

Hillsboro-Deering Cooperative School District

Deliberative Session

February 5, 2023 – 7:00 pm

Hillsboro-Deering Middle School Gymnasium

School District Moderator John Segedy opened the meeting at 7:24pm and made introductions: School Board members; Chair Chris Bober, Vice Chair Jessica Morris, Paul Plater, Heidi Welch and Michael Kenney; School District Clerk Megan Shower, Superintendent Jennifer Crawford, Legal Counsel Matt Upton, and Business Manager Grant Geisler.

He then led the Pledge of Allegiance. John Segedy followed with a moment of silence.

Article 01 - Election of Officers

To choose by nonpartisan ballot the following School District Officials:

- Two School Board Members At Large for a 3-year term
 - Krista Davidson
 - Stacey Morin
 - Benny Valenzuela
- One Moderator for a 1-year term
 - John Segedy

1. Comments/Questions on Article One
 - a. None

Article 02 - Set Salaries of School Board, Agents/Officers

Shall the Hillsboro-Deering School District set the salaries of the School Board and compensation of any other officers or agents of the District as printed in the 2024-2025 Budget?

School Board Chair \$1,800
School Board Members \$1,000 each
District Clerk \$100 per meeting
Moderator \$100 per meeting
Ballot Clerks \$10 each per voting session
Recommended by School Board

1. Comments/Questions on Article Two
 - a. Riche Colcombe

- i. Makes a motion to remove the school treasurer salary of \$5,000 from this article. Don Mann seconds. Motion passes.
- ii.

Article #2 - Amended, as approved:

Shall the Hillsboro-Deering School District set the salaries of the School Board and compensation of any other officers or agents of the District as printed in the 2024-2025 Budget?

School Board Chair	\$1,800
School Board Members	\$1,000 each
District Clerk	\$100 per meeting
Moderator	\$100 per meeting
Ballot Clerks	\$10 each per voting session

Vote to approve article 2 as amended passed by the voters present.

Article 03 - Operating Budget

Shall the voters of the Hillsboro-Deering School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$24,597,117 (twenty-four million, five-hundred ninety-seven thousand, one-hundred and seventeen dollars)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$24,482,642 (twenty-four million, four hundred eighty-two thousand, six hundred forty-two dollars), which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the school district or by law; or the School District may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. (Funding the operating budget for 2024-2025 but does not include appropriations in other warrant articles, except Article #2)
Recommended by School Board

Presented by Chris Bober who gave an overview of the school board's mission and goals, the budget and budget key factors.

- 1. Comments/Questions on Article Three
 - a. Riche Colcombe
 - i. The budget 100% affects the tax rate, which contradicts the statement otherwise.

- ii. Would like the School Board Chair to explain how there was a \$3,000,000.00 surplus last year.
 - 1. Answer
 - a. The \$3,000,000 surplus was a cumulative result of excess covid-year funds, unfilled positions, and unexpected health fund refunds among other factors.
 - iii. Would also like to know why it was all spent the following year.
 - 1. Answer
 - iv. Moved to zero out line 10.2600.000.442.0 Energy Lease Payment Line of \$179,968.76. Don Mann seconds. **Motion failed.**
- b. Bob Hassett
- i. The problem with zeroing out this line item is that it is a contracted item and this was the most frugal way for the district to fund this.
 - ii. Zeroing out this line item will not change the fact that we have to fulfill this contractual agreement
 - 1. Answer - If we default on this lease, the company can come in and remove their equipment which is used to run the lighting and heating.
 - iii. There were many opportunities for the public to weigh in on this contract, which included a public hearing.
- c. Donn Mann
- i. Was there a public vote?
- d. [Kathryn McGinn](#)
- i. Shared information that can be found on the Department of Education's website.
 - ii. Cited the cost associated with the percentage of students receiving required services in the district.
 - iii. This is a fair and reasonable budget, and covers the needs of our students.
 - iv. The State of New Hampshire needs to address the budgeting issue.
- e. Jason Buck
- i. Recognizes the work of the Board
 - ii. If you remove salaries and contractual agreements from the budget, the budget has actually decreased.
 - iii. This Board is being a good steward of the taxpayers' money.
- f. Riche Colcombe
- i. Returning the \$3.1 million dollars was done as a requirement of the state.

- ii. Moved to zero out budget line item 10.2310.000.810.0 Dues & Fees District in the amount of \$9,727.84. Benny Valenzuela seconds. **Motion failed.**
- g. Margie Porter
 - i. The NHSBA is a valuable resource for the School Board, and we need to keep this line item in the budget.
- h. [Kathryn McGinn](#)
 - i. The School Board Association does a tremendous amount to help our school board and community.
 - ii. With the membership comes shell templates that the Board can use - saving money in legal fees.
 - iii. If we did not have this resource we would have a significant increase in legal fees.
- i. Bob White
 - i. What percentage of the budget is this amendment?
- j. Alan Dobrowolski
 - i. Most academic institutions have a requirement to belong to professional organizations.
 - ii. There needs to be an understanding that under the RSA the school board can use the previous year's budget as the baseline.
- k. Bob Hassett
 - i. A 1.64% increase in the budget is commendable.
- l. Riche Colcombe
 - i. Moved to remove \$753,000 from the budget. Venni Venezuela seconds. Secret vote requested. **MOTION FAILED (NO- 140, YES-92)**
- m. Benny Valenzuela
 - i. If the bond payment has been paid off, why are continuing to have this money included in the budget?
 - 1. Answer
 - a. The bond payment was already removed from the budget.
- n. [Jean Mogan](#)
 - i. If you look at the proposed budget, the bond payment is no longer in the budget.
- o. Riche Colcombe
 - i. Even though the budget reflects the bond payment line was removed, the money for that payment is still included in the budget elsewhere.
- p. Alex Luhtjarv

- i. This community did approve a collective bargaining agreement with the teachers and staff which has caused cost increases - which is where the money went.
- q. Donn Mann
 - i. If you look at the budget, the \$753,000 never came out of the budget; the percentage increase does not reflect what actually happened.

Article 3 Moves forward to vote as presented.

2. Kathryn McGinn. submits a motion to restrict reconsideration of article 3. Alex Luhtjarv seconds. Motion passed

Article 04 - Appropriation for Food Service and Federal / State

Shall the Hillsboro-Deering School District raise and appropriate \$2,550,000 for the support of school projects as follows: \$800,000 (eight hundred thousand dollars) for Food Service and \$1,750,000 (one million, seven hundred fifty thousand dollars) for Federal and State projects? Such sum to be offset by school lunch sales and State and Federal grants. Majority vote required. Recommended by School Board

1. Comments/Questions on Article Four

- a. Chris Bosse
 - i. Do these funds include any additional stipulations on how they are to be used, or what products they are allowed to purchase?
 - 1. Answer
 - a. There are rules around what these funds can and can not be used for. There are District policies in place.
 - ii. These funds have strings attached to them?
 - 1. Answer
 - a. There are rules of how these funds are used.

Article 05 - Appropriation for SAU Budget

Shall the voters of the Hillsboro Deering School District adopt a School Administrative Unit budget of \$1,156,115 (one million, one hundred fifty-six thousand, one hundred fifteen dollars) for the forthcoming fiscal year in which \$971,137 (nine hundred seventy-one thousand, one hundred thirty-seven dollars) is assigned to the school budget of this district? This year's alternative budget of \$1,160,145 (one million, one hundred sixty thousand, one hundred and forty-five dollars) for the forthcoming fiscal year in which \$974,522 (nine hundred seventy-four thousand, five hundred twenty-two dollars) is assigned to the school budget of the district, will

be adopted if the article does not receive a majority vote of all school district voters in the School Administrative Unit. Recommended by School Board.

1. Comments/Questions on Article Five
 - a. None

Article 06 - Fund School Building Maintenance Expendable Trust

Shall the Hillsboro-Deering School District vote to raise and appropriate up to \$250,000 (two hundred fifty thousand dollars) to be added to the School Building Maintenance Fund previously established? This sum to come from the Jun 30, 2024 unassigned fund balance available for transfer after July 1, 2024. No amount to be raised from taxation. Recommended by School Board

1. Comments/Questions on Article Six

- a. Alan Dobrowsolski
 - i. Is concerned about the control of how this funding is used.
- b. Leigh Bosse
 - i. Is glad to hear that if this is passed, that this will raise the funds required to replace the boiler in the High School.
 - ii. Urges the Board to replace the boiler before the emergency occurs.
- c. Riche Colcombe
 - i. Requested a copy of the service requests for the boiler
 1. The boiler is 30 years old, but there is no note in the reports that says that we are in imminent danger of the boiler blowing any time soon.
- d. Jill Smith
 - i. Are we able to earmark these funds? Can we insert language in the warrant article to specify what the money in the fund can be used for?
 1. Answer
 - a. This is a trust with a specific purpose, which is what the funds can be used for - but can not specify what the funds in the trust can specifically be used for.
- e. [Kathryn McGinn](#)
 - i. There is a 5-year maintenance plan that is reviewed yearly
 - ii. If this is not passed, we would have to wait for the boiler to die before the funds can be allocated.
- f. Riche Colcombe

established? This sum to come from the Jun 30, 2023 unassigned fund balance available for transfer after July 1, 2023. No amount to be raised from taxation. Recommended by the School Board

1. Comments/Questions on Article Seven

a. Benny Valenzuela

- i. If this is a required service, why do we need this fund instead of having these services in the budget?

1. Answer

- a. This is for any unexpected special education services that may occur after the budget has been approved and voted on.

Article 08 - Fund Technology Expendable Trust

To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate up to \$10,000 (ten thousand dollars) to be added to the Technology Expendable Trust Fund previously established. This sum to come from June 30, 2023 unassigned fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2023. No amount to be raised from taxation. Recommend by School Board

1. Comments/Questions on Article Eight

- a. None

Article 09 - Accept Annual Reports

Shall the Hillsboro-Deering School District accept the reports of agents, committees and officers chosen as printed in the Annual Report? Recommended by School Board

1. Comments/Questions on Article Nine

- a.

Article 10 - By Petition

Shall the voters of the Hillsboro-Deering Cooperative School District vote to direct the Hillsboro-Deering Cooperative School Board to terminate the 3-year landscaping and snow plowing contract with the vendor, effective April 30, 2024 due to breach of contract and the H-D School District's:

1. Failure to enforce the scope of work requirements specified as “shall perform” items Appendix A, Pages 9-11, of the “Request for Proposals: Grounds Maintenance Services, Landscaping and Snow Removal”
2. Failure to obtain competitive bids as specified in the school district’s building policy.
3. Lack of transparency and accountability for the use of taxpayer funds.

1. Comments/Questions on Article Ten

- a. Riche Colcombe
 - i. Presented the petition

2. Bob Hassett

- a. Finding someone to contract with is difficult, and contracting these services is the best way to get the maintenance requirements covered.
- b.

3. Nancy Plummer - Permission to speak granted by the voters present

- a. What specifically was not done that is in the contract?
- b. The contract was put out to bid - the school district contacted at least 4 companies to bid, as well as advertised in the newspaper.
- c. This feels like it is directed at the specific vendor.

4. Joseph Devons

- a. Is concerned that when damage is being done to the property of the school, who is responsible? The taxpayers or the vendor?
 - i. This needs to be addressed.

5. Mark Murdough

- a. Has been plowing residential for many years
 - i. If you get a major storm, and you don’t have a contract you will be paying much more than you are now.

6. The Board does not have the authority to cancel a contract without legal consequences. This body does not have the authority to dictate who and how they enter into contracts.

Article 11 - By Petition

Shall the voters of the Hillsboro-Deering Cooperative School District vote to rescind authority for the H-D School Board to enter into any multi-year procurement agreement for \$50,000 or greater and to require a warrant article to authorize agreement, which shall be voted by the legislative body of the Hillsboro-Deering Cooperative School District.

1. Comments/Questions on Article Eleven
 - a. None

Article 12 - By Petition

Shall Hillsboro-Deering Cooperative School District vote to prohibit the Hillsboro-Deering School Board from using taxpayer money to fund lobbyists, including indirect funding through membership organizations such as, but not limited to, NHSBA.

1. Comments/Questions on Article Twelve
 - a. Jill Smith
 - i. Is wondering if the language in article 11 and 12 is allowable?
 1. Answer
 - a. Both are advisory. State law designates what is put into an article.
 - b. Bob Hassett
 - i. This article has the same issues that article 10 and 11 have.

Meeting adjourned at 10:02pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Megan Shower
Hillsboro-Deering School District Clerk