



**BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
**Town of Hollis**  
Seven Monument Square  
Hollis, New Hampshire 03049  
Tel. 465-2209 FAX 465-3701

### **Minutes of January 9, 2013**

Meeting was held in the Community Room, Hollis Town Hall. The Budget Committee was called to order by Tom Gehan at 7:15 PM.

Members present: Tom Gehan, Mike Harris, Susan Benz, Chris Hyde, Peter Band, Tom Jambard, Frank Whittemore, Frank Giudici

Also present:

Hollis School Board-

Rob Mann-Chairman, Debbie Pucci, Frank Giudici, Bernard Mizula

School Administration-

Susan Hodgdon - SAU41 Superintendent

Eric Horton - SAU41 Business Administrator

Liz Allen - HPS Principal

Candi Fowler - HUES Principal

Amy Rowe - SAU41 Director of Student Services

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Review of Agenda

Review/Acceptance of Minutes:

Tom J. made a motion to approve the minutes of the Dec. 10 meeting. Mike H. seconded. All voted in favor, with Chris H. and Frank G. abstaining. Minutes were accepted as written.

Reports:

Hollis District: Eric H. commented that another isolation valve has been installed in the water system, so the problem continues to be investigated. The results of testing so far have indicated that the leak is somewhere along a 900 ft section of pipe paralleling Rocky Pond Road.

Public Input:

Tammy Fareed (9 Winding Valley Rd) mentioned that she is concerned about the possibility of decreasing the number of class sections in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade for next year. Her fear is that larger class sizes would adversely affect the quality of education.

Dennis Fallon (19 Pierce Lane) stated that it would be very shortsighted to reduce staff this year when there's no guarantee that they wouldn't need to hire someone back again next year. The small savings wouldn't be worth the trouble.

## Budget Committee Minutes January 9, 2013

Laurie Miller (14 Forest View Drive) agreed with Mr. Fallon that the savings from a short-term reduction in force would be insignificant. She suggested that savings could possibly be achieved by offering a retirement package, and replacing more senior level staff with entry level, at a much lower pay grade.

### Budget Review:

Tom G. discussed the most recent version of the proposed Hollis District budget. The bottom line brings it within \$48,134 of guidance. However, that number may change due the re-location of the part-time psychologist salary to the SPED category, which takes it outside of guidance. This would reduce the differential to \$18,134. Eric H. also stated that he reduced the SAU assessment, along with some other minor adjustments.

Rob M. stated that the School Board did not take a position on the current version of the budget. Tom G. mentioned that, since switching their meeting date, the BudCom now meets the day **before** the School Board. This is problematic at this point in the budget cycle, because they might not get the opportunity to weigh in on the approved version of the budget prior to the Public Hearing.

Tom G. suggested reviewing what changes have occurred since their last meeting. Eric H. described each change in some detail. Amy R. went into greater detail on the justification for the new part-time psychologist position. Chris H. asked if there was a FTE report available. The BudCom generally agreed to support the new position. Chris H. asked for an explanation of some changes in a few areas, since he had missed the last few meetings.

Tom G. went on to discuss budgeting for the number of class sections for next year's 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Rob M. presented some slides giving further insight into the decision making process. Peter B. asked whether the current budget number, which came in at \$18,134 over guidance, included four or five 4<sup>th</sup> grade sections. Rob M. stated that it includes five. Some discussion ensued regarding new policies just recently voted on by the School Board. Rob M. briefly presented the various options, and related costs and benefits of each, pertaining to the 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

Peter B. said he would support keeping the five sections for the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, but that the School Board should find another way to cut \$18K from the budget in order to meet guidance. Susan B. agreed with keeping the five sections, especially knowing that last year's 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, which was identified as needing extra attention, will be next year's 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Mike H. stated that he would like to get to the guidance number. Chris H. felt that meeting guidance implies that the staffing levels follow the Ed. Spec. as closely as possible, and that is not being done in this case. He reminded those present that the BudCom has to try to meet the needs of all Hollis residents. Frank W. stated that guidance should be met, at least going into the Public Hearing. Tom J. said that he'd like to see it closer to guidance, but arguing over a difference of \$18K is being too picky.

He would support the budget as it now stands. Frank G. stated that he doesn't think that saving \$18K justifies cutting a teacher. That savings could possibly be found in the Professional Development area. He also felt that the District has good policies and guidelines, that have served us well in the past, and we should stick with them. Tom G. stated that he thinks the Board can get closer to the budget guidance. Also that he will recuse himself from the 4<sup>th</sup> grade discussion, since he has a child in the upcoming 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Tom G asked Eric H. to confirm the differential between the bottom line and budget guidance numbers. Rob M. stated that the School Board will continue to search for ways to cut the budget, if possible to get it below guidance. Mike H. asked when the board expects to have their final budget available. Rob M. stated that they are currently in recess, and will resume their meeting at the close of the BudCom meeting. So it's possible a vote could be taken tonight.

Tom G. asked whether there were any anticipated changes to the Capital Improvement Plan or Warrant Articles. Eric H. stated that there were no changes but that he had met with the Hollis Energy Committee. They are in the process of putting together a list of projects with which to justify grant funding. At this point the list is limited to the Hollis District and the Town; the COOP schools are not included in this round. In addition, not enough time is available to get the projects in for this budget, so they would have to consider covering it out of the Expendable Trust Funds. The Town would most likely fund 70% of the cost, and the grant would cover the other 30%. Mike H. stated that they might be able to propose a warrant article solely for the purpose of energy projects.

**Budget Committee Minutes January 9, 2013**

A discussion followed concerning the status of the heating system at HPS. Eric H. stated that he moved unused money from the water system repair budget to the maintenance budget in order to pay for service to keep the system running. The problem is not the boilers, but the electronic controls.

Upcoming meetings:

Monday, Feb. 4, 2013: School District Public Hearing

Monday, March 18, 2013: Annual District Meeting

Motion to adjourn was made by Mike H. Tom J. seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 9:24 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Kowalski, Tax Collector