

Approved

HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET COMMITTEE

A regular meeting of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District Budget Committee (BC) was conducted on Thursday, May 23, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. at the Hollis Brookline Middle School.

Members of the Committee Present:

Darlene Mann, Chair
Raul Blanche, Vice Chair
Matt Maguire, Secretary
Lorin Rydstrom
Tom Enright
Brian Rater (Arrived at 6:44)
Cindy Van Coughnett (SB Rep)

Members of the Committee Absent:

David Blinn

Also, in Attendance:

Andrew Corey, Superintendent
Kelly Seeley, Business Administrator

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

None

Appointment of Meeting Observer

Tom Enright was appointed meeting observer.

Secretary's Report

Raul Blanche moved to approve the meeting minutes from the regular meeting held on April 15, 2019. Tom Enright seconded.

Motion Carried 4-0-2 (Cindy Van Coughnett and Lorin Rydstrom abstained)

Public Input

None

General Business

Prior to the BC meeting Bob Thompson gave a tour of the HBMS to several of the BC members to review the proposed changes to classroom utilization to accommodate the Robotics program.

FY21 Overview:

Superintendent Corey provided a FY21 overview for the BC. The FY21 budget planning process starts in July. The 1st step in the process is to conduct meetings with the principals and maintenance supervisors. Starting in FY21 a multiyear technology plan for the HBHS will be implemented over a three year period. A similar plan was done at the HBMS over the last 3 years.

Superintendent Corey stated that HB1612, relative to data security in schools, was passed into law last session. HB1612 has required substantial man hours to implement. One task that was required was to take down all websites accessible to SAU41 users so the privacy policies could be vetted and have a background check done on them. The SAU41 site now lists all approved websites. Additionally, the infrastructure had to be tested by a 3rd party. The district will also be looking into the bring your own device (BYOD) practice. There is a concern that a BYOD policy could increase the network's risk to cyber threats. The New Technology plan does include chrome books, but the plan is not to have a 1:1 ratio of chrome books to students. Students do not need access to computers for the full day. An update on the Technology plan will be provided in August.

Superintendent Corey indicated that parking spaces are becoming an issue again at the high school.

Brian Bumpus, assistant athletic director, will be taking over supervision of the town fields. HBHS currently does not have tennis courts and the team has to travel to have access to courts. He will be looking into tennis courts and will be working with the town to try and come up with a solution for having access to local courts in town.

Superintendent Corey meet with Hollis Police Chief to discuss the entrance to the HBHS. HBHS has one main entrance for in/out traffic flow. Through the process of looking at the exact location for the planned turf field, it was discovered that there are existing ROWs (Right of Way). The administration is currently looking at a ROWs to see if there is an option to provide an additional in/out pattern. The ROW options are in a study phase now.

Superintendent Corey told the BC that there is some concern over the line item in the budget for long term substitute teachers. There is a higher number of staff members on maternity leave, more than expected.

No major surprises expected for expenses. The CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) is being monitored. Monitoring of the FY20 budget will start shortly. Will look to see if the operating budget can allow the oil storage day tanks replacements. The roof replacement is comping up soon which will be a large expense and the desire is to not spend money from the maintenance fund. There will be some retirements that may result in some flexibility on the budget.

Superintendent Corey also reported that Amy Rowe and Bob Thompson have been working closely. They will present the FY21 budget in the Fall. They are also looking into additional programs to help reduce Special Education expenses in the district.

Turf Field:

The turf field is out to bid. The bids were due back on 24 May, 2019. The turf field is a large project and Superintendent Corey said the project proposal manuals are 214 pages and the supplement conditions is 50 additional pages. There were 4 companies that showed up for the pre bid meeting. All 4 companies asked questions. The bid opening is at 2pm. The bids will be sent out for review as soon as they are scanned in. Superintendent Corey thanked the planning board and conservation committee. He indicated there was one request to drain the field to the north vs. the west towards Beaver Brook. Changes were made to accommodate this request.

There are no outstanding issues with the planning board. The conservation committee had a couple of concerns. The district was able to address all the concerns. The first was with snow melt and the salt. The only requirement for snow removal is if the district was going to remove snow from the field. There is a specific snow blower required due to the salt requirements to not allow salt runoff to the surrounding area. The district does not plan to plow the field. The only other issue is the Cleanliness at events. Superintendent Corey thanked Brian Bumpus for his efforts to address the issue. The district has moved away from door to door fundraisers. The Booster Club has taken a longer-term approach for fundraising and community service. Superintendent Corey updated the BC with one of the recent Community Service projects. During the week of May 16th the track team conducted a town clean-up of trash along the roadside.

The district is still awaiting one item from DES (Department of Environmental Services) for a wetland permit. The wetland permit is currently in-process. There aren't any expected issues. A special SB meeting will be held on May 30th with the COOP board to review the bids. Superintendent Corey said that they may not make the decision for which company to go with at the meeting. Due to the lawsuit and "some bumps in the road", the turf field project is behind schedule. The delay of the field will not impact start of fall sports. It was expected that in the March or April timeframe the tree clearing would have started. Now that school will be out before the project starts the district will not have to worry about contractors being on site while students are present and will not have to share parking space.

The Boosters currently have pledges of \$20K towards bleachers. They hope to increase that amount once ground is broken. HB Elevates currently had \$150K in pledges. The \$150K is not earmarked for any specific purpose. Gerrell Smith will work with Superintendent Corey for fundraising once ground is broken. They will look for targeted and nonspecific donations.

Robotics:

Lorin Rydstrom, Raul Blanche and Cindy Van Coughnett participated in the tour prior to the meeting. The BC was provided proposed plans for the HBMS space for the BC meeting. Superintendent Corey stated that the project would satisfy the demand for at least 3 years. The projected enrollment increases will be closely monitored over the next several years. If the projected increases occur the district will be looking for additional space at HBHS.

Superintendent Corey provided an overview of the proposed changes to the space at HBMS. Room 103 and 104 are the primary space. Room 103 is the present robotics room. Room 103 will return to a Science room. Then teachers in 103/104 would be side by side. There is an expected turnover in Science. The new space configuration would result in the two science rooms being side by side. This would be an advantage for

collaboration and would allow an experienced and new teacher to be able to work closely together. Two small rooms are the storage area for science designed for chemicals. Room 103 has a safety shower. The Robotics clean room is presently a science room that would move to Room 103. This space would then become the robotics clean room. In the robotics clean room there was at one time a roll up door. The plan would open that back up to provide easy access between the clean and the dirty shop space. The dirty shop space will be used by 7/8 tech ed during the day. Money would be used for equipment upgrades. This would allow for safety upgrades and enhancements. The robotics team has been out looking for equipment donations. So far have they have secured 3D printers.

Room 105 will have no changes and is the current Tech Ed room. May add some computers to that space. There is a desire to use that space for CAD programming in the future. The hands-on piece of woodshop would be kept and will add CAD based options in the future.

The plan would be to use carts to move equipment In/Out of the spaces. The SB will take action in June to move or not move forward with the plan. Would 1st have to move everything out of the space and put things in storage. Work on Room 103 would be done 1st since students need it in fall. The robotics clean/dirty would then be started. There is some concern with finding contractors. Things are very busy right now.

Katie Hallett attended the BC meeting. Her son Cam was awarded the Dean Kamen award at Robotics competition. Katie Hallett and her robotics group have been working with SAU office for fundraising. They have assisted with the design and have two members on the facilities committee for the Stem study. Superintendent Corey stated that the plan for the HBMS space will provide a better experience for the 7/8 graders and meet the current needs of the robotics team. A community member has also donated \$5k for the architecture plans.

The district has worked for about a year with BAE. BAE provided a \$15K donation for robotics in February/March. The donation went towards modern laptops for robotics since that was the request from BAE. The teacher conference room is used by robotics team at night. The plan is to install some charging stations for the laptops so the laptops would be charged for the team to use in the evenings.

Superintendent Corey noted that things went from vote on floor to a plan with 6 weeks of planning.

Overall dollars: \$210K since HB elevates has started. Katie Hallett will work on robotics side and Gerrell Smith on the field side for fundraising.

Tom Enright asked if the \$210K is for both projects. The \$210K is the sum of HB Elevates donated money and booster donations. Specifically, the \$210 comprises a \$20K donation towards robotics, \$40K for bleachers and \$150K pledged to field with no stipulations.

Lorin Rydstrom asked about the abutters from the planning board meeting. One of the abutters thought there was a Right of Way (ROW) across the property. There was a ROW back from when the property was corn fields. Superintendent Corey has been working with the abutter and the SB and plan to have it resolved before ground is broken. The ROW will be documented with the attorney through a deed. It may also provide a benefit for the additional school for in/out (emergency use only). Darlene Mann stated that the ROW being

discussed in not by current football field, but it is the practice field up on the hill where lacrosse plays. The ROW is for the district and the abutter and is towards Beaver Brook.

Tom Enright asked if they are looking for emergency egress only. Superintendent Corey said yes and that there is also a possible emergency exit via Love lane that is still being looked at.

Lorin Rydstrom asked if the ROW has the potential to have a negative impact for field. There are 2 different ROWs being discussed at 2 different locations. Can this be a potential issue? Superintendent Corey stated that he does not expect there to be any issues or problems with the ROWs.

Darlene Mann spoke with Tom Solon and Barbara King about HB Elevates. Tom Solon provided info to Darlene Mann about the \$150K donation. There has not been any other donation activity that he has been aware of. Raul Blanche asked who would make decision on how that \$150K would be spent? Superintendent Corey stated that the SB will make the decision and there is not a timeline yet for when the decision will be made.

Superintendent Corey said that his HB Elevates donation-seeking has been slow due to Turf field, robotics space and the Hollis study for SAU office barn. He also said that the HB1612 implementation for the district has been overwhelming. He noted that according to the state this bill would not result in any additional cost to districts. He said that some districts have spent > \$40K, but SAU41 has been able to do a lot of it in house.

There were \$250K in security grants across SAU, \$130K spent on new doors at HSPS. The entry way at CSDA has some security enhancements and there are some new cameras at the schools. Superintendent Corey believes he will be able to start working on fundraising now that the budget tasks from the last couple of months are slowing down.

Lorin Rydstrom asked if HB Elevates has a funding line for the turf field and stem? Superintendent Corey said that HB Elevates can take funds for anything. The \$150K was designated for the turf field. Lorin Rydstrom asked if any of the donation was for bleachers? Superintendent Corey said No. The Boosters has pledged \$20k for bleachers. Lorin Rydstrom asked if at the District meeting in March, if we made any commitment to how the \$150k would be spend? Superintendent Corey said that it was implied that 15% would be used to offset \$1.6M. The plans were very clear what was included vs. not included. For example, the lights and bleachers are not included. He stated that everything inside the fence was included. Everything outside fence would be via donations.

Lorin Rydstrom asked if the funds in house are being invested. Superintendent Corey said they are in a nominal account to allow quick access since we did not know when they would be needed.

Tom Enright asked if lighting was an issue at any of the meetings? How much glare would extend from the lights? Superintendent Corey said that with the new lighting it is focused with minimal light pollution.

Cindy Van Coughnett said that sound was a concern. There currently is not a decibel ordinance in town. Superintendent Corey assured the abutters that events would finish at a reasonable time.

Raul Blanche asked if the 15% for bond reduction was officially recorded and if we would spend the 15% to reduce principal? Superintendent Corey said yes, 15% would go towards the bond.

Robotics:

Tom Enright asked Cindy Van Coughnett about the HBMS space for robotics. When the \$98K was passed at the district meeting there was not a plan. He asked if the woodshop would continue. Cindy Van Coughnett said it would. Tom Enright expressed a concern that the woodshop space is constricted. Superintendent Corey indicated that the woodshop and robotics space will be used during the day. At night the robotics team can also use both spaces. HBMS is getting away from having specific spaces owned by groups.

Darleen Mann stated that the 1073 robotics team is a HS-only team. Raul Blanche questioned how the space would be shared and said that there needs to be a smooth transition between day use and night use. Superintendent Corey said that the Robotics teams have always done a good job putting the space back in order after use. The wood shop will do the same.

Darlene Mann asked Andy about the 3-year plan for the space. The enrollment shows the elementary schools growing. Superintendent Corey stated that enrollment increases are very dependent on the local and national economies. If the economy cools off things could slow down. The signs are that things will continue to grow, and this plan will give us at least 3 years. If the enrollment continues to increase and we hit 930 students at the HS we will have to add space at the HS. Gina is working on the Stem plan for the HS.

Darlene Mann asked how much latitude is there in enrollment before there would not be enough space at HBMS? How many more additional students would have to be added before the space would have to be taken back for classrooms? She asked if it could be expected to happen within the 3-year period? Superintendent Corey stated "No", unless there was an explosion in enrollment. Hollis did have to add a K class last year due to a large increase in children. It was made clear to robotics that they would lose the clean space if it was needed for day use due to enrollment increases. Superintendent Corey said that it would take 80 to 100 new students which would mean a new team and would require 4 rooms. That is a large number and not expected to happen within the 3-year timeframe.

Darlene Mann expressed her concern with how the \$98K was passed and that this is a Slippery slope. There was no plan, process or review. For example, the Stem project had committees that worked over several years to vet things and provided detailed plans and it still did not pass. The BC worked to reduce budget and removed several items. This was a citizen's petition and it did not go through the normal process and it upends the budgeting process. Superintendent Corey mentioned this was not part of the budget. He said that "A": citizens know we would not support this expenditure if there was not a plan, and "B" That he would have to sell the plan to the committee and the SB and he would be held accountable to the same standard. Cindy Van Coughnett also mentioned that the SB had concerns with how this happened.

Raul Blanche said that he totally supports the project and the efforts as well as Darlene's but would like to see how much savings we could achieve from the rest of the budget in order to compensate for this increase. Maybe there is some room to give some more money back to the taxpayers? Superintendent Corey expects to return about \$70k back to the taxpayers and accepts the challenge to try to also return the \$98K amount back to taxpayers.

Darlene Mann asked about the FY21 Capital Improvement Plan(CIP) and where does the Road Repair entry exist? The Town said roads to schools are school the school district's responsibility. She asked when are we planning to address roads? Why does it fall to the districts? Superintendent Corey said the roads are private ways and the district will do some patching and repairing. Raul Blanche expressed a concern about the heavy equipment for the turf field project may cause some damage to the roads and parking areas. Superintendent Corey said then when he met with the pre-bidders that the topic was discussed and they indicated that they will not damage the hot top and within a month or so all equipment would be off the hot tops and in the construction area for the field.

Darlene Mann asked if we going to pave the dirt lots. Superintendent Corey said that the bottom lot will not be paved. There is not a sidewalk. We may be able to pave the teacher lot. The field will have about 35 additional spaces in a gravel lot.

Raul Blanche stated that if the 15% fund raising through private donations is successful that this project could become a model for future projects.

Lorin Rydstrom moved to support the Robotics plan as presented. Raul seconded.

Brian Rater asked if there are there any concerns? Superintendent Corey said that the flooring and gas in Room 103 could be a concern. There is always a potential for an unknown surprise when things are opened up, but he said he is comfortable with the plan.

Matt Maguire stated that he supports the plan.

Darlene Mann said that she is reluctant to support the proposal. She believes that there has been good thought and effort put into the proposed plans. She said that she supports robotics and what it offers, however, as can be seen from some of her earlier comments, she is very concerned about the method. She would have preferred the plan go through the normal budget process in the fall to see how this falls into the budget plan for the next cycle. She understands the mood of the community and will of the legislative body but will not support the plan, not for lack of support for plans and effort, but will not support it due to the method in which the \$98K of funding was achieved.

Lorin Rydstrom asked what would happen of the BC or SB does not support the plan? Superintendent Corey stated that the money would go back to taxpayer. The legislative body appropriated it for a purpose. He stated that if the project is not done, then the SB and BC would not have followed through with what the legislative body wanted.

The SB has the authority, not the BC. This motion is only for the BC to provide some perspective. Superintendent Corey advocated for moving forward with this project and will do everything he can to find ways to return more money back to taxpayer.

Matt Maguire asked what would happen if the project quote ended up > \$98K? Superintendent Corey said that only \$98k can be spent.

Raul Blanche indicated that this is a tough choice. The proposal has value and positives. Trying to balance positives with methods is difficult. Superintendent Corey gave an example that if the Legislative body passed a motion to cut X amount, then we would have to do that. This is no different other than they added money. Tom Enright did not agree with that analysis. Raul Blanche expressed that there is a lot of value in this endeavor and gains that can come out of this and the positive outweighs the negative.

Brian Rater said that the BC is responsible for what the Legislative body says. Ultimately the decision comes from them and we have to make a good effort to implement the decisions. We do have the legal responsibility to make sure it can be done within the constraints, for example if they allocated \$98K but the cost was \$400K we would have to go back to the voter. But short of something that is harmful to the district we have a moral obligation to abide by the direction of the Legislative body and make a good effort.

5-2 Motion Carried

SB Update:

Note: Agenda had links to overview of Tech. and Eng. program and minutes from some of the curriculum presentations from the last SB meeting. There was a lot of public input.

Raul Blanche had a question on number 3 on what will be cut. Cindy recommended the question be passed to Gina.

There is a special SB meeting next week on the Field topic and then the regular meeting during the 3rd week in June.

Financial Update:

Kelley Seeley provided the BC with a financial update. We have gained about \$20K since the last BC meeting. Still reviewing encumbers. There is some variation in the numbers. Revenue from Medicaid is down, but other areas have made up for it. Normally we hit the Medicaid numbers for revenue.

The BC reviewed the Federal Grants for the COOP School District. There are three Grant options within the district: IDEA, Title IIA and Title IV. The information provided to the BC committee will be provided in the meeting minutes.

Grant and Food Service Review:

A Food Service Update document was provided to the BC. A third-party performed a review of the K-12 food service operations of the district. The expectation of the review was to provide feedback on the Menus, Meal

Participation, Marketing, USDA Compliance and provide a recommendation on whether to stay or leave the USDA NSLP.

The conclusions of the third-party review include:

- Stay in the NSLP
- Believes we can improve participation
- Continue to implement recommendations.
- The district will continue to thrive under Amy Cassidy's management
- Create a 5-year plan in FY20.

Announcements

Next Week is special SB meeting and GB Meeting.

4th Thursday of June 6/27, will be next BC meeting.

No Meeting in July

5th Thursday of August 8/29, will be the BC meeting. (Will include a Facility Tour)

Brian requested a list of classes offered to get some insight. He also requested that we could have a tour of the middle and high school.

Process Observer Readout

Tom comment that the process was excellent and there was a healthy discussion.

Adjournment

Raul Blanche made a motion to Adjourn. Brian Rater seconded. Motion Carried 7-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.