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HOLLIS/BROOKLINE COOP BUDGET COMMITTEE
November 19, 2008 Minutes

- Members Present: Steve Pucci, Doug Davidson, Ray Valle, Forrest Milkowski, Dan Peterson, Greg McHale and Greg d'Arbonne.
- Members Absent: Lorin Rydstrom
- Guests/Public Present: Approximately 25 members of the public were present.

COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION:

MEMBERSHIP	E-MAIL/MAIL
Steve Pucci, Chairman	sdpucci@earthlink.net
Greg McHale, Vice Chairman	H: greg.mchale@gmail.com
Greg d'Arbonne, Secretary	H: Gdarbo6844@aol.com W: Gdarbonn@systems.textron.com
Dan Peterson, School Board Representative	DanJPeterson@usa.net
Doug Davidson	rangerfund@charter.net
Forrest Milkowski	ForrestMilkowski@earthlink.net Forrest@Market-Advantage.net
Lorin Rydstrom	Lorin.rydstrom@fctg.com
Ray Valle	delv@tds.net

1. Committee Chairman Steve Pucci called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM. This meeting was a joint meeting with the Coop School Board.
2. The Middle School and High School Principals and the SPED Director reviewed their proposed budgets.
3. Steve Pucci asked if the SAU budget could be covered. Superintendent Susan Hodgdon spoke to the budget for the SAU Administrator who was absent due to illness. Steve asked what the price of oil is that was used to calculate the budget. Tom Enright said it was \$4 per gallon. Steve asked what is the process we will use to determine what the correct fuel price will be? Tom stated there is no consensus with tin the School Board. Steve asked again what the process to determine the price is. Discussion by the group did not settle the issue. Tom said there would be a decision at least at the December meeting. Steve asked that we settle price for fuel and what is consumption been; transportation costs and what options are there; expendable supplies seem to be going up; is the Board looking at cost share of the Professional staff in the negotiations. Tom said these are excellent questions and asked Steve to put those down on paper to submit tot the Board for them to answer through their investigation of the issues. Steve agreed he will do this. Doug Davidson pointed out to all that the burden of insurance for the professional staff is increasing at a pace that is not sustainable. Tom noted this is a problem but pointed out this is a legislative problem and they must solve the problem.
4. Asked that Greg d'Arbonne read the Minutes of the 17 July Meeting as not all members had read the Minutes. Greg read the Minutes. Ray Valle made a motion to accept the Minutes as read. Doug Davidson seconded the motion.

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- a. **Motion:** Ray Valle made a motion that the Budget Committee accepts the Minutes of the July 17, 2008 meeting as read by Greg d'Arbonne. Doug Davidson seconded the motion.
 - b. **Vote:** 4 in favor of the motion, none against, 2 abstained as they did not attend the meeting (Greg McHale has not yet arrived at this point in the meeting). The motion passed.
5. Doug Davidson made a motion that the Minutes of the 18 June meeting be approved as sent out by Greg d'Arbonne. Greg d'Arbonne seconded the motion. Vote was 3-0-3.
- a. **Motion:** Doug Davidson made a motion that the Budget Committee accept the Minutes of the June 18, 2008 meeting as sent out by Greg d'Arbonne in his e-mail of "Budget Committee Meeting Minutes - 18 Jun 08 – Draft 1." Greg d'Arbonne seconded the motion.
 - b. **Vote:** 3 in favor of the motion, none against, 3 abstained as they did not attend the meeting (Greg McHale has not yet arrived at this point in the meeting). The motion passed.
6. Directional Strategy: Steve Pucci handed out a sheet with various points covering: Guidelines and Principles; Process; What is driving this year's Budget Committee; and Our recommendations. Steve stated that since "Zero Based" is causing some angst, he feels there should be a review of "X" percentage of programs and line items to review how these items are progressing. Over a 3 to 5 year period, all programs and lines would be reviewed. This led to discussion on these topics. Doug Davidson stated an example is the telephone and internet access budget, which needs to be looked at and he is waiting for this to happen after asking for that look in earlier discussions with the School Board. Steve stated the current economic state of the nation is weighing heavy on the Taxpayers minds and the Hollis Town Survey indicates the Citizens do not want an increase in taxes. Dan Peterson stated the Survey found it is not a majority that was opposed to more spending on the schools. Dan stated he collated the survey so he is very familiar with the numbers. Ray Valle stated we should look at where the Budget took a significant upward bend away from the Cost of Living and Student Population increases and then go back to that point to figure out the percentage of difference to determine sustainability for a budget. Ray stated we need to have measurable factors to determine how programs or lines are doing. He feels the Board can tell us how many years one can be measured to determine but probably no more than 5 years. Dan feels many of these are subjective recommendations and are susceptible to changes in personalities on the Board and Budget Committees and the items on the list do not necessarily mean we will have a quality education if we reduce the budget. Steve said we have to go into this process to figure out what needs to be done to reach the goal of a budget that remains the same or is reduced. Lorin Rydstrom stated the Budget Committee has already stated we do not want an increase in the Budget. Doug disagreed and feels the budget needs to be sustainable and without that process to make a sustainable budget and then the budget does not get increased. Ray objected to Doug's use of the word "sustainable" as the Budget Committee did not vote for a sustainable budget. Dan feels most of the bullets are subjective and the last bullet can not be concluded based on the above bullets. Steve agreed to strike the Recommendation. Decision was made to delete the line on the Town Survey as it did not enhance or detract from the document.

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7. Discussion of Performance-based recognition and rewards: there were varied opinions about this topic. Concerns ranged from rewards system being abused to those who feel this can work. Lorin Rydstrom stated this subject is not in the purview of the Budget Committee and that it is the School Board's job.
8. Greg d'Arbonne made a motion that the document discussed be cleaned up and voted on at the next Budget Committee meeting. Greg McHale seconded the motion. Unanimous passed.
 - a. **Motion:** Greg d'Arbonne made a motion that the document "Directional strategy/plan of BudCom" and discussed at this Budget Committee Meeting be cleaned up and voted on at the next Budget Committee meeting. Greg McHale seconded the motion.
 - b. **Vote:** 7 in favor of the motion, none against. The motion passed.
9. Website recommendation: Greg McHale recommended creating a website for Minutes and notes. Greg d'Arbonne stated the SAU has the responsibility of keeping information up to date so he asked Dan Peterson to bring that up to the SAU. Ray Valle said the Budget Committee website should have a link in the SAU site and the website should limit who can post, make changes, etc. All agreed a website would be good. Once it is up and running, press and public will be informed. Greg McHale volunteered to create the website to see if it can be done.
10. Budget Development/Analysis – Target Areas for Review: Steve Pucci stated we have voiced concern over the Teacher's contract and how do we get some comments to the School Board. Dan Peterson stated he spoke to the School Board and he was interested on being on the negotiating team. There was a concern about the Evergreen Law and it's affect on future contracts. Dan told Steve it would be best if Steve went to Tom Enright to talk about the current contract. Steve stated we want to make sure the Budget Committee is participating in the Budget Workshops with the School Board. Steve also stated he wants to make sure the Budget Committee gets the Agenda for the School Board Meetings.
11. School Enrollment figures: Steve Pucci has the figures for the Primary, Middle and High School from 1991 to 2007. He also will receive the SPED numbers and the total budget and what was spent. He will also receive the number of employees by SAU, schools, and administrative staff for the last 5 years. He is also going to receive the cost of the Foreign Language program. He will also receive medical and dental pays (what the employee pays and the District pays). Steve stated that if there is other information a Budget Committee member wants, ask him and he will ask the SAU office.
12. Facilities Needs meeting: Greg McHale will attend and Dan Peterson will attend but he is non-voting member. If there are specific questions a Budget Committee member wants to know about, please inform Greg.
13. Communication, Marketing and Awareness: Dan Peterson feels representation by the Budget Committee at the Budget Workshops will help in this arena.
14. Monthly Budget Committee Meeting Schedule: Difficult to schedule on a day when it can be televised. The Budget Committee members agreed that the next meeting will be 15 September. Steve Pucci said we should try to hold our meetings the third Monday of each month. Ray Valle asked about Webcasting of the meetings. Ray will investigate.

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15. Milestones:

- a. Attend Budget Workshops.
- b. Provide the School Board number for the budget No Later Than (NLT) the end of the October meeting.
- c. Legal Deadlines for submissions and meetings (Warrant Articles, District Meeting).
- d. Communications can be done by getting the agenda to the press.

16. Forrest made a motion to adjourn and Greg d'Arbonne seconded the motion. All in favor.
The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg d'Arbonne
Secretary