

**DRAFT 1**  
**HOLLIS/BROOKLINE COOP BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
**February 4, 2009 Minutes**

- Members Present: Steve Pucci, Doug Davidson, Ray Valle, Lorin Rydstrom, Greg McHale, Forrest Milkowski, Dan Peterson and Greg d’Arbonne.
- Members Absent:
- Guests/Public Present: None.

COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION:

<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>	<b>E-MAIL/MAIL</b>
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
Lorin Rydstrom	Lorin.rydstrom@fctg.com
Ray Valle	delv@tds.net

1. Committee Chairman Steve Pucci called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.
2. Steve Pucci reviewed for the audience which consisted of the Coop School Board, the SAU administration and the Public, the Budget Committee’s analysis of past budgets and factors that impact the budget such as population, health coverage, etc. Steve pointed out the various expenses that are higher than the average. After Steve briefed, the floor was open to the Public to make comments and ask questions:
3. Comments from the Public were:
  - a. Anne Dumas asked about health care benefits and how much is the saving if we make the cuts as the Budget Committee recommended. Steve Pucci said a detailed look was not made but based on averages and over the number of employees, there was a determination that there would be a savings. Ann then asked if you can change the plan even without a contract negotiated. Steve said yes, it can be done. Ann then asked about the computer program, which Dan Peterson explained would be bought this year rather than next so there would be that savings. Ann commented that she did not think the cuts were realistic and that too many cuts were being made in one year.
  - b. Erin Rickey (sp?) asked about the student population as she thought the 7<sup>th</sup> grade class was larger than the outgoing 12<sup>th</sup> Grade class. Steve Pucci said the Budget Committee is looking forward and the projections show the population is shrinking when looking out over the out years to 2019.
  - c. Dr. James O’Shea asked about the large dollar amounts that were said to be savings. He asked Dan Peterson to speak about recent discussions at a School Board meeting about Health Care costs. Dan stated there were some obstacles to making changes, although alternatives could be offered. Dan stated the School Board is looking but has not found an alternative as of yet. Dr. O’Shea went on to explain how he felt the savings the Budget

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Committee thinks can be made are not realistic. Doug Davidson asked him what areas the School Board is proposing to reduce. Dr. O'Shea stated the School Board will explain at the meeting that follows this Budget Committee meeting.

- d. Cindy Ryder asked about the Teacher's contract not being negotiated yet and what does that mean to the budget. Steve Pucci explained that no COLA or step increases continue if no contract is negotiated. Cindy pointed out that any increase in payments for employee benefits means a decrease somewhere else in the budget.
- e. Rosemary Mizzachi stated she is a resident and teacher and was on the teacher negotiating team. She said the Budget Committee made the health plan sound better than it really is. She stated that without a negotiated contract, there are no increases in pay.
- f. Fred Hubert stated that the plans are capped for each employee so the District only pays \$12,000 for the medical plans.
- g. Harry Haytyn emphasized that the Budget Committee and the School Board and the teachers need to come together and come to an agreement by the end of tonight. Tom Enright stated it was too late for the teacher contract to be settled this evening.
- h. Tom Solon stated the medical plans could not be changed and lowering the cost of medical costs would save money for everyone.
- i. Heidi Foster stated it does not make sense to compare Private sector and the Teachers health plan. She asked if there has been a comparison between our district and other school districts. Steve Pucci said the Budget Committee has not.
- j. Cindy Ryder asked about the Budget Summary and why there was a \$400k reduction in one part of the budget. Dawna Duhamel, the District Business Administrator, explained it was based on uncommitted reserves.
- k. Debbie Pucci stated there seems to be a perception that the Budget Committee used "fuzzy Math" in their calculations. She explained that there has been some thought and actual factual thought to figure things out. She pointed out the reorganization of the cafeteria that found additional space and the use of emergency lighting at the High School rather than the regular lighting that has reduced costs.
- l. Anne Dumas stated that she does not think it was "fuzzy Math" but she feels there should be more detail into what has been proposed by the Budget Committee.
- m. Rosemary Mizzachi stated that there has been a comparison between the Districts and their Health plans and only two other Districts have the same cap that we do.
- n. Chris Hyde asked about the revenue assumptions and the State Aid and how does it go across the 2 Towns. Dawna Duhamel pointed the figure out and it is almost a 50/50 split. Chris asked what the Debt Service is for next year and is it declining or going up. Dan Peterson said it is about \$10K more based on payments. Chris asked about the population figures and staffing. He was told the numbers are up in the SPED department. Chris asked how far off the School Board and Budget Committee are from each other.
- o. Erin Rickey (sp?) stated that the per-student cost and teacher to student ratio have all fallen below the State average.
- p. Chris Hyde talked about the per student cost and the teacher student ratio.
- q. Marsha Cohn stated she did not see any recommendations suggested by the Budget Committee as to where to make the cuts. She would like to see the specifics of the cuts. Steve Pucci explained that there were recommendations made but in the interest of brevity for this meeting, they were not presented. Steve cited a few of the recommendations.
- r. Robert (name not heard) stated he thinks everyone is getting wound up about the exact cuts but this is an itemized budget. He stated that he has attended many meeting and has seen both sides come very close to the same numbers and he charges both the School

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Board and the Budget Committee to come to an agreement soon. Ray Valle stated the School Board has the authority to determine how the budget money is spent so they can make the cuts in specific places that the Budget Committee cannot.

- s. Roger Saunders stated that Fred Fuller has a \$2.65 per gallon offer on fuel oil that can be signed as a contract.
4. Forrest Milkowski stated we need to close the Budget Hearing and open the Budget Meeting. Ray Valle recommended we leave the Hearing open so the public can still comment. It was decided that Dan Peterson would present the School Boards recommended Budget. Dan presented the School Board recommended budget and the public made comments and asked questions.
5. Forrest Milkowski made a motion that we close the public hearing. Lorin Rydstrom seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
  - a. **Motion:** Forrest Milkowski made a motion that the Public Hearing be closed. Lorin Rydstrom seconded the motion.
  - b. **Vote:** 8 in favor of the motion, none against. The motion passed.
6. Steve Pucci invited the School Board members to join the Budget Committee at the table for a joint meeting.
7. The joint meeting was adjourned and Forrest Milkowski made a motion that the Budget Committee meeting be adjourned and Greg d'Arbonne seconded the motion. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg d'Arbonne  
Secretary