

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, November 29, 2018 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
Brian Rater (Arrived 6:40)
David Blinn
Lorin Rydstrom
John Cross, School Board Rep (Arrived 6:35)

Members of the Committee Absent:

Tom Enright

Also, in Attendance:

Kelly Seeley, Business Administrator
Bob Thompson, Principal HBMS
Richard Barnes, Principal HBHS

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

None

Appointment of Meeting Observer

Lorin Rydstrom was appointed the process observer.

Secretary's Report

David Blinn moved to approve the meeting minutes as amended from September 27, 2018. Raul Blanche seconded.

Approved 5-0-0 (Brian Rater and John Cross were not present at the time)

Public Input

None

FY20 Budget Discussion

Bob Thompson, Principal HBMS, and Richard Barnes, Principal HBHS, attended the meeting to provide the committee an update for the FY20 budget discussion. The agenda material for the meeting included a spreadsheet, COOP BC Budget FY20 RND3, that was used as the basis for the discussion.

Principal Barnes went first with the review of the FY20 budget proposals for the HBHS. Personnel-related topics were discussed 1st. Principal Barnes told the committee that there were 42 transfer students coming into HBHS for this school year. That amount was double what the typical amount is.

Principal Barnes walked through the spreadsheet with the committee. The spreadsheet is broken up into various categories. Below is a summary of the discussion highlights from each budget proposal category:

Principal Barnes discussed that the administration is focusing on maintaining class size. In the FY20 budget there is one teacher allocated to help with class size reduction. There is also a 0.2 position for a French teacher that will be shared with the HBMS. There are also additional shared positions for a SAU SPED directed nurse and a facilities director.

For the **Academics category**, textbooks makeup the majority of the category's budget proposal. The regular calculus classes have been using the AP textbooks. The budget has \$20k in the budget to replace this for the reg class with Math-Running Start Textbooks. The AP books can then go back to the AP classes for their use. There was a question about how the textbooks are chosen. SNHU is involved in the recommendation of the textbooks. There was a follow-up question about how often do the recommendations change. Principal Barnes indicated that it changes probably every 5 years. This is the 2nd year that the Running Start with SNHU have been in place.

There was a question about courses vs. AP shift. Principal Barnes indicated that the AP classes are still the premium.

The district will be switching to a new publisher for the Spanish textbooks. The current books are no longer offered.

There was discussion about Project Lead-the-Way and the HB Challenge Day. There are approximately 75 students involved in the HB Challenge Day. The Rotary Club helps fund the program. The program is a culture building activity and focuses on topics such as anti-bullying. (Note: Project Lead The Way is a nonprofit organization that develops STEM curricula for elementary, middle, and high schools.)

During the discussion for the **New Computer Equipment**, Principal Barnes discussed the rollout for the 5-year Technology Program. The wireless infrastructure upgrades will go in before new devices. The FY20 budget includes \$31K for Chromebooks for Social Studies. Social Studies have taken the lead with transitioning to

Digital Textbooks. The proposed budget also has a line up for the carts for holding the Chromebooks. The total for the new computer equipment category for the HBHS is \$33,750.

There was a question regarding whether or not the Technology in the classroom helps improve the efficiency in education? The online courses and online tests may see an improvement.

For the Replacement Computer Equipment category, there are 10 replacement staff laptops, one server replacement and one food server replacement all of which totaled \$17,600. For the Software/Hosted Services category there were line items that total \$7,090 in the proposed budget.

The discussion on the **Safety Category** focused on the cameras. Currently the school does not have the full coverage that is desired. Areas that need additional coverage include all the entrances for the bathrooms. There would be cloud based storage for the recordings. The administration is working to phase in the cameras. The proposed budget has a \$20k line item for the cameras for phase 1. A state PSIF grant has been applied to help pay for the cameras. If the grant is not approved the total cost of all the cameras would be \$82k. If the grant is not approved the plan is to phase them in, so that is why there is only a \$20k line item for FY20.

The discussion on the **Facilities Maintenance category** centered around the elevators and the plan for an elevator maintenance contract. The other major items in this category include Day Tank Replacement (State requirement for oil storage tanks), Drinking Water Testing, Phase 2 of the Roof Repair, HVAC upgrades, window seals and Insect Control. In Total there are \$93,826 in line items for this category in the proposed budget.

Bob Thompson then provided an update on the FY20 budget proposals for HBMS. Highlights of the discussion include:

For the **Personnel Category** there are no new MS staff requests. The proposed budget does include two new stipends for club advisors. There is \$1,300 for Ski Club Advisor and \$2,350 for a 2nd robotics advisor.

There is \$12.8K in the proposed budget for the shared SAU SPED directed Nurse and \$27.3k in the budget for the shared facilities director position.

There was some discussion about the middle school robotics teams. Ideally there should be a team and advisor for every 15 students. Currently there are approximately 30 students so there is a need to have an additional advisor. The program does tend to be year-round. The High School robotics team continues to conduct its work at the middle school.

The highlights for the line items in the proposed budget for **Academics category** include \$3,400 for Newsela for SS, Eng and Science (Note: Newsela is an Instructional Content Platform). The staff has been using free trials for the Newsela, but the free trials have run out and to continue we need to make the purchase. There is \$2,200 for PSAT testing, \$6,000 PLTW-Modules, and \$2,500 for Graphing Calculators. The PLTW (Project Lead

The Way) is for a STEM based curriculum. There was a 0.2 Math position added last year and there is \$4,000 for new eVision Math textbooks.

For the **New Computer category**, there is \$16,396 in line items which include, 20 Chromebooks for Social Studies for \$5,000. There is also a \$500 cart line item to hold the Chromebooks. There are also line items for 2 smartboards, a Document Camera and 4 iPads for the library. The total for the line items in this category is \$16,396.

There was a question, if there is a phased approach to the purchasing of the Smart board for the middle school. The response was that there is a 2- Year plan and there are not a lot of smart boards currently at the middle school.

There was a follow up question asking if the smart boards are mobile. The response to this question was yes, but smart boards do require calibration so moving them from room to room during the day does not work well.

There is \$20,550 in line items for replacement of computer equipment. The items in this category include 7 staff laptops, a server, a food service server, Two switches for the wireless infrastructure and a cart for the laptops.

The discussion then turned to **Safety**. The only line item in the budget is for Phase 2 of camera upgrades for \$22,193. There is a State PSIF grant that was applied for. There were camera upgrades last year and the middle school has approximately an 80% of desired coverage. It was noted that the cameras selected are good cameras.

While talking safety a question came up regarding the crosswalk, if it is included in any line items. There is a sense that the crosswalk has made a positive difference. There are not any cross guards. It was noted that it took about 5 years to get the crosswalk lines painted.

A question was asked if there is a required inspection for the cameras in order to qualify for the grant. The short answer was “no” for the cameras. However, there is a NIMS Certification (National Incident Management System) requirement for the school to have been assessed by DHS within the previous 3 years. It was noted that DHS was very involved in ensuring the correct types of locks that must be installed.

A question was then asked about when we would know if we received the grant. Unfortunately, there is not a timeline and the notification could happen at any time, even late in the school year.

There is \$43,468 for line items in the proposed budget for the **Facility/Maintenance category**. The newly state mandated requirements for the Day Tank replacement and Drinking water tests are in this category. There is a line item for new tables and chairs for the MPR. There is a planned phased approach to update all the tables and chairs. It was noted that the new tables will be much easier to deal with and will save time since they will be easier to set up and take down.

Principal Thompson also discussed the vent in the art room and indicated that it really needs to get fixed and would like it to happen this year.

After Principal Thompson completed going over the line items in the proposed budget for HBMS, a discussion on the CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) took place. Kelly Seeley provided the committee with a summary of the CIP items.

The fire panel replacement (\$60k) for the middle school is a must do and will be funded out of the capital trust this year.

The current unassigned fund balance is approximately \$105k. There is also a \$15k elevator expense that is also planned to come from the same fund.

A question came up about paving the roads to/from the school. Cavalier court is not a town road. The district would be responsible for any paving expenses. It was requested to add the paving expenses to the CIP. NPRC will be performing an egress and paving study. There was also additional discussion on the items in the summary that was provided.

The proposed budget being discussed does not include a line item for the additional bond cost for the new athletic field. It is expected that there will be between \$186k to \$200k in bond cost that will need to be added to the budget.

The SAU budget was the next topic of discussion. There was a discussion on the organizational changes of the administration. Bob Thompson will be promoted to the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services starting on July 1st, 2019. Amy Rowe will stay on for the year as Transition Coordinator for Student Services and will serve in a role to help with the transition for Bob Thompson. Amy Rowe will have a 1-year contract that will be at a lower salary for FY20.

Lorin Rydstrom pointed out that there is approximately a \$148K increase from the current budget. This increase amounts to approximately 9.5 % increase.

There was also a question that Darlene Mann asked about the \$24.9K difference from the starting point for the FY19 budget. She will reach out to the SAU Board chair to ask for clarification.

The Athletic Field Bond was discussed next. Three proposals were discussed at a Special COOP SB meeting the night before (11/28/18). There were two types of loans that the COOP SB was looking into: 1) No Pre-payment Penalty but a higher rate vs. 2) Lower rate with a pre-payment penalty.

The proposal from First National Bank for an amount up to \$1,660,000 was approved at the special COOP SB meeting. The loan is a fixed interest loan with a rate of 3.8% for 10 years. The loan does not have a pre-payment penalty. The loan is structured to have 10 level payments and would not include an interest payment for this year.

The timeline would be for the COOP SB to sign the loan by 12/17.

There was discussion around the selection of the higher rate loan with no-prepayment penalty. If there were not any pre-payments the total interest would be approximately \$150k more over the life of the loan. A loan from the bond bank would typically be lower, but the district missed the timeframe for being able to do that. The bond bank loans typically are offered twice a year and the June 2019 timeframe will be the next available option. There was some speculation regarding pledges of additional private funds to help offset the loan, but

details were not available. If there are funds that will be pledged, then the loan with no pre-payment penalty makes sense and is the way to go.

It was noted that the Field lawsuit cost \$19,161 in legal fees and there was a COOP District Meeting cost of \$19,646. The delay due to the field lawsuit will also result in the Bond having a higher interest rate since the rates are higher now.

Guidance Discussion

The preliminary guidance for the operating budget from last month's meetings was \$22,976,880, which is a 6% increase over the operating budget from the previous year.

The \$22,976,880 operating budget does not include what the full transportation increase will be (It is not known at this point) as well as not including the Athletic field bond cost and the requested relief line items.

The Round 3 proposed operating budget with the items discussed during tonight's budget discussion comes in at \$23,310,735, which is a 7.5% increase over last year's operating budget. This represents a \$333,855 difference (increase) from the committee's previous guidance.

Lorin Rydstrom made a motion to maintain the previous guidance of \$22,976,880 for the operating budget. David Blinn seconded.

The motion was approved 7-0-0

SB Update

Due to the meeting running over the allotted time, there was not a SB Update.

Announcements

COOP Budget Public hearing scheduled for Wednesday February 6, 2019

COOP District Annual meeting scheduled for Wednesday March 6 and 7th, 2019
There will be a firm start and end time for the meetings. There is also a new ballot format.

Next COOP Budget Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday January 9th.

Process Observer Readout

Adjournment

Raul Blanche moved that we adjourn. Brian Rater seconded. The motion passed 7-0-0. Adjourned at 9:12.