



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

Minutes of February 4, 2015

Meeting was held in the Community Room, Hollis Town Hall. The Budget Committee was called to order by Tom Gehan at 6:32 PM.

Members present: Tom Gehan, Susan Benz, Mike Harris, Chris Hyde, Frank Whittemore, Tom Jambard, Rosemary Mezzocchi – School Board Rep.

Others present: Eric Horton – SAU 41 Business Administrator, Robert Mann – Hollis School Board, Tammy Fareed – Hollis School Board, Andrew Corey - Superintendent

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Tom G. spent a few moments discussing the budget process and schedule. He mentioned upcoming meetings: Tonight's meeting is the Hollis School District Budget Public Hearing.

Tuesday February 10 - Hollis Budget Committee Meeting, 7:00 pm

Thursday February 12 – COOP Petition Article Hearing

Tuesday March 3 – COOP District Annual Meeting (Snow Date March 4)

Tuesday March 10 – Town Elections

Saturday March 14 – Town Meeting (Snow Date March 21), 9:00 am

Thursday March 19 – Hollis District Annual Meeting, 7:00 pm

Tom G. spent a few minutes reviewing the annual budget process, specifically as it pertains to the Hollis School District. He discussed the various economic factors and enrollment statistics which go into developing the budget guidance. He reviewed economic data, valuations, tax bills, demographics, bonded debt, etc; all factors that are taken into consideration when developing budget guidance. He stated that a 1% increase in the tax base was assumed when developing the guidance for FY16. He mentioned that bonded debt was retired in FY15 resulting in savings of \$362K.

Tom G. listed the warrant articles as presented. It was noted that they had not yet been recommended by the School Board. The School Board will take a position on the articles on Monday, February 9.

Tom G. then discussed how estimates are made of the effect of the proposed budget and warrant articles on the tax rate. It is anticipated that, due to a variety of different factors, the tax rate could increase by as much as 0.3% in 2015, from \$23.13 to \$23.21.

Tom G. reviewed the conduct of the public hearing and opened the floor for public comment.

Discussion of Warrant Articles:

Article 1. Shall the voters of the Hollis School District adopt a school administrative unit budget of \$1,421,449 for the forthcoming fiscal year in which \$395,559 is assigned to the school budget of this school district? This year's adjusted budget of \$1,370,893 with \$392,536 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.

Estimated Gross Tax Impact - \$0.33/\$1,000

Tom G. stated that this article cannot be modified on the floor and that it is a yes/no vote. He explained the SAU41 governance and how the budget finances 3 distinct school districts (Hollis, Brookline, and Coop).

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There was no public input on this article.

Article 2. To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of **\$8,000** to be added to the previously established MAINTENANCE FUND FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND ASSOCIATED STRUCTURES at 4 Lund Lane in Hollis, Map 56, Lot 2, from rental proceeds and unexpended maintenance funds to be received from SAU 41 available for transfer on July 1 of this year.

Estimated Gross Tax Impact - \$0.01/\$1,000

There was no public input on this article.

Article 3. To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of **\$12,000** to be added to the previously established SCHOOL BUILDINGS MAINTENANCE FUND from the Hollis School District's June 30, 2015 unanticipated revenues (unreserved fund balance), available for transfer on July 1, 2015.

Estimated Gross Tax Impact - \$0.01/\$1,000

There was no public input on this article.

Article 4. To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of **\$10,252,996** for the support of schools, for the payment of salaries for the school district officials and agents and for the payment of statutory obligations of the district. This appropriation does not include appropriations voted in other warrant articles.

Estimated Gross Tax Impact - \$8.53/\$1,000

Tom G. stated that the proposed budget is \$10K under the BudCom guidance amount. Tom G. reviewed planned staff changes and the larger expenditure increases/decreases. Tiffany Testa (Mooar Hill Rd.) stated that she was against the elimination of the Spanish program in HPS and HUES. She stated that eliminating the Spanish program in order to finance more math professionals would not necessarily produce better math results. Paula Ellis (Shedd Lane) stated that she did not support the elimination of the Spanish program and listed the educational benefits of exposure to a second language. Patricia Harmon (Tyng Hill Rd.) reiterated the benefits of bilingual education and asked the School Board to add the program back to the budget. Kim Day (Pierce Lane) asked for the gross tax impact of adding the Spanish program (\$180K) back into the budget. Tom G. replied \$0.14/\$1,000. Vivian Silva (Broad St.) and Maria Fallon (Blood Rd.) spoke in favor of keeping the Spanish program. Jennifer Cahill (Hannah Dr.) stated that the Spanish program exposes the children to other cultures and supports diversity. Jolanta Conti (Hannah Dr.) stated that the Spanish program was beneficial and that cutting it from the budget was shortsighted. Jennifer Starr (Federal Hill Rd.), Tanya Engle (Worcester Rd.), Michelle St. John (Orchard Dr.) also spoke in support of keeping the Spanish program. Ms. Testa returned to the podium to discuss her research that shows foreign language study increases both reading and math achievement. Bernadette Chippino (Witches Spring Rd.) asked if there would be an assistant principal at both HPS and HUES. Andrew C. replied that the staffing would be finalized during the meeting on February 9th. The BudCom stated that adding the Spanish program back to the budget was at the discretion of the School Board and perhaps should be addressed at the upcoming meeting on Monday. Ms. Silva stated that having one special education coordinator support both HPS and HUES may be stretching the position too thin. Richard Manley (Truell Rd.) spoke against eliminating the Spanish program. Ms. Harmon stated that concern over the elimination of Spanish is being brought to the BudCom because there is a sense of inflexibility at School Board meetings with regards to increasing the budget to maintain the program. Tom G. replied that the BudCom defers to the expertise of the School Board when considering educational programs. There was more discussion on the benefits of foreign language study, budget guidance, and limited time in the school day. Tom G. stated that the BudCom would not take a position on this article until after the School Board takes a position on Monday. Andrew C. reviewed the budget process and stated that the decision to eliminate Spanish has been considered for several years and was not made rashly. He also stated that many members in the community support eliminating the program.

Article 5. To see if the school district will vote to establish a contingency fund for the current year for unanticipated expenses that may arise and further to raise and appropriate **\$95,000** to go into the fund. The

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sum to come from June 30, 2015 fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2015, if available, and no amount to be raised from taxation. Any appropriation left at the end of the year will lapse to the general fund. Majority vote required.

Estimated Gross Tax Impact - \$0.08/\$1,000

Drew Mason (Baxter Rd.) stated that the verbiage should say 'unassigned' fund balance.

Article 6. To see if the school district voters will authorize the Hollis School District to access future year state and federal catastrophic aid funds in the event that special education costs exceed budget limitations. There was no public input on this article.

Article 7. To transact any other business which may legally come before said meeting.

Public Hearing was ended at 8:43.

Tom G. reviewed the upcoming meetings. Chris H. asked if the BudCom does not take a position at this meeting would a deadline be missed for the town annual report. He also asked if the BudCom is legally required to take a position at this meeting. Tom G. replied that the BudCom files the MS-27 form with the state. Eric H. stated the form is due 20 days after the meeting. Tom G. said someone would call town administration to inquire about the town report deadline.

Article 1: Mike H. made a motion that the BudCom recommend this article. Motion was seconded by Susan B.

Roll call vote:

Susan B. – Yea, Tom G. – Yea, Chris H. – Yea, Tom J. – Yea, Frank W. – Yea, Rosemary M. – Yea, Mike H. – Yea

Motion carried 7-0-0

Article 2: Mike H. made a motion that the BudCom recommend this article. Motion was seconded by Susan B.

Roll call vote:

Susan B. – Yea, Tom G. – Yea, Chris H. – Yea, Tom J. – Yea, Frank W. – Yea, Rosemary M. – Yea, Mike H. – Yea

Motion carried 7-0-0

Article 3: Mike H. made a motion that the BudCom recommend this article. Motion was seconded by Susan B.

Roll call vote:

Susan B. – Yea, Tom G. – Yea, Chris H. – Yea, Tom J. – Yea, Frank W. – Yea, Rosemary M. – Yea, Mike H. – Yea

Motion carried 7-0-0

Article 5: Mike H. made a motion that the BudCom recommend this article. Motion was seconded by Susan B.

Roll call vote:

Susan B. – Yea, Tom G. – Yea, Chris H. – Yea, Tom J. – Yea, Frank W. – Yea, Rosemary M. – Yea, Mike H. – Yea

Motion carried 7-0-0

Article 6: Mike H. made a motion that the BudCom recommend this article. Motion was seconded by Susan B.

Roll call vote:

Susan B. – Yea, Tom G. – Yea, Chris H. – Yea, Tom J. – Yea, Frank W. – Yea, Rosemary M. – Yea, Mike H. – Yea

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Motion carried 7-0-0

Tom G. stated that the BudCom would not take a position on Article 4 until the next meeting on February 10, 2015.

Motion to recess until Tuesday, February 10th at 7:00 pm in Community Room, Hollis Town Hall was made by Chris H. Rosemary M. seconded. All voted in favor. Motion was approved 7-0-0. Meeting went to recess at 9:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Winsor, Tax Collector