

Town of Hudson Budget Committee Meeting Minutes - DRAFT  
August 7, 2024

**HUDSON BUDGET COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the August 7, 2024 Meeting

**A. Call to Order**

Chairman Cole called the meeting to order in the Buxton Community Development Room at Town Hall at 7:00PM and declared a quorum was present.

**B. Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Cole led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**C. Attendance**

**Members Present:** Donna Boucher, Randall Brownrigg, William Cole, James Lawrence, Kevin Walsh, Richard Weissgarber, Robert Wherry, Selectman Liaison Heidi Jakoby, School Board Liaison Grace Kennedy

**Members Excused:** Shawn Jasper, Kimberly Rice

**D. Public Input**

Chairman Cole opened the meeting for public input at 7:01. No attendees came forward, the chairman closed public input at 7:02.

**E. Acceptance of Minutes**

May 1, 2024, June 5, 2024 minutes. Clerk Walsh noted correction to the June 5 member present to correct the name of Ms Boucher.

Mr. Wherry motioned and Mr. Brownrigg seconded a motion to accept the minutes of the May 1, 2024 meeting as presented. No discussion, motion passed on voice vote with Ms. Boucher, Ms. Jakoby, Mr. Weissgarber abstaining due to their recent appointment to the committee but had not yet taken their oath of office.

Mr. Weissgarger motioned and Mr. Wherry seconded a motion to accept the minutes of the June 5, 2024 meeting as presented. No discussion, motion passed on voice vote.

**F. Nominations/ Appointments**

None presented.

**G. Liaison Reports**

Selectman Liaison Jakoby presented the Board of Selectmen Report (BOS) with the following comments:

- Town Planner Hiring Status – there has been little to no progress on this with Ms. Jakoby asking this to be placed on the next BOS meeting; citing the challenge to find qualified candidates for the position. The town continues to utilize the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) for planning assistance. Ms. Jakoby is not on the selection committee for this position and relies on the updates the BOS receives from that committee.
- Town Administrator Hiring – BOS has hired Municipal Resources (MRI) at a cost of \$7,000 to conduct the search and preliminary screening to identify the top candidates for BOS to conduct final interviews in the next couple of weeks. Town Assessor Jim Michaud has been named as Interim Town Administrator, upon Mr. Malizia's retirement, with a 15% temporary increase in

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compensation in the interim when questioned by Mr. Weissgarber regarding compensation. Also noted that the search for an Assistant Town Administrator position is being delayed until the Town Administrator position is filled.

- At the morning Highway Safety Committee meeting discussed when accidents happen in town that damage town property (ex. Guardrails, Signage) there is the inability to identify the person/persons involved in an effort to recover the cost associated with repair/replacement of town property via insurance. This is an added cost to the town and Ms. Jakoby to research costs incurred by the town as these types of incidents are generally not covered by the town's insurance policy.

School Board Liaison Kennedy deferred to School Board Chair Ms. Maureen Dionne. Chairman Cole recognized Ms. Dionne.

- Diversity/Equity/Inclusion (DEI) Overview/Status and cost/budgetary impact of DEI. Ms. Dionne who gave a brief history of DEI in the school district, beginning as an outgrowth of bullying/harassment incidents some 4 years ago to become a sub-committee of the school board. Policies regarding anti-bullying harassment were adopted and are the guiding documents for the sub-committee. DEI Clubs have been formed at Hudson Memorial School and Alvirne High School with advisors, who receive stipends, and are student-led. DEI training is provided to the school district, following the NH Governor's Advisory Council office initiative on DEI. Focus has been on accessibility of information, for example regarding language, physical space, district web site (school announcements, hand books, applications, translations services for parent-teacher conferences, etc.). Mr. Brownrigg questioned how DEI is funded as he was of the opinion that it is not under the NH Department of Education's standards, rather at the local district level. Ms. Dionne stated that the DEI sub-committee is a sub-committee of the School Board and exists to ensure compliance with a number of state and federal regulations regarding accessibility. Mr. Brownrigg also inquired if there was an opportunity for public attendance/membership of the sub-committee. Mr. Wherry questioned how accessibility came under DEI and Ms. Dionne responded that it was due to the inclusivity aspect of DEI. He further asked if there were statistics or metrics on the number of students impacted or who may be accessing pages on the web site addressed by language. Ms. Dionne would research with IT regarding associated costs and time and cost associated with compliance. Mr. Weissgarber asked if the sub-committee had a charter, concern for budgetary impact and Ms. Dionne responded that it did not have a charter but would research. Chairman Cole asked about metrics for the establishment of the sub-committee and metrics today. Ms. Dionne responded that the School Board is provided with monthly reports including on bullying and harassment and the committee exists to insure the school district continues to provide a safe, accessible and inclusive environment. Chairman Cole recognized School District Business Administrator Ms. Jen Burk to share how the School District can provide the Budget Committee with related expense/revenue numbers (i.e. taxpayer monies) for DEI via stipends and associated co-curricular accounts. Chairman Cole requested copies of all minutes of the sub-committee since existence as well as minutes of the School Board meeting that established the sub-committee.
- Challenge Day (Sept 2022) – Ms. Dionne described the event held at Alvirne High School for grades 9 and 10 students over the course of 4 days. Facilitated by an outside vendor and included parents as well to foster team building and positive community experience. \$19,100.54 paid for by the Alvirne Trustees. Parents received information about the program and encouraged to volunteer if possible. The name of the vendor will be provided. Mr. Walsh

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noted that the event took place during a default budget year and how did a “new expense” occur given the default budget status. Business Administrator noted that the Alvirne Trustee funds are presented as unanticipated revenue under RSA 198.20B can be received and expended accordingly.

- Facilities Study – Ms. Dionne reminded members of the study previously shared with the committee. Purpose of the assessment is to provide information on the facilities, capacities of the elementary and middle school. This study provides one piece of a puzzle as to how the School District can deliver appropriate education opportunities given enrollment trends and facilities. Study was provided to the School Board in March 2023 and continues to be a part of the planning process along with the district's strategic plan. Chairman Cole inquired if this study would incorporate the Homeland Security study. Ms. Burke noted the Homeland Security document was not a public document but that information contained in that as well as the state's school security initiative could find its way into an overall facilities program. Ms. Boucher inquired in the associated Capital Improvements Committee of the School District meetings could be televised. Ms. Dionne indicated she would follow-up with that.

### Target Exactions Sub-Committee

Mr. Walsh shared the charge of the sub-committee and reviewed the information included in the committee's packet, describing the exactions by project milestones, “back office” controls with Town Finance Director and next steps which include meeting with the Town Administrator, focus on Fire/Police safety given the need for that to occur prior to the issuing of the building permit for the main building, and contact School District Business Administrator regarding STEM exaction element and the process for accounting for those funds and activities.

Chairman Cole called for a brief recess at 9:02PM.

The meeting was called back to order at 9:15PM.

### H. Old Business

#### Default Budgets – process & parameters

The Chair recognized Vic Chair Lawrence who recalled the committee requesting default budgets ahead of receiving budget from the town and school district, regarding the process and parameters that each governing bodies use to develop their respective default budgets. The town provided a description of the process used to develop the default budget. School District Business Administrator Ms. Burk described the process the school district uses and timeline resulting with the default budget being available around October 9. Further discussion regarding Special Education portion of the default budget and those projected obligations generally in the September time frame after student registrations are finalized. Regarding default calculations regarding personnel costs, state retirement contribution and hiring processes are known, then those figures would be available. Mr. Brownrigg inquired to the number of grants received and those are provided in the budget detail. Ms. Burke will share her notes with the process she uses to follow to compute the default budget.

SAU81: employees/Student Enrollment (2005-2023)

With Mr. Jasper absent, the Chair deferred this discussion until the September meeting.

RFP Documents: Town Hall Assessment

Selectmen Liaison Ms. Jakoby noted that she didn't have that information with her and will forward via

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e-mail the Request for Proposal (RFP) and contract to the committee tomorrow. This is different from the other warrant article regarding the comprehensive infrastructure study for town operations.

NRPC "Interim" Planner: Hourly rate and how determined

Selectmen Liaison Ms. Jakoby spoke with the Interim Town Planner regarding the contract which was included in the Budget Committee's packet which covers some 20 hours of support weekly at the rate of \$72.00 per hour paid to the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC).

**I. New Business**

FY26 Schedule for budget deliberations – Draft

Chairman Cole presented the draft based on last year's schedule and to be reviewed by the governing bodies for scheduling based on availability of appropriate personnel.

Vice Chair Mr. Lawrence asked School District Business Administrator Ms. Burke regarding dates as relative to state law for SB2 communities for final submission and hearings.

Motion to recommend schedule as modified to reflect revised dates by Mr. Weissgarber with second by Mr. Brownrigg. Motion passed by voice vote.

**J. Other Business/Comments**

Clerk Walsh noted the Budget Workshop presented by the New Hampshire Municipal Association and expressed interest in attending. The Chair requested Mr. Walsh to coordinate with other committee members to register and attend.

Members expressed appreciation for Town Administrator Melizia, and Hudson Cable TV personnel Jim MacIntosh in his retirement and Jacqueline Lemay on pursuing her education.

Mr. Brownrigg expressed hope that the public attend the budget hearings when schedule.

**K. Next Meeting: Sept 4, 2024**

**L. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Brownrigg, seconded by Mr. Lawrence. Motion carried on a voice vote. Meeting was adjourned at 10:00PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kevin Walsh  
Clerk

Ref: Recorded by HCTV, reference video [Budget Committee Meeting of 08-07-24 \(hudsonctv.com\)](https://www.hudsonctv.com)