

Minutes
Deliberative Session Meeting for Souhegan Cooperative School District
February 6, 2012
Amherst, New Hampshire

Attendance:

Moderator: Cynthia Dokmo

Souhegan Cooperative School Board members: Christine Janson, Chair; Mary Lou Mullens, Vice Chair; and members Howard Brown, Steve Coughlan, Pim Grondstra, Fran Harrow, and Jeanne Ludt.

Administration: Peter Warburton, Superintendent; Elizabeth Shankel, Business Administrator; Renea Sparks, Director of Special Instructional Services; Nicole Heimarck, Director of Curriculum and Professional Development; Jon Ingram, Principal, Souhegan High School

Attorney for the District: Gordon Graham

Clerk: Nancy Baker

Souhegan Cooperative School District Advisory Finance Committee: Gail Agans, Chair; Dan Foley, Lorri Hayes, Julie Livingston, Marilyn Peterman (absent), Tom Silvia, and Peter Stearns (absent)

The number of voting attendees was 41 from Amherst and 7 from Mont Vernon.

Moderator Cynthia Dokmo called the deliberative session of the Souhegan Cooperative School District to order at 7:02 pm. Ms Dokmo explained the deliberative process to attendees and notified all that the official voting on warrant articles for the town and school boards would take place on Tuesday, March 13, 2012.

School Board Chair, Christine Janson, introduced school board members as well as the school district attorney, clerk, and administrators, and then Gail Agans, Chair of the Advisory Finance Committee who introduced her committee members.

Ms Dokmo explained the purpose and goals for the deliberative session, those being to determine whether to maintain the original wording on the annual meeting warrant notice or to amend it. She called the audience's attention to the rules of the Moderator included in the attached Voter's Guide. She notified those attending that when the wording on the ballot was approved for each warrant article, she would be asking for a motion to restrict consideration.

Ms Dokmo recognized Mary Lou Mullens who moved Article 2 as set forth in the warrant.

Article 2 Shall the Souhegan Cooperative School District raise and appropriate **\$2,930,701** (Gross Budget) for renovation, repair and replacement of the roof, HVAC system, paving and interior locking system at Souhegan High School, and authorize the issuance of not more than **\$2,930,701** of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA Chapter 33) and authorize the school board to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms and conditions thereof; and take any other action necessary to carry out the purpose of this article, and further, raise and appropriate the additional sum of **\$50,066** for the payment of the first interest payment on the aforesaid bonds?
Three-fifths vote required to pass.
The Souhegan Cooperative School Board unanimously recommends the passage of this article by a vote of 7 to 0.

Steve Coughlan seconded the motion. Mary Lou Mullens spoke to the article, beginning with a history of the Souhegan Cooperative School District bonding. The main building, constructed in 1992, was funded by a \$12,146,508 twenty year bond, the last payment of which is in the FY12 budget. The Annex was built in 2002, funded by a \$5,800,000 ten year bond, the last payment of which is in the FY13 budget. The main building, now twenty years old, has had no major system or structural work to date and needs renovations. Gale Associates engineers and architects examined the state of the main building and the annex in 2010 and recommended \$14,000,000 in repairs and renovations to support current needs. The smaller cost or less critical items are being addressed in the operating budget over time. Some needs have been met by utilizing space more effectively as is the case with the Annex cafeteria and Wellness space. The School Board has identified critical items that require immediate attention and are most appropriately dealt with in a bond. The roof of the main building and its rooftop HVAC units are failing and need replacement. Water leaks are a real concern as the

potential damage could cause unanticipated repair costs and loss of useable space and academic time. HVAC system repairs have cost between \$13,000 and \$38,000 per year for the past four years. The original roads and parking lots have deteriorated, particularly the main entryway area and the bus loop which both get heavy use on a daily basis. The interior locking system is obsolete and does not meet current safety and security standards. The board prioritized security measures and a number of them have been completed such as new locker pods, updating the telephone system, moving the visitor's entrance and the School Resource Officer's office to more centralized locations, and the addition of parking lot cameras and lights. The interior locking system is a higher dollar item not easily addressed in the operating budget and it has been identified as a high priority item for the safety and security of students and staff. The current locks don't meet safety standards and are not adequate for a quick and secure lockdown. The present locks are no longer manufactured, so replacements and parts are not available.

Ms Mullens then outlined the itemized cost breakout for this work. The main building roof replacement would be \$1,160,000, the HVAC replacement \$950,000, the main building and annex interior locking system \$220,701 and the essential paving \$600,000. The total requested bond amount is therefore \$2,930,701. She then asked Steven Coughlan to speak to the financial impact of this article.

Mr. Coughlan explained that this work would be funded by a ten year bond at an assumed interest rate of 3%. The FY13 interest cost would be \$50,066 and the total interest cost on the \$2.9 million dollar bond would be \$487,777. He referred to a chart which showed the current and future bond payments. In FY12, the current budget there is \$1,053,065 in payments on the two existing bonds (the original main building and annex bonds of 1992 and 2002 respectively). The FY13 payments would be the final payment on the annex bond of \$594,355 and the payment on the proposed bond of \$50,066 for a total of \$644,421. The year after that the annex bond goes away and there would be only the payments on the proposed bond of \$379,187. The chart showed the interest payments on this proposed bond for the next ten years. Mr. Coughlan detailed the tax impact of the bond, presuming a 3% interest rate. In FY13 the impact would be .02 cents in Amherst, 20 cents in the next two years, and then as principal is reduced, the impact over the next ten years goes down, being at 16 cents in the last year of the bond. In Mont Vernon, the impact is 3 cents the first year, 24 cents the second year, and then decreasing over the life of the bond to 19 cents the final year.

The Moderator recognized Julie Livingston of the SCSD Finance Committee to speak to its position on this article. She reported that the Finance Committee voted unanimously to support this article.

The Moderator then opened up the discussion to questions and comments from the audience. Brian Bunner of 1 Brook Road, Mont Vernon asked about the tax reductions that occur as bonds are paid off. He referred to the slide and noted that there are significant reductions in the burden on taxpayers, yet this is not shown. Why is this? Steve Coughlin explained that this presentation addresses only the tax impact of the new bond and doesn't talk about what happens elsewhere as it relates to the operating budget. That would be discussed when the operating budget is presented.

Eileen Nabor of Beech Hill Road, Mont Vernon asked if the ratio of Mont Vernon's student population over the life of the bond was calculated as part of showing the tax impact to Mont Vernon voters. Mont Vernon is sending fewer and fewer students, so was this taken into account? Mr. Coughlan replied that the tax impact is calculated each year based on two things – the total assessed valuation of property in the towns and the student population of each town. For the purpose of making this calculation the School Board made the assumption that was what is true now would be true for the life of the bond. These are projections. The reality will change slightly as student population changes over the life of the bond.

Julie Livingston of the Finance Committee helped to clarify the intent of the tax impact slide in the presentation, saying that it speaks to the proposed bond only and doesn't reflect on the impact of paying off the original two building bonds.

Bill Belvin of 231 Boston Post Road, Amherst asked Superintendent Warburton if any of this proposed bond would qualify for any State building aid, now or in the future. The Superintendent replied that it would not.

Bill Emerson of Lyndeborough Road in Amherst remarked that the parking lots at the high school are not nearly as bad as some of the town roads. He asked about the next steps in the needed repairs and improvements outlined in the Gale Report. This proposed bond addresses only about \$3 million of the needed work in addition

to the work absorbed in the operating budgets. What about the other big ticket items? When will there be another bond to take care of those? When should taxpayers expect to be addressing these?

Chris Janson replied that one of the biggest items recommended in the Gale Report was essentially rebuilding our athletic facilities – the stadium, the track, some of the fields. This is the biggest ticket item that the School Board didn't address with this bond. They did consider addressing it with a bond this year, but the decision was to explore private funding for this project, working with the Recreation Department and private citizens in planning. It is a large project as many of the present facilities are no longer ADA compliant. There are a lot of issues to deal with before making decisions. The smaller ticket items are being built into the operating budget over the next several years, so this bond brings you the most critical high ticket items – the ones the School Board was willing to bring to the voters now.

The Moderator, seeing no further comments, directed the School District Clerk to place Article 2 on the ballot as originally worded. She accepted a motion to restrict reconsideration from Porter Dodge. Bruce Bowler seconded the motion and it passed.

Moderator Dokmo recognized Christine Janson to move Article 3, which was then seconded by Steve Coughlan.

Article 3 Shall the Souhegan Cooperative School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amount 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 **\$18,550,794**? Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be **\$18,378,827**, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Souhegan Cooperative School District or by law; or the governing body 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.
Majority vote required to pass.
The Souhegan Cooperative School Board unanimously recommends the passage of this article by a vote of 7 to 0.

Ms Janson introduced Jon Ingram who spoke to the programs and accomplishments at the high school and offered some background information to help voters put the budget in perspective. He began with student enrollment for FY13 and staffing numbers, as educational programs and the staff who provide them are the largest component of the school budget every year. He noted that the facilities receive very heavy use, so maintenance is another major factor. There are many things in the budget that are needed to keep the facilities in good operating condition. Their age means that the administration has to stay on top of it.

Souhegan High School is turning twenty years old. In the beginning its educational practices were considered innovative and the school pushed the envelope to prepare students in new and effective ways. Now many of these practices are "best practice" at other schools. It is time to revitalize our commitment to exploring new and innovative practices, as the School Board and staff want to keep pace with change and to continue in a role as leaders in public education. Many achievements of students and staff were listed on slides presented and Principal Ingram stressed not only the quantity and quality of these achievements, but their substance. He noted particularly that the opportunity to apply learning is a hallmark of the Souhegan educational approach. Connecting student passion with student learning is also an important part of the philosophy that is implemented. The highly educated and motivated staff facilitates this kind of outcome based learning and they are to be commended for their professional development and dedication.

Christine Janson then talked about the work of the School Board this year. The Board has worked over the past several months to build a budget that is fiscally responsible and keeps costs down wherever possible, while maintaining student programs and student/teacher ratios. The process allowed for scrutiny of each line item as each Board member teamed up with a member of the Finance Committee to examine the budget carefully. Subcommittees then reported to the full group and from this the budget was finalized.

Other than developing the budget the major work of a school board is policy, and this year several policies were developed or reviewed, generally as part of a process that included all three schools in the District. The Board spent considerable time on the recommendations in the Gale Report, prioritizing them. Enhancing security on campus has been a focus this year with the approval of additional lighting and security cameras in parking

areas. External locks on doors in the building were replaced in the operating budget and the internal locks will be addressed in the proposed bond. This year the Board approved some significant building configuration changes aimed both at better use of our space, and at cost savings. The Annex cafeteria was closed and is now used for all art classes. Space in the main building that had housed art classes has been converted to wellness space. The previous weight room is now used for special education services.

Cooperation with the other schools in the district is key to an effective operation. The aim is to be consistent in budgeting, calendars, curriculum, transition and policies.

Ms Janson then presented the annual percentage change from budget to budget over the past few years. This year the increase is quite small. The Souhegan School District proposed budget for FY13 is \$18,550,794, an increase of \$12,758 or 0.07% over the FY12 adopted budget.

She introduced school board member Pim Grondstra who spoke to details of the budget. Using a pie chart, he broke down the eleven budget costs by function. The largest portion of the budget is in education costs accounting for over 63%, followed by 8.3% for support services, and 6.7% for buildings and grounds.

Reductions on bond payouts and a one time expendable trust deposit account for a total cost reduction of \$523,710. However, increased costs in benefits, costs in an employee agreement, additional out of district costs for special education and additional instructional costs have meant a total additional cost of \$612,984. Items that have changed in the budget include both increases in regular and special education professional and paraprofessional positions and decreases in custodial and food service positions. Also included in changes are the replacement of locker pods, and addressing smaller facilities items recommended in the Gale Report.

Fran Harrow spoke to the special educational program. Differentiated instruction benefits all students, but some students need special instruction in order to incorporate learning and make it their own so that they can use it. That is the part that special education plays in the overall program. As in any part of the education program, personnel and program are the primary factors impacting costs. This is the second year of a two year contract for special education personnel just as it is for regular education personnel, and there are also increased insurance and retirement costs incorporated into the budget. Because of programming changes there is an increase of 1.2 teachers this coming year. This is due to a change in the delivery of services. More students are coming into the district rather than being in out-of-district placements. This is a financially responsible move over the long term as it will provide significant cost savings. The percentage of students served at the high school is increasing and there are changes in programmatic personnel. Currently the district pays by the hour for various therapists, reading specialists, speech and language therapists. The need for service is such that now there is a need to bring these professionals in house, and it will be significantly cheaper to do so.

Ms Harrow then addressed the issue of how our students in special education are successful. The indicators of success are in the inclusionary practices that benefit all students. Last year 100% of seniors in special education graduated and 80% moved on to post secondary education. 20% moved productively into the work environment. One of the means to accomplishing this has been a transitional model that encourages student and parental involvement in how the student moves from the educational environment to what comes after it. Nearly 100 local businesses partner in this transition model to provide internships, and in any given year 14 to 20 students participate in these opportunities. She thanked all the business partners for their support of this important program.

Jeanne Ludt explained the SAU 39 apportionment formula. Three districts (Amherst, Mont Vernon, and Souhegan) make up SAU 39 and they share the costs of operating the SAU. The budget is apportioned among the three and the Souhegan portion is 34.73% or \$697,853. This is an increase of \$12,389 over FY12. The Souhegan portion becomes a line item in the Souhegan budget. The SAU budget funds the consolidated services provided to all three districts, facilitating a cohesive Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade education for all students. The FY13 SAU budget of \$2,066,409 represents an increase of \$36,798 or 1.81% over FY12. This increase is driven primarily by increased health and dental insurance and retirement costs and a 1% salary increase for administrators. SAU administrators received no increase last year.

Ms Ludt moved on to the revenue summary. All expenditures appear in the expense budget and all income, including all off-setting income, is listed in the revenue summary. The amount to be raised by the local education property tax is determined by subtracting the revenue from the budgeted expenditures. The unreserved fund

balance, state and federal aid, local revenue are subtracted from budget expenditures to determine the amount to be appropriated, and from that amount the adequate education grant and the statewide property tax are subtracted. One of the items that is subtracted from the expenditures is the unreserved fund balance. The unreserved fund balance is made up of both money not spent by the time the books are closed and unexpected revenues. The unreserved fund balance of \$502,584 was the end of year surplus from last year's budget to be returned to the taxpayer in this year's budget. This year's amount is significantly higher than in recent years partially because the Board anticipated much high retirement fund contributions that did not come to fruition. The Board tries to fit anticipated adjustments into the budget that result from State and legislative action. Sometimes those actions are not finalized until after the school budget has been established. The Board always budgets with the goal of avoiding deficit spending. Had they known before the books closed that they would have such a large surplus, they might have chosen to purchase some of the much needed items that were sacrificed in order to make sure there was an adequate amount for the retirement contribution. Instead of pre buying items in order to lower next year's budget they returned the surplus to the taxpayers to lower the tax rate. The amount that they propose to return to the taxpayers next year is \$280,000, which is a best guess based on what they think will be received in revenue and what they think will be needed to cover increases in fuel costs, benefits, service contracts, etc. Sometimes predictions turn out to be lower or higher. For example the budget increases for health insurance might turn out to be less, special education can turn out to be more. For the past several years the board has used 1% to 2% of the total budget as the best guess. Normally an average of \$300,000 is returned.

The bond payment that is expiring this year would lead voters to think that the budget would have gone down by that amount of about \$500,000. Because there was close to \$500,000 in new expenses, most of which were fixed or contractual, and simultaneously there was an estimated return of \$500,000 to the taxpayers to lower the tax rate, there is a budget to budget expenditure increase of only \$12, 758. If the Board had been able to use the surplus to pre-buy items that had to be deferred to the proposed FY13 budget, they would have been able to come in with a lower budget or lower bond proposal. Instead they returned the unreserved fund balance to lower the tax rate. So the dilemma becomes whether to lower the budget or lower the tax rate. The important thing to note is that these decisions are always made mindful of the needs of the taxpayer, and with the need to comply with the law. Additional items on the revenue page that are noteworthy are food service, which has been consolidated into one building, reducing costs significantly. These savings are not allowed to offset the tax rate, and must be spent in food service only. Other items that will be decreasing in the future are the federal stimulus funds and building aid.

Adequacy aid grants and statewide property tax revenue have stayed relatively stable for Amherst for several years, but have fluctuated for Mont Vernon. This year, fortunately for Mont Vernon, the amount they will receive will be higher rather than lower. Amherst taxpayers will see an increase of 25 cents per thousand of assessed valuation with this budget. Due to Amherst's recent reassessment the average home value has been lowered to \$325,000 to give an idea of costs. Because Mont Vernon received a slight increase in their adequacy aid grant over last year, Mont Vernon taxpayers will see an increase of 28 cents per thousand, which is significantly lower than last year's estimated increase of 41 cents. Because the Town of Mont Vernon has not done a reassessment, the average home value for estimating purposes is at \$400,000. The tax rate is not a firm number as it is based on assessed property value as of April 1, 2012, a number not available yet. Historically the tax rate has been lower than predicted at the time of the deliberative session.

Fran Harrow explained the default budget. There are two figures in Warrant Article 3. The first is the figure proposed for the FY 13 budget, and the second is the amount of the default budget. The default budget is uses the dollar amount in the approved FY12 operating budget, reduced by one-time expenditures, and reduced and increased by contractual agreements and other obligations previously incurred or mandated by law. There is a difference of \$171,967 between the proposed budget and the default budget. Items that would likely be sacrificed under a default budget are repair and replacement of exterior lights, instructional materials in math and science, technology items to upgrade the infrastructure of the network in the buildings, and technology updates to support development in languages, math and in the Library. The tax impact decrease between the proposed and the default budget would be \$171,967 or 9 cents per thousand of assessed valuation in Amherst, and 10 cents in Mont Vernon.

The Moderator called on the Finance Committee for its opinion. Dan Foley of the Committee said that after reviewing the budget and finding it fiscally responsible, the Committee voted unanimously to support it 7 – 0.

The Moderator asked for comments from the audience. Bill Archibald from Mont Vernon asked about pre buying. He understood that there was \$245,000 of pre-buying in FY 11 for FY12. Is that the reason that the surplus for FY12 went up to over \$500,000? Betty Shankel, the SAU Business Administrator, replied that in the spring after the deliberative session, the State decided to downshift the NH retirement, coming in at 13.95% in April after our budgeting at 9.07%. There was no way to increase the FY 12 budget at that point, so that left a hole in the FY 12 budget of \$344,531. In order not to be in deficit spending in FY 12, there was some pre buying, but not up to the \$344,531 figure. In the end, the budget was not that much short, but administrators didn't know until August that that number would be reduced somewhat. It dropped down from the \$344,000 that was anticipated to \$160,000. Rather than pre-buying more, the School Board decided to return \$500,000 to the taxpayers. Having some special education issues resolved in a positive way also helped the budget, so a freeze was not necessary on buying. Mr. Armstrong asked for clarification that a portion of the pre-buy was returned in the surplus. Ms. Shankel affirmed that this was the case.

Brian Bunner of Mont Vernon remarked that in the budget there is no differentiation between capital expenses and operating expenses – that it is all one budget. The basic operating expenses independent of debt service went up by \$12,000 total, but actually went up by \$470,000. Is that right? Steve Coughlan replied that when he thinks of operating vs capital budgets, he thinks of new capital expenditures in the capital budget and carried costs for old capital expenditures in the operating budget. That's how it has traditionally been done. The State tells us how to budget and how to allocate these expenses and that's how we do it. If we didn't the budget would not be allowed. We do what the State requires in accounting. Mr. Bunner stated that this method doesn't reflect the actual increase since the bond and the operating budget are treated separately. Taxpayers don't understand with this piecemeal approach. Mr. Coughlan replied that in an \$18,000,000 budget there are many ways that you can look at it, but this is the way school districts do it.

David Chen of Amherst asked for data on the student/faculty ratio over the last ten years. He noted that the student body has dropped from around 1,100 students by about 240 students over the last 3 or 4 years. Has the student/faculty ratio dropped correspondingly or has it been maintained at earlier levels? Jon Ingram, Principal of Souhegan, replied that the staffing levels have dropped as the population has dropped. The school tries to adhere to the Coalition of Essential schools recommendations of 80:1. As the student population has decreased, so has the number of faculty. But it is important to consider the issue programmatically. It is not possible to stick to a formula of total students to total teachers, as some programs have a ¼ teacher or ½ teacher assigned. The number of special education students rises and falls also as a part of the total population even though teacher loads are determined differently. But the answer is that over time faculty has decreased as students have decreased. Mr. Chen asked for clarification that it is proportional over the last ten years, and Principal Ingram affirmed this. Mr. Chen then asked if our ratios are essentially the same as in other schools our size? The average of 80:1, the Coalition of Essential Schools recommendation, is probably lower than some other schools. Differences in scheduling also are a factor as block scheduling leads to different teacher loads. In large schools teachers may see 100 students, but the 80:1 figure is a deliberative decision at Souhegan. Steve Coughlan adds that while regular education is 80:1; special education is driven by individual needs, so there are two different things happening. As the student population goes down, the faculty numbers go down to keep the ratio at about 80:1.

Bill Emerson of Lyndeborough Road in Amherst asked about the School Board budget of \$750,000. If the town has to go to a default budget, he challenged the School Board to take the difference out of its budget exclusively, so that there wouldn't be a sacrifice of the math and science curriculum and other and technology areas mentioned. What is this \$750,000 for? Mr. Coughlan replied that the \$700,000 SAU budget is in that account as well as some stipends.

There being no further comments or questions, the Moderator directed the Clerk to place Article 3 on the ballot as originally written. Rick Katzenberg moved to restrict reconsideration and Tom Grella seconded that motion. It passed.

Howard Brown moved Article 4. Steve Coughlan seconded the motion.

Article 4 Shall the Souhegan Cooperative School District vote to raise and appropriate up to **\$65,000** from the year-end undesignated fund balance (surplus) if available on July 1, 2012 to be added to the Expendable Trust Fund known as the School Maintenance Fund previously established in March, 2005?

Majority vote required to pass.

The Souhegan Cooperative School Board unanimously recommends the passage of this article by a vote of 7 to 0.

Mr. Brown spoke to the article, referring to the recommendations in the Gale Report. The School Board has tried to do many of the recommended items out of the operating budget, but this article will help to minimize the tax impact by taking care of unanticipated items outside of the budget. Before it can use this fund the School Board must hold a public hearing.

Lorri Hayes of the Finance Committee, said that since the only way that money can go into this fund is if there is an unreserved fund balance, the Committee wholeheartedly supports this article 7 – 0.

Brian Bunner of Mont Vernon asked for clarification that this \$65,000 would come out of the proposed \$280,000 unreserved fund balance that is shown on the budget sheet. Mr. Brown said that this was the case.

There being no further comments or questions, the Moderator directed the Clerk to place Article 4 on the ballot as originally written. Carol Holden moved to restrict reconsideration and Porter Dodge seconded that motion. It passed.

The Moderator called on Pim Grondstra of the School Board to move Article 5. Steve Coughlan seconded the motion.

Article 5 Shall the Souhegan Cooperative School District vote to authorize the school board to accept a private expendable trust fund under the provisions of RSA 198:20-c, VI for the for the purpose of building, maintaining, improving, and renovating athletic fields, athletic facilities, and athletic infrastructure of the Souhegan Cooperative School District and to support athletic programs in the Souhegan Cooperative School District?

The Souhegan Cooperative School Board unanimously recommends the passage of this article by a vote of 7 to 0.

Mr. Grondstra spoke to the motion. This is a private expendable trust fund to cover the costs of a new track, a multifunctional turf field as well as a handicapped accessible grandstand as well as other items. The fund will not cover items such as coaching stipends or uniforms. This article will benefit the Souhegan community, but will also benefit the citizens of Amherst and Mont Vernon, as well as various recreational and private programs. Any and all donations are tax deductible, and only private donations will be accepted. No public taxpayer monies can be added to this fund. Therefore there is no cost to the taxpayer to establish this trust. It is not a 501 (c) 3 foundation which has strict IRS rules and requires a separate board to run it, but rather it is a trust fund that will be administered by the School Board for the intended purposes only.

Tom Silvia of the Finance Committee said that the Committee voted 3-4 in favor of supporting the article with two abstentions and two absent. Two people abstained because they wanted further information. Moderator Dokmo asked if the committee would like to revote now that they have more information.

Eileen Nabor of Mont Vernon asked for a definition of the term athletic infrastructure. Mr. Grondstra said that it is what is required to sustain core athletic facilities, such as new restrooms, press box, concession stand, etc. Mrs. Nabor then asked who the agents of this trust would be. He replied that the School Board are the agents. Mrs. Nabor questioned if this was in compliance with RSA 198:20. Attorney Graham replied that this is up to the donors. Typically it is a school board. He explained that this is not a trust of public money, but of private money, so the rules are a little different. This is a way to accumulate donations.

Kathleen Holman of Amherst asked if this trust money would be restricted for improvement to property owned by the school district or town. Mr. Grondstra replied that it would be on school property only. It would not be used on leased private property.

Brian Bunner of Mont Vernon asked if this fund is being established as a recommendation of the Gale Report. Mr. Grondstra said that that was the case. Mr. Bunner then asked if the Gale Report was available to the public. Several people noted that it has been available for some time on the SAU 39 website.

There being no further comments or questions, the Moderator directed the Clerk to place Article 5 on the ballot as originally written. Bruce Bowler moved to restrict reconsideration and Vicki Leknes seconded that motion. It passed.

Article 6 To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

The Moderator recognized Christine Janson who, with the School Board, honored Jeanne Ludt for her twelve years of service on the Board with a gift of a Marilyn Stillman painting of Souhegan on a barrel stave. Governor Lynch sent a citation in her honor which was read. Jon Ingram presented a gift on behalf of the high school. Jeanne thanked the board and administration and spoke to the experience of her long service.

Moderator Dokmo thanked the Finance Committee particularly for its valuable work. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy T. Baker", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nancy T. Baker
Souhegan Cooperative School District Clerk