSS paraprofessionals \$102,286, and increases in areas of special education

out-of-district tuition and services \$326,781, curriculum/MTSS Administrator \$110,000, special education new positions \$78,447, and special education transportation \$74,530. An increase in the cost of heating oil at \$59,000 is based on market increases, and the increase in bond principal and interest of \$55,179 on the new FY23 bond.

Noted was that the cost of special education services is a federal mandate that is built into the budget instantly. That increase represents half of the total increase. The curriculum/MTSS Administrator position is the result of heavy feedback around support for our Principals and having another person to help with some of the disciplinary issues, curriculum K-6, and collecting some of the data related to IEPs, etc. This position has been discussed for several years and has been delayed due to concerns for the budgetary impact. With this year's climate and the feedback received, the decision was made to put this forward.

The default operating budget is determined based on the FY23 adopted operating budget of \$10,525,348 increased or reduced, as the case may be, by items required by law or contracted at \$656,268 and reduced by one-time FY23 expenses at \$55,738 for a total FY24 default budget of \$11,125,878. The difference between the proposed and default budget is \$157,573.

A breakdown of items required by law or contracted showed wages/benefits at \$129,940, special education services/transportation \$293,916, health/dental/FICA/NHRS \$148,662, regular education transportation \$23,256, bond payment increase \$55,180 and various other small amounts totaling \$5,314.

Were the taxpayers not in favor of moving forward with the curriculum/MTSS Administrator position, the default budget, with a few other cuts, would essentially address that.

School Board Member Micavich added when talking about the Curriculum Administrator position, the Board balanced the need for that position with taking away the regular education MTSS paraprofessionals. The reality is that it is very hard to find paraeducators right now. This was again an attempt to balance the needs of the community with the needs of the schools.

Kelly Zakar, School Board member, commented when talking about the Curriculum Coordinator, a term people may be more familiar with is that of Vice Principal. The position would essentially be a Vice Principal that would be shared between the two elementary schools and provide support to the Principals. Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds were able to be utilized to bring in Bob Ouellette, retired Principal at the HBHS, to help fill some of those gaps this year on a contracted basis. Feedback from the Principals has been that the position has been invaluable even on a part-time basis.

MOTION MADE BY ERIC PAUER TO AMEND THE PROPOSED BUDGET BY REDUCING IT FROM \$11,283,450 TO \$10,165,028
MOTION SECONDED

ON THE QUESTION

Eric Pauer, 12 Westview Road

Everything being proposed will raise property taxes for the Brookline School District by a little more than 20%. Taxpayers cannot afford it. The amendment would give voters a choice between the \$10.2 million and \$11.1

million. There are not many articles that can be modified to adjust this high tax hike. He is not convinced the district is following the 8% tax cap when the tax increase would be 20%.

The COOP School budget is going to go up 15%, the Town is going to go up 14% if we let those go through. We cannot take 20% here. The difference between the proposed and default budget is only \$157K. It is almost the same number.

School Board Chairman Haag questioned where a million dollar reduction would come from within the budget. He wished to understand what would be sacrificed at a million dollars.

Mr. Pauer responded it is not his job to tell him that.

School Board Chair Haag stated the Board and administration spent 5 months reviewing this budget. He would like to hear analytically what is being proposed to be removed for a million dollars out of the budget.

Mr. Pauer responded you will probably have to have a few less teachers would be his guess, maybe not as many administrators. The number includes keeping the tax impact to about 5%. When asked, Mr. Pauer stated he could come up with a detailed plan for the reduction. He does not think this community is able to take a 20% tax increase. We passed a tax cap to keep the increase to 8%, which is pretty generous. He will let the voters decide.

Jessica Hartman, 51 Mountain Road

Spoke against the amendment. Thanked the Board for their volunteer hours and hard work. Believes the budget brought forth by the Board and Administration came from very prudent review and focus on what would be needed to care for our students as well as considering the taxpayers. Appreciates the time and prudence that is evident by the presentation provided.

The proposed amendment is asking the Board to go to our teachers and contracts that we already have. She does not see how that would help or happen, and it also doesn't speak to the community with the request that they have that we need more help in our schools to help our Principals, help our students who are really still suffering post-COVID. Is not in favor of the proposed amendment and does support the budget proposed by the Board.

Ed Perry, 4 Muscatanipus Road

Opposed to the amendment. When looking at the proposed budget he saw something that looked a lot like the inflation amount. It was not surprising to him. He does not believe it realistic to say let us try to have the same outcomes and maintain the quality we have now and try to decrease the budget under inflation.

We make this distinction as if there are two camps in Town; parents and taxpayers. When we talk about taking both sides into consideration, often we are talking about the same people. He is always impressed by the intelligence of the people of Brookline, their resourcefulness and ability to get into the details. When he sees a majority of people show up year after year at town meetings in full support of our schools and the things that we need asking for more resources for our schools, he knows they are smart enough to understand we cannot pull that out of the air. They know it is going to be an increase in their taxes and it is a price that they are willing to pay, not just for the benefit of the children but for the benefit of the country because our children and our

country are competing with people who are being educated all over the world and elsewhere they are not talking about taking the foot off the gas.

Peter Walker, 57 Pepperill Road

Supports the amendment. Disposable incomes for households are down \$5,000 annually over the last two years; 21 months in decline in real wages. The proposed budget is not really sustainable for taxpayers. He appreciates a counter proposal and is hopeful it will be supported.

Brady Halligan, 17 Birch Hill

Asked the Board for the number of teachers that would have to be cut to meet the \$1 million reduction and the affect it would have on class size.

School Board Chairman Haag stated his belief it would be 10 teachers (fully loaded positions). We would be in violation of our class size policy. We would be looking at cutting at least 1 teacher in every grade, which would absolutely increase class size and go against quite frankly what the population supports around class sizes. It could be more than 10 teachers when you add in the special education requirements that are federally mandated. Asked if the reduction would even comply with federal and state law, he responded the district would have to support the special education needs, which means regular education and teachers would be cut.

Abe Hartman, 51 Mountain Road

Asked for clarification of last year's budget and was told it was \$10.5 million. The default is at \$11.1 and \$11.2 is the proposed budget. He wished to have clarified where the 20% increase that was spoken to is derived.

MOTION MADE BY RYAN PAUER TO MOVE THE QUESTION

MOTION SECONDED

MOTION FAILED

22-32

Johanna Shriver Halligan, 17 Birch Hill Road

Questioned the dollar increase that would result from the proposed operating budget. School Board Chair Haag stated the impact to be \$10.57/\$1,000 valuation.

Ms. Shriver-Halligan stated her opposition to the proposed amendment. Her child started school this year, is in preschool, and there is only 1 preschool teacher. She stated a desire not to cut the only program that is teaching her child how to talk. Although she understands both sides, at the end of the day it is important to remember that we are parents and taxpayers, and we want our kids to have the same opportunities other kids had. Her child has benefitted from the paraeducators and from having supervision in the class. All of those things are important.

You cannot just say let us cut some here and there without examining that and the impact it would have long-term. People who may not have children in the schools had that opportunity and their children were cared for, taught, and educated. We want that opportunity for our children and want to pay teachers and paraeducators what they are worth.

Kacie Petrin-Ellis, 7 Smith Road

Noted page 2 of the presentation addressed percentage of enrollment for both special education and 504 students. She asked if that enrollment has increased since the past year and was told it is a slight increase.

She understands from experience the level of improvement provided students having special requirements in this district. She is sad to say that at this point they are considering paying for private school to no fault of the district. She believes the district to already be short staffed, caseloads are increasing, etc. She is concerned the proposed amendment would negatively impact the school district.

Tom Rogers, 8A Louis Drive

Spoke of hearing of the lack of paraeducators, and questioned how short the district is in that regard. School Board Chair Haag stated it to be a shortfall of 8. Mr. Rogers commented the proposed amendment suggests reducing the budget by \$1 million without providing detail of where that money will come from, which could result in approx. 10 teachers being let go. He is hopeful the taxpayers will not consider going from a position of being down 8 paraprofessionals and not having enough support to cover our classrooms as it stands, to then pulling out of thin air a budget that is a million less without backing that up with detail to support the logic behind it. He thanked the School Board for doing their due diligence and working so hard over 5 months to come up with a logical budget. His child has gone through the schools and is a Freshman at UNH. His child had a wonderful education here and it is because the schools were invested in.

School Board Member Zakar spoke of the SAU website and the document titled FY24 budget detail for new items round 4.1. This has been a five-month process. At the start of the process, building administrators are asked to identify needs. The request began at an estimated cost of \$316,000. That was whittled down to \$13,000 of requests for new personnel included in this budget. She asked the public to look at the document that steps through each of the budget cycles to see how much has already been stripped out, e.g., a new playground for CSDA, smart boards and computers and resources to help our teachers use their time and expertise with our children more effectively.

Mark Christiansen, 9 Flint Meadow Drive

Asked for confirmation of whether the 7% is year on year. School Board Chair Haag stated it to be a 7% increase over last year's budget.

Mr. Christiansen commented he does not know anyone who is working for a living who is getting 7% more this year than last. Whatever the details are, we have to live within our means.

Dennis Skey, 54 Averill Road

In 2004, the economy was similar to what it is now. At that time, he proposed a football team at the high school. Of course he was almost run out of town. He formed a 501C and people who really felt compassionate about that donated money. The people in this town may have money and it may be a tax break to give money towards these things that you just budgeted and had to cut. He would propose later on to set up programs where taxpayers could give funds for computers, and these different programs that would otherwise be taxed. Although the budget seems tight, the administration will be juggling money all year long. That is not the way it works. We do not run like the federal government, we spend as we go, but we also can contribute money.

Ed Perry, 4 Muscatanipus Road

When hearing the idea that we might have to let 10 teachers go, generally speaking that will trigger an atmosphere change. Other people are likely to go as well. You start losing employees and others have to step up to the plate, and all of a sudden, they are doing 2-3 other people's work for the same pay they made last year. Not a good business model. People are going to start walking out the door. He questioned how easy it is right now to go out and fill these positions.

School Board Member Micavich responded speaking from experience in this district and the district she works in, it is a somewhat impossible process to fill positions for special education teachers in particular. There will be a lot of competition for positions. There are a lot of teachers leaving the field. What is being suggested would be a disaster for that.

Mr. Perry asked, when having someone who has been on board for a while, is it potentially likely that we will see a situation we see in many other instances now where people who are trying to fill positions at companies are asking for a lot more than people who work there currently. Although he would like to save money, he does want to be smart about it not by slashing money out of the budget, firing a bunch of teachers, then having to re-hire a bunch of people at a higher wage in a new atmosphere.

School Board Member Micavich replied slashing the budget by a million dollars is going to create such chaos that no one is going to want to work in the schools. We will see increases in behaviors. One thing that is prevalent in all academic studies is the importance of class size. We will become a different district over time and not in a favorable way. We will not be able to attract teachers to a district that is going downhill in a disastrous way where we are cutting 10 teachers. What person wants to take a job in a district that just cut 10 teachers. No one, because they know they would be on the chopping block next for a town that does not support them.

Mark Andrews, 35 West Hill

Addressing the question of where the 20% was derived, noted a chart that showed the overall BSD tax rate impact of 18.3%. He stated his support of the proposed amendment.

School Board Member Marsano noted that includes all of the proposed warrant articles not just the operating budget. If any of the others were not approved that too would impact the overall increase.

Eric Pauer, 12 Westview Road

If everything is passed, as proposed, taxes, just for the school district, will go up to \$12.74/\$1,000, which is \$2.13/\$1,000 for every taxpayer. This proposal is just an option on the ballot on March 14th. Having only the proposed and default budgets (two numbers only \$157K apart) really doesn't give voters a choice. The district adopted an 8% tax cap under RSA 32:5b, which says our taxes cannot go up more than 8%, and we're going up 20%.

School Board Chair Haag stated the entire table has to be taken into account. You have removed the reduction in revenue too, which adds to that 20%. The bottom line impact is a 7.2% increase. You have taken out the revenue piece, which is a problem we cannot solve.

Mr. Pauer stated the RSA is very clear. School Board Chair Haag responded he already explained to Mr. Pauer the Board already had its legal team look at it. He does not have another answer to provide. The Board has legal guidance that allows for it.

Moderator Webb requested anyone objecting to allowing James O'Shaughnessy, Esq., School District Attorney, to speak make that objection known. No objections were stated.

James O'Shaughnessy, Esq., School District Attorney, remarked for clarification on the Statute for the local tax cap, the percent increases on the amount of tax not the rate of tax.

Mr. Pauer stated it to be that you cannot raise more than 8% from the previous year.

Attorney O'Shaughnessy responded "that is correct, on the operating budget".

Mr. Pauer argued it is not just the operating budget. RSA 32 talks about the budget and says all appropriations. That is the key thing that was missed there. There is a difference of legal opinion, but the intent and the language of RSA 32 is that we don't get a 20% tax increase if the super majority passed an 8% tax cap. We will be getting into some legal challenges going with this 20% because he does not think it is right. He has voiced that to the School Board, and it has proceeded anyway.

School Board Chair Haag responded Mr. Pauer voiced it and was provided the detail of how they got to it. His question was answered, he just didn't like the answer.

Moderator Webb remarked there are two different legal opinions. You will not reconcile it.

Brian Rater, 31 Mason Road

Referring to the chart titled BSD Tax Rate Info., noted the tax rate is determined not only by the expenses but also revenues. Expenses are reduced by revenue received. The chart shows local revenue from FY23 at \$1,215,627 and anticipated for FY24 \$887,000. That is a reduction in revenue (to offset the taxes that have to be raised) of \$328,627. That in itself affects the tax rate significantly. The State Aid Grant represents a reduction in revenue for FY24 of \$200,466 and the Retained State Tax an increase of \$188,012. Overall each year we continue to see declining support from the State government.

Abe Hartman, 51 Mountain Road

He typically hears comments at this meeting and at the COOP around attrition, what teachers would leave, and do we really need to pay them X amount. His understanding is, at least at the COOP, there are positions that haven't been filled. When he checked on that he was told the district hasn't received a single resume for that position, for a teacher, this year. We have basically had to do without that teacher. He is uncertain how we would ever fill teacher positions if they were cut.

When those comments are made the response is typically, they will be here because we have good kids, etc. It doesn't work like that all the time especially if teachers can go to Massachusetts or drive 35 minutes to another district. He saw this where he was raised as it was a competition between Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. It is a consideration. We do have these openings that are not being filled, which is a drain on the system.

School Board Vice Chair Jew commented, to that point, it would be good to remind everyone what happened in the Croydon School District in New Hampshire, which made national news. At the Deliberative Session the budget was slashed on the floor. People went to vote at SB2, didn't know what they were voting for, and their school was looking at putting all of their students in pods and being given educational content via remote instruction because they didn't have the staff as they had to make drastic cuts because it was not budgeted. There was no plan for that massive decrease, but the number felt good at the ballot. That is drama we do not need. It is a well thought out budget as it is.

Kacie Petrin-Ellis, 7 Smith Road

Another resident had alluded to money being moved around between funds. She questioned if there are fenced funds in this budget. She stated her assumption monies from the special education lines cannot be moved into other lines, etc. Asked specifically if there are fenced funds.

Superintendent Corey stated the answer to be yes. He provided the example of special education requirements, which, at times, could result in the need to reduce a regular education line item to meet the costs mandated by law.

Ms. Petrin-Ellis asked if the district could arbitrarily move money between funds.

Superintendent Corey responded the Board gets the bottom line number. One of the things the Board and Administration have prided themselves on is being transparent and only making movements when there is a legal obligation to do so.

Ms. Petrin-Ellis stated this is no surprise because the budget is printed. Superintendent Corey stated the Excel spreadsheet that is online goes line item by line item identifying increases and decreases.

Ms. Petrin-Ellis stated she has faith the Board is being prudent with taxpayer dollars. She questioned where 10 teachers would be cut from and if that has been considered.

School Board Chair Haag stated we are in hypothetical right now. It would be class size impact and things like that. With federal requirements around special education, it would probably be the regular education. Asked about students requiring one-on-one paraeducators, School Board Member Micavich stated special education costs are usually pretty set in law. Theoretically, could we let go of a special education teacher who is already working with 6 students and bring it up to 12, yes, but then there are also laws about class sizes. There are a lot of things that would have to be considered. The amount of staff that we would have to cut, if doing her math correctly, is about 18-20%.

Asked if there were cuts to special educators, could that potentially cost the district additional funds and possible lawsuits, School Board Member Micavich responded absolutely, this sort of thing is just a recipe for spending more money down the road. Other districts have done this, and this happens. There would be more behaviors, academic decline, teachers leaving, lawsuits over everything including special education, discipline issues, etc. It is setting us up for a disaster. We are all going to spend the money in the end, our kids are just going to suffer in the interim.

School Board Chair Haag spoke of the potential for increases in the costs of out-of-district placements. That is not good for two reasons; we want the students to stay in their district and financially it is more expensive to do that.

Ms. Petrin-Ellis stated her understanding out-of-district placements can be substantial. School Board Member Micavich stated out-of-district placement can be \$100,000, which doesn't include transportation, which can be \$300/day. Once you start wrecking Tier I supports, students have to move up to Tier II and Tier III. There are residential placements that are upwards of \$400,000 each.

Ms. Petrin-Ellis questioned if there have been studies on the impact of freedom vouchers. Superintendent Corey stated his belief at this point, that number is minimal. Most of our residents have chosen to stay within our school district. Some have moved to home schooling, which is a great alternative for some families. Overall that piece right now in our community is minimal.

Tom Rogers, 8A Louis Drive

That is a great point; despite all the talk about the rising costs and the big benefits about going into private school, we are retaining our students because we provide a good product. At this point in the night, he wished to remind everyone what they were looking at was a budget that a lot of people put a lot of work into versus a motion that has absolutely no backup.

Lisa Akey, 38 Westview Road

Has two young children and moved here because of the schools. Is proud that we have the 3rd ranked school district in the State. Our district is competitive with some districts out of Massachusetts. Something she thinks about when looking at tax increases is that the strength of our schools is also tied to the property values in our Town. She sees it as an investment in her children's education and those that come after them. It is also an investment in her home.

John Liska, 197 Route 13

Is a businessowner and does not feel many understand what is happening; steel plants are being closed, supply chain issues are ongoing for a year, we are getting behind the 8 ball. It is nice to be able to afford things, but we have people being laid off and things closing down. Like a business, we allocate things to make things happen and keep it alive. Before we try to keep up with something that is bigger than us, we have got to take a second thought. Right now our economy is not very good.

Ken Haag, 9 Hobart Hill Road

The Board started this work in September, received feedback around supporting it and no input during the public hearing. The cycle goes 5 months, and then they come here and take a \$1 million cut with zero plan. It is reckless and foolish. He does not know how this happens every year where they get to this Deliberative Session, and it almost is hijacked then we go to the polls, and it is a 4-1 overwhelmingly in favor.

Johanna Shriver Halligan, 17 Birch Hill Road

The fastest way to get rid of people who know what they are doing and take the time to care about you is to not pay them. She can say that because she is in the process of walking away from her specialized field because she does not get paid what she is worth. Yes, the economy is bad, but at the end of the day history has shown us that economies rebound. She is not willing to undercut her children's education and the future of our Town because of an economy that is poor right now. Do not undercut and undersell our children because you do not want to pay for the next two years.

Diane Pauer, 12 Westview Road

Supports quality education. It is paramount that we educate our children. She respects the budget process that the School Board has gone through with the help of the Finance Committee. The point she wished to remind everyone of is that we would not be having this conversation if at the end of the budget process the 8% tax cap had been respected and adhered to.

MOTION FAILED

No further discussion was offered on Article 3.

Article will be placed on the official ballot as written.

Article 4 – SAU Budget

Shall the voters of the Brookline School District adopt a school administrative unit budget of \$2,264,374 for the forthcoming fiscal year in which **\$446,191** is assigned to the school budget of this school district? This year's adjusted budget of \$2,247,208 with \$442,809 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. **The School Board recommends this article 5-0-0. The Finance Committee recommends this article 3-0-0.**

Estimated Net Tax Impact - \$0.63/\$1,000

Moderator Webb moted this to be another article, which the statutes say you may not amend.

School Board Vice Chair Jew provided an overview of the SAU budget. The SAU office is comprised of 3 separate school districts. The SAU office oversees 3 separate sets of teacher contracts, 3 separate sets of support staff contracts and 3 budgets totaling over \$55.5 million. They oversee over 2,400 students. We have a unique setup in this State. There are not many units set up the way SAU 41 is, and this requires a lot of specialized training and unique machinations in payroll and budgeting to administer everything according to each specific district.

It is governed by the SAU Governing Board, which is made up of all three school boards. The Governing Board made it a priority to look into compensation and ensure our staff at the SAU level is paid at an appropriate level. We did not want to set the market, but wanted to get our staff up to a level where they would be competitive because turnover at that level is not easy to replace and train. As a result, the Board increased the budget by \$161,198 or 7.6%. The portion that the Brookline School District is responsible for is approximately 20% of that budget. The Board also wished to ensure hourly employees at the SAU were also

compensated at a competitive rate. This process happens during Governing Board meetings which occur quarterly. The Board discussed this in September and conducted a public hearing in December, which is where taxpayers could provide feedback on the budget.

Eric Pauer, 12 Westview Road

Part of the reason we are seeing this 20% increase is this SAU budget. We cannot amend it here tonight, but he did provide feedback to the entire SAU Board when he saw the increase. He saw some increases to some of the administrators that were 10% and he believes he saw a 17% increase. This says 3-5%, which is for the lower paid individuals. He asked for clarification of the increases given to the Superintendent, Director of Facilities, and Business Administrator.

School Board Vice Chair Jew stated the Board looked at compensation across the State to ensure we are in line with competitive rates. We didn't set the market with any of these, just brought people up to where their peers were.

Mr. Pauer stated the Department of Education just posted salaries of Business Administrators, Assistant Superintendents and Superintendents in New Hampshire. Our Superintendent is #3 in the State. We are not #3 in size. He saw that he was given about a 9.9% raise. This kind of budget increase just compounds the problem. He wished to let voters know that this is our portion, but since we are in the COOP, there is a portion that goes there, and we have to pay for part of it there as well.

Brady Halligan, 17 Birch Hill

Commented you get what you pay for.

Tom Solon, 2 Shady Rock Road

We are currently in a situation nationally with a dramatic shortage of administrators. Last he knew there were 19 open positions for Superintendents in the State of New Hampshire. We are fortunate to have an administrative staff who have conducted themselves in a way, for many years, where they have become leaders in the State and the country. People look to them for guidance because of their innovative actions. We have brought our budgets into compliance and kept our increases lower than typical in the State while providing superior education.

This SAU is probably the most cost effective part of your expenditure because they have the ability to have broad impact. They are able to look at all 3 districts, consolidate opportunities, lower costs in that way, improve the education. The total amount of the budget is \$2 million out of over \$50 million or about 4% of the overall budget that you are spending on education.

He personally advocates for increased investment at the SAU because of the dividends it pays on the overall impact of our school districts. He asked taxpayers to support this budget, support the people who are running our schools and providing the results that you want. If you really want to cut the costs of administration within our overall school area, the way to do it would be to have a single school district K-12 for Hollis and Brookline. You would now have only 2 contracts to deal with and would cut by 75% the number of budgets the administration has to address. They issue over 10,000 purchase orders because each district has to be run

independently. If you really are looking for cost effectiveness, if cost is the driver of your decision, he would advocate support of a K-12 COOP.

Allison Minion, 4 Macintosh

As a former school administrator she is aware of the challenges of the job. You get what you pay for. You may be paying for someone who is 3rd in the State, but we are 3rd in the State when it comes to excellence. Frankly, it should be more; make him first and let us go be first. Let us support them the same way we support our teachers.

Colleen Micavich stated the Board did consider the increases and fully supports them. Being a Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent is a thankless job. There is a ton of competition because nobody wants to do it, especially in this State.

No further discussion was offered on Article 4.

Article will be placed on the official ballot as written.

Article 5 – Special Education Reserve Trust

To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$25,000** to be added to the previously established Special Education Trust Fund, with this sum to be raised by taxation. **The School Board recommends this article 3-2-0. The Finance Committee recommends this article 3-0-0**

Estimated Net Tax Impact - \$0.04/\$1,000

School Board Member Zakar stated the Brookline School District established a special education expendable trust fund in 2018 for the purpose of defraying costs of unanticipated expenses. Special Education costs are federally mandated. It can be an existing student who experiences a catastrophic illness or an accident and suddenly has the need for special education services. It could be a student receiving a new diagnosis or a student moving into the district requiring special education services. Without the expendable trust fund, the costs could bankrupt a district. The fund was established to cover the cost of unanticipated expenses to try to protect the budget and district.

The Board and Administration strives to maintain a balance of \$250,000 in the fund as this is roughly the cost of an unanticipated out-of-district placement.

Wishing to explain the Board vote of 3-2-0, she stated when the Board met with the Finance Committee to review the warrant article, there were 3 options presented for funding sources; funding through taxation only, through the unassigned fund balance, and a hybrid whereby a portion of the funds would come from each of those sources.

Discussed at that meeting was that, at this point in time, there is not anticipated to be funds remaining at year end. Because special education is federally mandated, should an unanticipated expense occur, any funds needed would have to come from elsewhere within the budget, e.g., regular education.

The vote of the Board represents 3 Board members voting to have the funding source be straight taxation wanting to ensure the funds are available. Two members were in favor of a hybrid method. All members are in favor of funding the trust fund, it is a matter of the funding source.

Tom Solon, 2 Shady Rock Road

Questioned the anticipated need to use up to \$150,000 of the fund during this fiscal year when the description is to have it available for unanticipated expenses. He asked why there would be a planned almost budgeted withdrawal from this as opposed to having anticipated costs built into the budget and maintain this as an emergency fund of sorts.

Superintendent Corey explained the expense came in after the budget was set. As we always do, we are looking to see if we can offset those costs via the operating budget. The projection of using the fund is what we anticipate for students that moved in last summer that could not be projected into this current year's budget. Mr. Solon asked and was told the anticipation is that the amount would be taken out in this current year to cover expenses.

School Board Vice Chair Jew added of the \$758,102 increase to the operating budget, \$409,000 is attributable to special education funds added into the operating budget.

MOTION MADE BY ERIC PAUER TO AMEND ARTICLE 5 TO READ “TO SEE IF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT WILL VOTE TO RAISE AND APPROPRIATE A SUM OF TWENTY FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$25,000) FROM THE JUNE 30TH UNRESERVED FUND BALANCE (SURPLUS) AVAILABLE FOR TRANSFER ON JULY 1ST OF THIS YEAR TO BE ADDED TO THE PREVIOUSLY ESTABLISHED SPECIAL EDUCATION EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND”
MOTION SECONDED

ON THE QUESTION

Eric Pauer, 12 Westview Road

The language is basically doing what the School Board discussed as option 3. In all previous years, when funding trust funds, we have always done it out of the unreserved fund balance. That is the reason we set these up; always want to have the precedent. Can we tax people to pay into that, of course we can, and that is what the district is proposing. If this is taxation, we need to find some place where we can give voters an option.

He has heard, at this point in time, it appears the unreserved fund balance will be low, and maybe the fund won't be able to be funded. Because it falls early in the warrant, this would be funded before the other one.

Wished to mention something about the Croydon School District that was brought up earlier. They do not have SB2. They had a traditional meeting where they cut their budget by about 53%. They did not have balloting. They actually had another meeting under traditional that they were allowed to. SB2 would have actually stopped that. He wished to correct the point. They do not have SB2.

Jill Aitken, 14 Potanipo Hill Road

Opposed to the proposed amendment. Special education is federally mandated. There is the expectation that \$150,000 of the existing fund will have to be utilized. That will not impact taxes this year because we have the funds to cover the expense.

It appears, even if approving the requested allocation at the polls through taxation, the anticipation is the ending balance will be \$100,000. The intent is to keep the fund at \$225,000 (what it can cost to place 1 child). You can have more than 1 child with these needs in one year. Like it or not if these needs come about and we have not planned for it, we will have to pull the funding from somewhere else, which will hurt all of the students. If anything, we should be putting more into the trust. She is supportive of what the Board has proposed.

Brady Halligan, 17 Birch Hill

Asked the Board to address having considered this proposal and rejected it by a vote of 3-2.

School Board Member Marsano stated she is one of those who rejected the motion to utilize taxation as the funding source. Had she had it her way it would have been at a much greater dollar amount and through the unreserved fund balance. She is concerned draining this trust fund by the amount that may be necessary will really set us up for a scenario down the road that could be incredibly dangerous for us in terms of fiscal responsibility. At this point in time, we do not stand with an unreserved fund balance. If she has to look at it as the entirety though taxation, she feels this is a place where she does not want it mandated down. If the means exist to fund the trust through fund balance that would be great, but if we don't then we need to not be taking more and more money.

School Board Chair Haag stated he voted against the funding mechanism being taxation. The Board discussed this at length during the public hearing and it is really a color of money that they were trying to figure out how to best raise and appropriate and support these. Article 6 is important to consider too. The order of these on how they get funded is also a key piece. When considering the next article, which proposes a funding mechanism of taxation, \$100,000 of the requested \$150,000 is a must do next year. His concern was that we had to fulfill that obligation, and this article could be drawn through the unreserved fund balance.

School Board Member Micavich commented, as a new Board member, she struggled with this a bit. She wished to clarify the entire Board supports this article. The only difference of opinion is the funding source.

Tom Solon, 2 Shady Rock Road

Spoke in favor of the amendment. He is supportive of the concept of this fund. It is a necessary safeguard. Perhaps like Board Member Marsano, he believes it should be a larger number. In the climate we are in he respects the Board's decision to hold it at \$25,000, but does think that the appropriate funding source, given it is sort of an insurance policy or what if as opposed to a known expense, should be the unreserved fund balance. He does not like the fact that we will be depleting the fund. He respects the possibility that the Administration will do everything it can to find the cost within the existing budget, but if replenishing, he supports doing it from the unreserved fund balance.

Moderator Webb commented the concern has been expressed as to whether we have to show tax impact on such an article in this Town. The suggestion was made that it would have to show on the ballot. School Board Member Marsano stated it would be foregoing a potential rate reduction of \$0.04/\$1,000.

Erin Sarris, 15 High View Drive

Asked for clarification that the rationale for proposing funding this through taxation this year as opposed to the way it has previously been done is that there is a concern there may not be an unreserved fund balance and was told that is the concern.

School Board Chair Haag commented it would be tight.

School Board Member Zakar remarked, with the proposed amendment, if there remains only \$5 in the unreserved fund balance that is the amount the trust would be funded to. She understands the expectation there will not be monies remaining at year end (surplus). That is why she voted to raise the funds through taxation.

MOTION FAILED

No further discussion was offered on Article 5.

Article will be placed on the official ballot as written.

Article 6 – Maintenance Trust

To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of up to **\$155,000** to be added to the previously established School Facilities Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund, with \$100,000 of this sum to be raised by taxation, and the remaining balance of up to \$55,000 to come from the June 30th unassigned fund balance (surplus) that is not raised by taxation. **The School Board recommends this article 5-0-0. The Finance Committee recommends this article 3-0-0.**

Estimated Net Tax Impact - \$0.14/\$1,000 for the \$100,000 and foregoing a potential rate reduction of \$0.08/\$1,000 for the \$55,000.

The FY23 ending balance is anticipated to be \$71,200. With an appropriation of \$155,000 and the proposed use of \$174,050, the anticipated FY24 ending balance is \$52,150.

Proposed uses include, at RMMS, phase 2 of cafeteria tables (\$8,800), burglar alarm – end of life (\$15,000), access points – end of life (\$7,250), and IT wiring update (\$23,000), and at CSDA, Phase II of exterior doors (\$10,000), exterior lighting (\$10,000), and the fire panel (\$100,000).

The largest issue that has been postponed for many years is the fire panel. With the tightness of the budget and this being an item that has been on the radar and is past its serviceable life, we really need to address it. The panel is still functioning. The students and staff in the building are safe.

It is an issue the Board and Administration feel needs to be addressed this year. The \$100,000 identified to come from taxation is a means to ensure this item is addressed. The remaining items are necessary, but the fire panel is critical.

School Board Chair Haag stated his belief there was feedback from the Fire Department that they were urgently recommending that this be passed this cycle.

Tom Solon, 2 Shady Rock Road

Is quite disappointed to see how this is being proposed. The maintenance fund along with many of the trust funds, he believes were intended to be an accumulating funds to save towards future expenses. What is being presented is a passthrough. You are asking that we put money in for things that we know we have to spend immediately. To him, to some degree, it is circumventing the budgeting process because this is a real expense. He is not disputing the needs are here and not disputing the fact that the existence of a facilities maintenance fund is appropriate. This is the same position he has taken with the COOP as well. If you know it needs to be spent and you know it needs to be spent in the upcoming year, put it in the budget.

School Board Member Zakar responded last year we had cheap money on the warrant; less than maybe 3%, which was the bond that would have paid to do all of these upgrades including the fire panel, deferred maintenance, etc. We had budgeted for that and put forth a bond that would have been really cheap. If you look again at the first few rounds of the budget building in safety and compliance issues and in facilities and maintenance, those were things that were included. Trying to keep the budget low and trying to present the taxpayers and the governing body with a budget that stays within the operating budget tax cap, we had to make cuts. Knowing that there is no money in the unreserved fund balance and that the maintenance trust has been used for unanticipated needs, we felt this was our only option.

School Board Chair Haag commented he understands the point made as it has gone through his mind in this cycle too. His thought is if that is a feeling of the public, he would love to take that input and it can be considered in the next budget cycle. He can absolutely see and understand the point. What stuck out to him in this cycle was ensuring the \$100,000 fire panel is funded in some way.

Mr. Solon remarked although he appreciates the feedback, what the Board has done is put this at risk because the article could be voted down. The budget is a bottom-line budget. Once the budget is approved, the Board has the money to fund as it prioritizes. There is the ability to move funds around. If the Board really feels this has to be paid and it was in the budget, no matter what budget got approved, there would be the option of funding this. Right now if this article does not get funded, you are back to not having the funding of the panel and it is not in the budget either. He understands why people do it but disagrees with it.

Eric Pauer, 12 Westview Road

Agrees with the comments of the previous speaker.

MOTION MADE BY ERIC PAUER TO AMEND ARTICLE 6 TO READ “TO SEE IF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT WILL VOTE TO RAISE AND APPROPRIATE A SUM OF \$55,000 FROM THE JUNE 30TH UNRESERVED FUND BALANCE (SURPLUS) AVAILABLE FOR TRANSFER ON JULY 1ST OF THIS YEAR TO BE ADDED TO THE PREVIOUSLY ESTABLISHED SCHOOL FACILITIES MAINTENANCE EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND.”

MOTION SECONDED

ON THE QUESTION

Eric Pauer, 12 Westview Road

The motion is to not do the \$100,000 by taxation, and just do the \$55,000 by the unreserved fund balance. We have always funded our trust funds through unreserved fund balance. He does not think that precedent should be changed. That is a danger of it not passing at the ballot. If remaining funds are not sufficient to cover the cost of all items identified, the fire panel could be done and perhaps a few others. He does not agree with pulling out a known expense and not including it in the operating budget just to try to meet some interpretation of the tax cap.

Johanna Shriver Halligan, 17 Birch Hill Road

Stated what was heard was that we are not expecting an unreserved fund balance. It is \$100,000 for the fire panel alone. Do you all want these kids to burn up? That is what is going to happen if you do not have a fire panel. That is a pretty serious need. She understands that money is tight. We can prioritize, but how are you going to prioritize that when we are cutting teachers, cutting special education, pick and choose what is and is not a safety issue, etc. If the Fire Department is recommending the fire panel be replaced, she believes it is a very serious point that needs to be taken seriously and not just cross our fingers and hope we have unreserved funds. Things have use by dates for a reason.

Brady Halligan, 17 Birch Hill

The Fire Department here are volunteers. There may not be very many of us available in the middle of the day, during the school day especially. Early warning and evacuation would be of critical importance to life. Putting this language in that would say well maybe we will do this if there is an unassigned fund balance when we are forecasting that there will not be, could be problematic at best. He opposes the amendment.

Ed Perry, 4 Muscatanipus Road

Was uncertain of his position on the proposed amendment. He finds himself relatively horrified in a country as great as ours we are pitting neighbor against neighbor over fire panels. He thinks it might be time to start calling up to Concord and asking where the support is.

He is aware of lawsuits where the State Constitution may be in violation, that we might not be receiving the funding that we are supposed to receive, and this is what it causes when we have a dereliction of duty up in Concord and we are not receiving the funds that the constituents are asking for. We get into these situations where we are pitting neighbor against neighbor, which is so sad in these small communities where we all rely on each other.

Especially in regard to items such as the fire panel, it is not a laughing matter. Now that we know that we have a fire panel that needs replacing, if anything should happen, the lawsuit that would come down on this Town would financially cripple us. Once you know about something you do not have any recourse, you are not in a position of saying we didn't know.

Peter Walker, 57 Pepperell Road

Asked for clarification the panel as it exists currently is in compliance. Superintendent Corey stated it is a fully functioning panel. It is at the end of its useful life. We have had some difficulties with it, but it is regularly inspected and passing.

Martin Gosselin, 111 North Mason Road

Asked if the panel is not working. Superintendent Corey stated the panel is working.

Tom Rogers, 8A Louis Drive

Agrees with the point for next year that we should be including these things in the operating budget. That said, what we are talking about are systems that are at end of life. He is in insurance and has expertise in this. In regard to the fire panel being at end of life, compare being in a school with a fire panel that is at end of life where the Fire Department and experts are recommending replacing it with being in a hospital and having a respirator that is at end of life or cardiac resuscitation pads that are at end of life. How would you feel if the budget process went like this and someone said is it still working, okay, we are good. These things all come down to numbers. He agrees it should be in the operating budget, but really everything we are doing here is kicking things down the road. These issues have been discussed for a while.

School Vice Chair Jew stated her recollection of the discussion with the Fire Department to be that the panel miss tones and when it miss tones it requires a disruption of the day where the building administrator has to call to the fire department and verify that there is no actual smoke or fire occurring in the building at the time. It works, it just doesn't work with 100% accuracy. It requires human verification whenever it tones.

Jill Aitken, 14 Potanipo Hill Road

Is hearing from everyone up front and the previous speaker and agrees the fire panel, if it is "fully functioning" now, but we have had problems with it, now is the time to replace it, not when it fails at the critical moment. She understands people are disappointed with the proposed funding source, but she also understands the School Board is fighting to try to keep the operating budget down because of the whole deliberation we had earlier tonight. Let us try to create public awareness of how important this article is and try to get this passed. She is opposed to the amendment.

Martin Gosselin, 111 North Mason Road

Is an electrician who works on these panels. The panel does not need to be replaced. It has not failed. It is the communication. There needs to be a lot more discussion on this. You just don't rip the whole thing out just because there has been a lot of the 3G, 5G, and other different communication methods. Just because it is not communicating well doesn't mean you have to replace the whole system.

School Board Member Marsano asked if he has inspected this fire panel noting she legitimately does not know if he is part of the inspection of the fire panel that has been occurring. Mr. Gosselin responded not this one specifically, but he sees a lot of them.

Tom Durand, 21 Meetinghouse Hill Road

Asked if the items being proposed to be funded through taxation would roll through and continue on for the next year and was told they would only be funded through that mechanism for one year. He supports the proposed amendment and feels the Board put 3 critical safety items in public view and then played on emotions to ramrod this through. This was well versed for operational budget stuff. What he does in the government, if Boeing pulled this, the government would be all over them. He does not understand why the taxpayers are not all over the Board for this glaring oversight.

School Board Chair Haag responded he would welcome him to come to the School Board meetings beginning in September.

Moderator Webb commented so many of the decision making processes are preceded by public hearings. You have to look at the Town website and try to notice when these things are happening. It takes some aggressive work, and you have better things to do, but as the decision evolves it is better to be in early on than at the tail end.

Brian Rater, 31 Mason Road

Posed a Point of Order question; would it be in order for a reconsideration of the vote on the operating budget? We could take the \$100,000 out of this warrant article and put it in the operating budget. The operating budget can go over the 8% tax cap because we would be doing it here at this body. The tax cap is only on the budget that is presented by the School Board.

Moderator Webb commented that would certainly be creative. There has not been a motion to restrict reconsideration so that is still on the table for any of the decisions made earlier. But he cannot speak to the application of the tax cap on the ballot versus on that which the Board presents.

School Board Marsano stated it to be correct that the tax cap can be overridden by the Legislative Body in the Deliberative Session. Asked to provide an opinion, James O'Shaughnessy, Esq., read the Statute (RSA 32:5-b III) The provisions of this section shall not limit the Legislative Body's authority to increase or decrease the amount to any appropriation or the total amount of all appropriations."

Mr. Rater requested a sense of the meeting if people would be interested in doing that.

A show of hands indicated there was not the necessary support to move in that direction.

Vote on the motion to amend Article 6
MOTION FAILED

No further discussion was offered on Article 6.

Article will be placed on the official ballot as written.

Article 7 (by Petition)

To reflect the growth of Brookline and to help distribute the workload of the Brookline School Board, shall the Brookline School District change the number of members of the Brookline School Board from five to seven members per RSA 671:4? **The School Board does not recommend this article 5-0-0.**

Moderator Webb questioned if any of the petitioners were present to speak to the petition.

Eric Pauer, 12 Westview Road

Stated there to be a lot of people that want to serve on the Brookline School Board; there are 4 candidates for 2 open positions. He considered running, but there are many running. He is aware the Board is very busy. He served on the COOP School Board, which consists of 7 members, which made it a little easier to do the workload and the right amount of oversight.

Peter Walker, 57 Pepperill Road

Questioned the reason the School Board is opposed to the article.

School Board Chair Haag responded he looked through all of southern New Hampshire; Milford, Bedford, Hollis, Hudson, Amherst, Mont Vernon, and Merrimack are all at five members. He stopped looking after that point. His reasoning for not supporting going beyond the standard is to allow for the electorate to choose a candidate that they want as opposed to people that come in and are not voted in, but just are open seats available, which then kind of dissolves the community's will at a time throughout policy, budget, etc. There is a term packing the Supreme Court. To him this is a similar way where you have people that are only in seats because they were available as opposed to going through the election process, having to campaign and talk about their views.

School Board Member Micavich added it gets a little unwieldy. She spoke of the learning process involved commenting adding two people unnecessarily just prologs things and does not provide benefit. More importantly it seems this petition warrant article is an attempt to end run our right to vote in people and just have people if you want to come join us. With all of the surrounding communities having similar numbers it doesn't make sense.

Jessica Hartman, 51 Mountain Road

Stated appreciation for the number of people running. She is hopeful those people have come to all of the School Board meetings this year and been able to be a part of that and have a good understanding of what is going on in the district already. She questioned what occurs if having 7 positions and not enough candidates to fill them.

School Board Member Marsano responded it makes it harder. If you have a membership of 7 and need a quorum that would make it more difficult just because you would have an open seat that you would automatically count out. Moderator Mann stated his belief there is a mechanism for appointing to fill a vacancy. School Board Member Marsano spoke of her own experience on the Board. She ran unopposed twice over the last 6 years. There were individuals in the community that pleaded with her to run so that a name would be on the ballot. She is also aware that there are open positions in Town that we are constantly looking

to fill. She is concerned why we would be increasing when there are opportunities within Town. She is one of the two on the Board who are leaving this year. She believes it fantastic that we have 4 people interested in the job, but just opening it up more and more is not necessary.

Ms. Hartman commented based on the fact that it could be appointed if there were an open position, she feels she would like to have a right in voting for who is on the Board, and therefore would be opposed to the article.

Brady Halligan, 17 Birch Hill

Is opposed to the article. It would make sense if we had 8-10 people wanting to run every year. We have 2 open seats and there are 4 candidates. Additionally there are numerous open positions throughout town government. He has been a union representative, elected and a thankless job. He thanked the members of the Board for all the work they do. There are school districts around us that have folks on their boards that did not have opposition to them and frankly in his opinion hate public schools. There was a school district very near to us that recently had a meeting that had national news attention for the proposals of a member that violated federal law. It is very important to have quality candidates and too many members would dilute the quality of candidate and result in issues.

Moderator Webb noted the Legislative Body was not approving or disapproving this tonight, it is discussing what will go forward to the voters on the 14th of March.

Christine St. George, 13 Lorden Lane

Has lived in the district for 26 years. More often than not there are candidates on the ballot running unopposed. The Finance Committee is always looking for people. She believes this petition to be ridiculous.

Attorney O'Shaughnessy clarified school board vacancies in school districts are filled by the school board. The school board appoints until the next election.

No further discussion was offered on Article 7.

Article will be placed on the official ballot as written.

Article 8 (by Petition)

To prevent taxpayer dollars from funding lobbying against the interests of parents and citizens, shall the Brookline School District zero out budget line item "Dues" 10.2310.810.00.0? **The School Board does not recommend this article 5-0-0.**

Moderator Webb questioned if any of the petitioners were present to speak to the petition. He noted confusion over the numbers.

Eric Pauer, 12 Westview Road

Stated the numbers to be a line item in the budget. We have a bottom line budget, and the Board can move the funds anywhere they want except if an item is zeroed out by the Legislative Body. In that instance, they cannot use funds for that purpose.

Moderator Webb respectfully disagreed. Mr. Pauer stated that to be in RSA. Moderator Webb responded it is indeed in RSA and you have to eliminate the entire budget line; you cannot just take a single item. It is part of the Statute, which is virtually unreadable. It requires more than one Statute in combination. You cannot just do a single line item. What the Statute says is that there is a budget form, which is posted outside and is submitted to the Department of Revenue Administration. If you are proposing to zero out one of the lines on that form, and they are very encompassing, you cannot just take one thing, you have to do the whole police department not just a single cruiser, etc. That principle he would say prevents you from binding them. They can still move funds around. The only way to prevent that is by taking out what they call a purpose, which is one of these things on the budget form. He is quite confident.

Asked, Attorney O'Shaughnessy remarked, in general, for appropriations he agrees, but for this purpose he thinks if you completely zero out a line item that is for a purpose that is the no means no.

Moderator Webb stated disagreement.

Mr. Pauer stated the intent is to not spend money. This line item is used for dues to the New Hampshire School Boards Association (NHSBA). Unfortunately, they co-mingle money that is used for training and other good purposes with lobbying money. There has been a bill up in Concord this session, HB51, that talks about this process of lobbying and separating the funds. They said you can always do a petition warrant article and zero out the line item. That is the purpose.

Moderator Webb added the fundamental principle is if there is a petition to issue, you have to address it on election day whether it is enforceable, legal, etc. It is what it is, and its enforceability is for another day.

Mr. Pauer commented to put things on the warrant you have to get a minimum of 25 citizens interested in it. This one came from other folks he works with that wanted it. There is also a similar one in the COOP for the same purpose.

Tom Solon, 2 Shady Rock Road

Mr. Pauer did mention where this actually points. It is called dues, but what it really is, is our membership for the entire SAU. We join the NHSBA, which is an organization that does a number of things for all school boards. By being a member (yearly cost of \$5,500) you get webinars and in person training, they manage all of our policies both providing sample templates for policies and providing sourcing for online. A big part of it is they provide free legal advice. As a School Board member we get more than our money's worth out of it. The lobbying aspect is that every year they have a delegate assembly, which allows every member school board in the State to send a delegate to the assembly. They devise an agenda that they would like the NHSBA to help support by testifying and providing advocacy in our State government.

That is the lobbying aspect. They do not produce it on their own, they become our voice. They attend the hearings when we as school board members may not be able to. If this line gets zeroed out it will cost us significant amounts of money in paid legal services and we will have to hire out to manage all of our policy work as well as any training that we go to.

Brady Halligan, 17 Birch Hill

Strikes him as something that the general voter that may not be fully educated on would automatically not support, and it sounds like not supporting it would actually result in a significant cost increase to the school district. He asked for a means of modifying and was told that would be a motion to amend.

Ed Perry, 4 Muscatanipus Road

In opposition due to the fact that it is vague in general; what is the interest of all parents and all citizens? How in the world would you ever square that circle since so many people have so many different opinions and so many different interests? It is almost borderline dangerous because it is so broad and subjective.

Erin Sarris, 15 High View Drive

If simply was amended to take out the sort of subjective language to just say to prevent taxpayer dollars from supporting the NHSBA services for school board members, would that be a legitimate amendment?

Moderator Webb stated SB2 is somewhat new to us and the intricacies of it have not been mastered by us. This language goes to the ballot and will be put on the ballot unless you folks amend it. He could not give guidance on the words.

Ms. Sarris stated part of her does not want to legitimize this article because she thinks it is intentionally vague and deceitful, but at the same time...

Diane Pauer, 12 Westview Road

Called for a Point of Order stating the speaker was disparaging a **...audio inaudible...speaker speaking out from audience and away from microphone...**

Moderator Webb remarked it is close. As long as we talk about the merits of the idea we are fine as opposed to talking about an individual.

MOTION MADE BY TOM SOLON TO AMEND ARTICLE 8 TO READ “TO PREVENT TAXPAYER DOLLARS FROM FUNDING THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL DISTRICT'S PORTION OF THE SAU41’S MEMBERSHIP IN THE NH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION, SHALL THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL DISTRICT ZERO OUT BUDGET LINE ITEM “DUES” 10.2310.810.00.0?”
MOTION SECONDED

ON THE QUESTION

Moderator Webb stated in this SB2 world, whether petition articles or those submitted by the school board, one of the rules is that you cannot eliminate the subject matter of the article. It is a fuzzy thing and there have been several cases at the Supreme Court on what was sufficient change to eliminate it, but if you are staying within the same subject matter of the article, you are not eliminating it. You can do what you want with it, but it has to be germane, in his opinion, to the subject matter contained and addressed in the article.

Eric Pauer, 12 Westview Road

You cannot eliminate the purpose. We are in the grey area here because the petitioners put this forward because of the lobbying and now we are removing that word. The language “against the interests of parents and citizens” that is subjective and could be removed. You have to keep the lobbying in there because otherwise it is changing the subject matter.

Moderator Webb responded the subject matter could arguably be the elimination of the budget item titled dues.

Mr. Pauer remarked that is why he says we are in a very grey area here. He would prefer to have lobbying left in there.

Moderator Webb commented he would respectfully say that one could also say that it is the reference to zeroing out dues is the objective.

Tom Rogers, 8A Louis Drive

Everything in the beginning of the proposed article is subjective. The only objective thing is the actual line item of the budget. The line item of the budget is mentioned in the article. He does not think the proposed amendment is against the intent or purpose of this.

Brady Halligan, 17 Birch Hill

If removing the word “dues” Mr. Pauer would have a point, but the first half of the sentence is a qualifying sentence. The text that is actually being proposed to be amended really starts with “shall”. You could simply lop off the first half of the sentence and you have gotten rid of basically everything and not changed anything. You have simply removed a justification that one side is presenting that is one argument.

Beth Gildea, 22 Ames Road

Believes it important to be clear in petition warrant articles about what it is that we are actually voting on. When she read this, she had no idea what the lobbying group was, or these dues were. It is very frustrating sitting in a voting booth and not really understanding the language of an article. This a prime example of lying. She is in favor of an amendment.

Moderator Webb explained the way a petition warrant article works is any person in Town can write out any proposition, and if getting 25 voters to sign on to it, it has to go on the Warrant. We are kind of at the mercy of that process.

Tom Solon, 2 Shady Rock Road

Noted the language he had suggested was “to amend Article 8 to read “To prevent taxpayer dollars from funding the Brookline School District's portion of the SAU’s membership in the NH School Boards Association, shall the Brookline School District zero out budget line item “Dues” 10.2310.810.00.0?”

With the statement made by Mr. Pauer, a potential alternate would be to prevent taxpayer dollars from lobbying through funding of the school district's portion.... The idea being adding the lobbying through to retain that intent of the original article is a potential compromise.

Mr. Solon remarked the opinion is that the originally offered amendment is legal. The question is whether it is what the body wants.

Mark Christiansen, 9 Flint Meadow Drive

Stated the proposed amendment rips out the purpose. It is like going into the Constitution and ripping out the part about it is to preserve the liberty of the people. We had a compromise, one that left the purpose in that included the lobbying that happened through this organization. He thought that was an improvement because it was clearer.

Tom Solon, 2 Shady Rock Road

Because he made the motion without those words and it was seconded, he was of the impression that it had to be voted on first and then there would be the opportunity to potentially amend it to add the lobbying into it. He was uncertain procedurally what the will of the body was.

Jessica Hartman, 51 Mountain Road

Is in favor of the amendment to the article because she thinks it lends some clarity to what dues refers to.

MOTION CARRIED

Tom Rogers, 8A Louis Drive

Commented it is getting late in the evening, and we are starting to lose people. He sees the next article is not budget related.

MOTION MADE BY TOM ROGERS TO LIMIT RECONSIDERATION OF ALL PREVIOUS ARTICLES

MOTION SECONDED

MOTION CARRIED

Moderator Webb stated the motion passed. All decisions made so far this evening cannot be reconsidered although we have one more to go and we have to vote once and for all on this amended version of article 8.

Eric Pauer, 12 Westview Road

The second version of the amendment proposed, are we going to vote on that one now?

Members of the Legislative Body spoke out from the audience stating they could not.

MOTION MADE BY ERIC PAUER TO AMEND ARTICLE 8 TO READ “TO PREVENT TAXPAYER DOLLARS FROM LOBBYING THROUGH FUNDING OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT’S PORTION OF THE SAU41’S MEMBERSHIP IN THE NH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION, SHALL THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL DISTRICT ZERO OUT BUDGET LINE ITEM “DUES” 10.2310.810.00.0?”

Moderator Webb remarked we have this present version of Article 8, and the gentleman is saying I would like to make a motion to amend, which he can do.

Members of the Legislative Body spoke out from the audience addressing that as reconsideration.

Moderator Webb stated he does not believe the body to be voting on the acceptability of this except as an amendment to the primary motion. That is his position, but the Legislative Body is in charge and can outvote him on any decision he makes. His understanding is what we agreed to do is to change article 8 to this new language not to ...

Mr. Pauer interrupted stating we were not finished with it yet. Moderator Webb stated agreement that discussion was still ongoing on article 8.

**MOTION SECONDED
MOTION FAILED**

No further discussion was offered on Article 8.

Article will be placed on the official ballot as amended.

Article 9 (by Petition)

To reduce the Brookline property tax burden, shall the Brookline School District rescind authorization under RSA 198:4-b II so that the Brookline School District no longer retains any unassigned general funds under RSA 198:4-b II?” **The School Board does not recommend this article 5-0-0. The Finance Committee does not recommend this article 3-0-0.**

Moderator Webb questioned if any of the petitioners were present to speak to the petition.

Eric Pauer, 12 Westview Road

Mentioned the top of the warrant might have a typographical error as it says Warrant Articles 1-8. In Article 9 there should be a space between the b and roman numeral II in the first mentioning.

The article has been put forth in previous years. This is an article that allows the School Board to retain 2 percent. This unreserved fund balance that we talked about earlier, after they fund any of the trust funds that require that they can keep another 2% of the budget and not return it to taxpayers. This is rescinding that authority so that they return all of that funding after they fund any trust funds.

MOTION MADE BY BRADY HALLIGAN TO AMEND ARTICLE 9 BY DELETING THE FIRST SEVEN WORDS AND HAVE THE ARTICLE START WITH THE LANGUAGE “SHALL THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL DISTRICT”

MOTION SECONDED

ON THE QUESTION

Brady Halligan, 17 Birch Hill

As written, it reads to him like it is intended to sway opinion. The amendment simply eliminates the qualifying statement and presents the article as a straightforward statement.

Peter Walker, 57 Pepperill Road

Asked the Chair of the Finance Committee if this would put some downward pressure on the tax burden in Brookline.

Moderator Webb stated the need to first address the motion to amend before getting into the merits of the article as originally proposed.

Tom Solon, 2 Shady Rock Road

Irrespective of his position on the article itself, he is opposed to the amendment because like it or not that really is the affected impact of doing it. If someone wanted to say something else about what else it does that is fine, but stripping out those five words really does deprive people of knowing what happens. If a person has not attended these meetings and they were to just read shall the Brookline School District.... They would have zero understanding. The article, as stands, is an accurate statement of what the impact would be. There are other repercussions as well. He is opposed to taking those words out.

Mark Andrews, 35 West Hill

Echoed Mr. Solon's comments.

Brendon Denehy, 31 Mason Road

Clarification is that it is actually a two-step process; money that comes back from the Brookline School Board goes into the Town of Brookline's unassigned fund balance and then it is up to the Selectboard to determine whether that money is used to offset taxes.

School Board Member Zakar asked for clarification if the statement was that were there not the ability for the District to retain unreserved fund balance, any unreserved funds go to the Town of Brookline and the Selectboard determines how it was used?

Mr. Denehy stated the Selectboard are the agents to determine how the unassigned fund balance is utilized.

Finance Committee Chair Rater asked the Business Administrator to address that.

Kelly Seeley, Business Administrator, SAU41, stated it reduces the tax rate it does not go into the Town's tax fund.

Eric Pauer, 12 Westview Road

Stated agreement with Ms. Seeley's comments. He added he believes the statement is very explanatory. It is not really trying to sway voters, it is just telling you what the article is doing. He recommended the amendment be defeated.

Alison Marsano, 30 Laurel Crest Drive

Agreed it does clarify the property tax burden, but it also leaves out the part that then we would no longer have any fund to look to for addressing any catastrophic issues that may arise. We did away with the contingency fund when we voted for the unassigned fund balance. She is okay with leaving the property tax burden language in as long as we add language identifying there would no longer be a catastrophic fund for the School Board. That would also be accurate.

Jill Aitken, 14 Potanipo Hill Road

Wished for clarification of elimination of this ability to retain would result in any unassigned fund balance being transferred to the Town's fund and then the Selectboard would determine how to utilize them.

Moderator Webb responded that is what was said, but he is uncertain that is accurate.

Ms. Aitken reiterated the Moderator's understanding is that if we eliminated the ability to retain, the money would automatically go back to the taxpayers?

Moderator Webb stated the taxpayers would not be asked for the funds, e.g., the funds would go to offset the amount that has to be raised in taxes to support the following year's budget.

MOTION FAILED

Peter Walker, 57 Pepperill Road

Questioned the Chair of the Finance Committee, if enacted, would this change put some downward pressure on the tax burden in Brookline.

Finance Committee Chair Rater responded depending on the mechanism, sooner or later it would help to reduce the tax rate over time. Asked why the Finance Committee opposed the article, he stated the issue is the other part of it that is not discussed in the article, which is that this is the school's contingency fund for dealing with significant emergencies. It leaves the district at a significant vulnerability if emergencies come up and they don't have this fund to pull from.

School Board Chair Haag added the use of any monies out of the unreserved fund balance would require the Board to conduct a public hearing. Following that, the School Board would have to approve the use.

School Board Member Zakar spoke against the article. She commented we have spent a good part of this evening talking about using the unreserved fund balance to fund our needs in the pursuit of not raising taxes. To the Finance Committee's point, we would end up having emergency meetings every time an unexpected expenditure came up. Every time you have to conduct such a meeting, there is an expense to the Town and

District not to mention if an item such as a boiler were to go and need to be replaced in the middle of the winter, if you first have to hold an emergency meeting to secure the funding, that means school is cancelled, children are not in school, which means parents cannot work, which means people don't have summer, which means we have learning delays. It snowballs. There are consequences.

Ed Perry, 4 Muscatanipus Road

Asked for additional clarification, if there is no longer the ability to retain, and something were to happen, we would end up having an emergency meeting, and at that point would there be some form of request to find the funding? Superintendent Corey stated that to be correct.

Mr. Perry added in the interest of honesty, maybe the amendment is to potentially reduce the Brookline property tax burden. He does not like the business of making promises that we are not necessarily going to be able to fulfill. He suggested an amendment could read: "to potentially reduce the Brookline Property tax burden, but creating a potential liability as there would no longer be a fund to draw from, shall the Brookline School District rescind authorization under RSA." Maybe that would be a bit more balanced and allow people to consider that yes potentially I might reduce my tax burden, but I might also be creating a liability.

MOTION MADE BY JILL AITKEN TO AMEND ARTICLE 9 TO READ: "TO POTENTIALLY REDUCE THE BROOKLINE PROPERTY TAX BURDEN, SHALL THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL DISTRICT RESCIND AUTHORIZATION UNDER RSA 198:4-B II SO THAT THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO LONGER RETAINS ANY UNASSIGNED GENERAL FUNDS UNDER RSA 198:4-B II, THEREBY LEAVING THE SCHOOL BOARD WITHOUT A CONTINGENCY FUND FOR UNEXPECTED EXPENDITURES?"

MOTION SECONDED

ON THE QUESTION

Jill Aitken, 14 Potanipo Hill Road

That retains the integrity of the original article while also further explaining what the ramifications would be.

Diane Pauer, 12 Westview Road

Questioned the School Board on the number of trust funds the district currently has, what the funding levels are, and for what the trust funds are used.

Moderator Webb remarked before the Legislative Body was a motion to amend and the merits of that motion. There is the need to dispense with the motion to amend before addressing questions pertaining to the general issue.

Ms. Pauer stated the point she was driving at is there was a comment made that this article would eliminate contingency funds. It is her understanding that the district currently does in fact have trust funds for various purposes funded at various levels for the purposes of unexpected expenses. She would like the Board to address that.

Moderator Webb clarified she was speaking against the amendment for these reasons that there are funds. Ms. Pauer stated that to be correct.

Superintendent Corey stated there are two trust funds. One is special education and is limited to only unexpected special education items and the second is the maintenance trust, which we went over tonight; the beginning balance, the goal of the funding request, identification of the items that would be addressed, and the predicted ending balance. Those are the only two trust funds.

Brian Rater, 31 Mason Road

In State law there is a provision specifically for a contingency fund, which is not what this is. It is a completely separate mechanism for it. It could potentially mislead someone. The other issue is there are a couple of other funds out there, which are for specific purposes, but additional places we can go for those specific purposes. It is not completely eliminating all contingencies from the district.

Eric Pauer, 12 Westview Road

Spoke in opposition to the amendment believing it to be a bit deceptive. The word contingency fund is actually in RSA and is a different animal than what we have. We do have a contingency fund. We have had them in the COOP. He does not think we have ever had the official contingency fund. It is really a misnomer by saying it.

School Board Member Marsano clarified the District did previously have a contingency fund.

Mark Andrews, 35 West Hill

Spoke in opposition of the last clause of the proposed amendment (following the comma). Every single one of these warrants, up until this point, discussed the what, not the why. The affect as we just discussed is somewhat subjective, and if as written, potentially misleading.

Tom Rogers, 8A Louis Drive

Spoke in support of the proposed amendment. Believes it clarifies on the front and back end and makes it easier for people to understand both the purpose and potential outcome.

MOTION CARRIED

29-14

School Board Chairman Haag asked if the word “contingency” was a concern/liability from a legal perspective.

James O’Shaughnessy, Esq., responded he would not say liability. Mr. Rater and Mr. Pauer both brought up a point that contingency fund is different from these kept funds.

Moderator Webb stated his position would be that the word contingency is a word in common parlance. The fact that it happens to be used to identify an esoteric thing does not mean its common use is voided.

No further discussion was offered on Article 9.

Article will be placed on the official ballot as amended.

MOTION MADE BY ERIC PAUER TO ADJOURN
MOTION SECONDED
MOTION CARRIED

The February 8, 2023 first session (Deliberative) of the Annual Meeting of the Brookline School District was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

_____ Date: _____
Kenneth Haag, Chairman, Brookline School Board

_____ Date: _____
Karen Jew, Vice Chairman, Brookline School Board

_____ Date: _____
Colleen Micavich, Secretary, Brookline School Board

_____ Date: _____
Alison Marsano, Brookline School Board

_____ Date: _____
Kelly Zakar, Brookline School Board

_____ Date: _____
Alana Justice, Clerk, Brookline School District