



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

### **Minutes of June 22, 2011**

Meeting was held in the Community Room, Hollis Town Hall. The Budget Committee was called to order by Chris Hyde, Chairman at 7:00 PM.

Members present: Chris Hyde, Chairman; Frank Whittemore, Susan Benz, Tom Gehan, Peter Band, Tom Jambard, Rich Manley (arrived at 7:05)

Also present: Rich Raymond – SAU Network Administrator

#### Review of Minutes

Apr. 26, 2011 Motion to approve by Tom J. Second by Frank W. Minutes were approved as written.

#### Town Report

Peter B. handed out the financials through May 31. Revenues are approximately where they should be. It is too early in the tax cycle to report on property tax collections. Tax bill were mailed on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Chris H. asked about the highway block grant. Peter B. mentioned that the town may lose ~\$28 K next year due to the repeal of the \$30 surcharge on auto registrations. Susan B. asked about the sidewalk grant. Peter B. explained that the costs are shared 80/20, with the state picking up 80% and Hollis responsible for 20%. The highway block grant comes 100% from state funds. This is ongoing, annual funding, whereas the sidewalk grant is a one-time deal specific to this project.

The rest of the budget line items are on track except for legal, which is over expectation for this time of year. Chris H. asked about the \$5,150.00 in 'Assessing Dues and Publications'. Peter B. thought it might be the annual software license, but will double-check. Tom J. recalled that the legal budget had been increased quite a bit from last year. Chris H. surmised that much of the overrun might be due to the pending planning board lawsuit. Tim J. asked about the status of Flint Pond. Peter B. said that the project is complete. They did the final milfoil treatment, and the town has no further financial obligation. The Town Hall roof is complete. The Selectmen authorized filling the final vacant position on the police department staff; the new employee is currently at the police academy. Chris H. asked about the status of the library roof repair. Peter B. said that a local contractor has been chosen and work should begin shortly. The current estimate is \$3K to \$4K over budget.

#### School Report

Rich Manley discussed the latest financials from the SAU Business Administrator. Rich mentioned that Mark McLaughlin, the current Business Administrator, is leaving the position June 24<sup>th</sup>. No one has been chosen yet to fill the position, so there will undoubtedly be a lag time while the SAU struggles through the interview process and bringing the new employee up to speed. Chris H. suggested asking Mark M. if he would be willing to do an exit interview to help the BudComm understand why the position has been through such upheaval over the last three or four years. Rich M. said he would look into it.

Rich M. stated that there were three proposed encumbrances for the school district this year. Chris H. questioned the numbers on the financials, since some salary numbers appeared to be missing. There was difficulty in determining the actual breakdown of the encumbrances. Chris H. suggested moving on to

## Budget Committee Minutes June 22, 2011

discussing the requested \$7,200.00 funding for the wireless system at HPS, since Rich R. was there specifically for that purpose. Rich M. mentioned that the Hollis School Board is looking for BudComm guidance on this particular item. Rich R. discussed the proposed project for upgrading the wireless system at HPS. The current system consists of a few inexpensive wireless routers, which become overloaded when being utilized by more than just a few laptops. He is proposing something similar to what is installed at HBHS, which consists of a single controller which handles all the access points. It operates at the highest speed currently available, and is expandable to handle additional access points if necessary. It also provides greatly simplified technical support capabilities. Frank W. moved to support the proposed encumbrance. Tom J. seconded the motion. All voted in favor except for Chris H., who was opposed. The final vote was six in favor and one opposed.

Susan B. asked whether the School Board discussed at its most recent meeting why the food service budget has dropped dramatically. Rich M. stated that they did not. Chris H. requested that Rich M. come back with an answer at their next meeting.

Chris H. asked whether HPS and HUES have student activity accounts, similar to those at HBHS that have been in the spotlight recently. He wants to be sure any funds collected are being handled per the relevant RSA, and asked Rich M. to be prepared to discuss it at the next BudComm meeting.

Chris H. asked Rich M. to follow up on scheduling the Websense training sessions, so that the BudComm can start getting access to current financials, etc.

Rich M. mentioned that there has been a request by a resident who lives just over the Brookline town line who would like to tuition their two students into the Hollis School District. The School Board is discussing the possibility, since due to Hollis' declining enrollment, space could be available. More discussion will take place at the next School Board meeting in July.

### Committee Updates

Mike Harris is a member of the Non-Union Benefits Committee. Since he was not in attendance at tonight's meeting, he sent a written statement from the first committee meeting, which was read aloud by Chris H. (attached to this document). Susan B. discussed the progress made by the search committee for the Finance Director position. Two candidates were interviewed last week. The Selectmen are meeting Friday to approve making an offer of employment to one of them. The position is to be full-time.

Chris H. mentioned that he and Tom G. had met last night to discuss the SAU budget process with Steve Pucci and Valerie Ogden (COOP School Board), and Chris Adams and Betty Hall (Brookline Finance Committee). The purpose was to put together a process and timeline for budget review for the SAU. Tom G. read the tentative plan (from an emailed document), including data requirements, and anticipated timeline for meetings. Chris H. will contact the Department of Revenue Administration to inquire about default budget creation rules. More clarity is required regarding what actually constitutes a "default" budget. Chris H. will also contact Bill Matthews with regard to a study done in the past concerning the viability of the COOP. Chris Adams will contact Mark McLaughlin about arranging an exit interview. The intent is to set up a working group, made up of members from all three boards, which will meet with the SAU board throughout the budget process. Their role will be as conduit, to insure that all boards are kept informed and in agreement on the development and review of the SAU budget. The SAU budget will be reviewed at the public hearing for the SAU in December and also at the public hearing for the Hollis School District in February. Tom G. moved to accept the plan as presented. Tom J. seconded. Rich M. commented that this should be viewed as a work-in-progress and all agreed. All voted in favor except for Frank W., who was opposed. The vote was six in favor, one opposed.

### Union Sidebar

Peter B. recommended delaying the discussion until further review by legal counsel. Chris H. intended to discuss the status at this point. The question was raised last month regarding the legality of the agreement that was reached between the town and the union, which negotiated the move to a Local Government Center sponsored health plan in exchange for a raise in pay for union members. Chris' question was whether this should have been put before the legislative body. The town's legal counsel is looking into it

## Budget Committee Minutes June 22, 2011

prior to posing the question to the DRA (Department of Revenue Administration). It was decided that Chris H. would follow the question through the proper channels and keep the BudComm members informed of the status via email.

### Discussion of Remaining School Encumbrances

The second proposed encumbrance is for a minor plumbing addition at HPS for a sum of \$12K. This will involve modifying the existing computer room so that it can be used in the early intervention program. It is part one of further improvements proposed for that area of the building.

The last proposed encumbrance is troubleshooting of the water system, which has been an ongoing problem for some time. The plan at this time is to install two valves at selected locations in order to perform pressure testing, and hopefully identify which section of line is leaking. The estimated cost for this is \$8K. Tom J. moved to approve the encumbrance of \$8K for valves in the water lines. Peter B. seconded. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Peter B. moved to approve the encumbrance of \$12K for modifications at HPS. Tom G. seconded. All voted in favor except for Frank W. The vote was six in favor, one opposed.

The members voted on whether to meet in July. The vote was six to one in favor of skipping the July meeting altogether.

The members then voted to adjourn. Meeting was adjourned at 9:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Kowalski, Tax Collector

**Attachment**

## Budget Committee Minutes June 22, 2011

Chris

We had our first meeting today and found pretty general agreement among the participants as to what we should be looking for and how to proceed. The focus for today was the medical plan. I summarize from memory our discussion. Mark, please review and correct any errors or omissions

1. We are looking to develop an approach that will encourage individuals to have a stake in the choices they make regarding their health plan and medical treatments
2. Going forward we are looking to limit the town's exposure to future increases in the cost of providing health care to employees
3. We would like to keep the employees whole during the transition
4. We are looking for suggestions from the insurance provider (LGC) for plans that might entail a high deductible
  - a. maybe half paid for by the covered individual and half by the town
  - b. the town portion might be paid out of a fund that we establish for the purpose
  - c. the employee portion might come from an HSA or from a FSA
  - d. the employee salary would be increased to cover the employee portion of the high deductible
5. We are looking to increase employee contribution to 15% (this might not be applicable if we go to a high deductible)
6. Troy will try to arrange for and LGC representative to present options at our next meeting (perhaps 13 July)
7. After we arrive at a plan for the non-represented we would offer it to the represented

Michael Harris