

SAU #39 Public Hearing & Board Meeting

Thursday, December 20, 2018

Meeting Minutes- Approved 01 24 19

Administrative Team: Adam Steel- Superintendent, Christine Landwehrle- Assistant Superintendent, Bruce Chakrin- Director of Technology, Meg Beauchamp- Director of Student Services and Porter Dodge- Director of Operations.

Amherst School Board: Galen Tremblay- Chair, Elizabeth Kuzsma- Vice Chair, John Glover- Secretary, Terri Behm and Robert Hinz

Souhegan Cooperative School Board: Jim Manning- Chair, Howard Brown, Amy Facey, Steve Coughlan

Mont Vernon School Board: Thomas Driscoll-Chair, Stephen O'Keefe and Peter Eckhoff.

Minute Taker: Danae Marotta

Public: Mike Campo, CPA – Director, Plodzik and Sanderson, Concord NH, and community members.

I. Call to Order

Chair Ms. Amy Facey called the meeting to order at 6:00PM

II. Public Hearing-FY 2020 SAU #39 Budget

Mr. Steve Coughlan motioned to open the Public Hearing. Mr. Stephen O'Keefe seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.

Superintendent, Mr. Adam Steel, discussed they will be discussing the FY 2020 Budget. He then noted that the Budget Committee met on 11/27/18 and made two recommended changes. First, to increase the Legal Budget from \$15,000 to \$20,000 (based on expenditure history) and second, change how the SNS Director cost is charged to districts.

The Final Budget is \$2,338,227 an increase of 3.5%, Health insurance rates and employee changes account for 3.4% of the increase, salaries overall are down \$13K, Legal up \$14K with everything else up a total of \$1K.

The apportionment formula is half based on students in attendance and half based on valuation, in Amherst \$87K and MV \$5K and a decrease Souhegan \$5K.

He then noted that they will hear from public, motion to close the public hearing and then motion to approve the FY 20 SAU #39 budget in the amount of \$2,338,227.

Mr. Glover asked about the SAU contracts in regards to the individual districts.

Mr. Steel discussed that the contracts were negotiated on behalf of the individual districts and adopted at the SAU level. There is debate whether the SAU is a part of those contracts or the

34 individual districts are a part of those contracts. He further discussed that it is significant due to
35 the recent changes in the Default Budget Law.

36 He finalized by noting that it is likely that there are other districts having this same conversation.
37 Mr. Glover added that he read about the changes in the law and it hinges on the redefinition of a
38 contract. He then noted his concerns due to it being an expensive line item. He then asked how
39 do they address the new law within the SAU budget. There is a double legal obligation here.

40 Superintendent Steel noted that in the State of NH there is a non-appropriation clause.

41 Ms. Kuzsma asked about the risk with the bussing.

42 Mr. Steel discussed that what is more likely will be to renegotiate or reduce services. He then
43 explained the rule for transportation in the State of NH.

44 Mr. O'Keefe asked about the BA and the Director of Operations positions.

45 Mr. Steel explained that they did have someone that had a second interview but are waiting to
46 find the right person to fill the skill set of a BA. If not, they will then will have something similar
47 to what they had previously with a Director of Budget and Finance and still have a part-time
48 Director of Operations position. Either way, they will stay within the budgeted amounts.

49 Mr. Glover asked about the apportionment in regards to the default.

50 Mr. Steel replied, yes, it is a legal requirement.

51 Mr. Glover then asked why not the bus contract in the default budget.

52 Mr. Steel replied that the NH State Statute indicates what is in the SAU budget outside of
53 specific voter approval. He then explained what the scenario would be in the SAU #39. Mr.
54 Glover emphasized that the reason why he is asking questions is because he is thinking that the
55 new default law is jeopardizing the good work that they are doing, strategically, agency for
56 students, class size, social/emotional learning etc. He then added that there is ambiguity in the
57 law.

58 Mr. Steel added that there are two things that they can do, first do not use SB2 and lobby the
59 local legislatures to change the law.

60 Mr. O'Keefe asked about the health care incentive.

61 Mr. Steel replied, that the amount of \$1,000 is not competitive.

62 Mr. O'Keefe asked about the laptops.

63 Director of Technology, Mr. Bruce Chakrin, replied that they replace them when they are around
64 5 years old and replace 5 or so every year.

65 Mr. O'Keefe asked how many did they replace last year.

66 Mr. Driscoll asked if they could get a listing of the computers and their ages.

67 Mr. Chakrin replied, yes, he would be happy to do that for them.

68 Ms. Tremblay asked what can they do about the health insurance incentive.

69 Ms. Steel noted that he will ask the employees and as a result save money.

70 Mr., O'Keefe asked about the health insurance plan types.

71 Mr. Steel replied that they have a driver based plan.

72 Mr. Glover asked if this proposed budget the maximum amount that can be put into an SAU
73 budget. He then asked if there is money from the districts, that can be represented in this budget.

74 Mr. Steel replied that he is not sure of the legal, but it is ethical.

75 **Mr. Steve Coughlan motioned to close the Public Hearing. Mr. Jim Manning seconded the**
76 **motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

77 III. FY 20 Budget Final Approval

78 **Mr. Steve Coughlan motioned to adopt the SAU #39 Budget as proposed. Ms. Terri Behm**
79 **seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

80 IV. Public Input

81 No Public Comment

82 V. Individual Board Update

83 Amherst School District, Chair, Ms. Galen Tremblay, introduced new board member Mr. Bob
84 Hinz to fill Mr. Kevin Shea's vacant seat. She then mentioned that they met with the Ways and
85 Means Committee last week and have a fair amount of work to do on their budget.

86 Souhegan Chair, Mr. Jim Manning, discussed that they met this week to vote on the Souhegan
87 budget. They voted to further reduce the budget by \$73,000, with the vote ending 6-1. They
88 came to a good place. He then noted that SHS senior, Ms. Arielle Zlotnick, has received an
89 appointment to the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, New York. They are all very proud of
90 her.

91 Mr. O'Keefe asked what was the main sticking point to the 6-1 vote.

92 Mr. Manning discussed that there was an assessment of the Master Schedule and one of their
93 board members had done an analysis. In their analysis, they wanted to reduce the budget by 5.5.
94 Superintendent Steel's recommendation was to reduce by 2. In the end, they left the meeting
95 reducing 3.

96 Mr. O'Keefe asked when will they see a slow down with decreasing enrollment.

97 Mr. Manning replied 4 to 5 years, and it will be challenging. They will be trying to implement
98 changes, upgrading the facilities and have to get innovative.

99 Mont Vernon, Chair, Mr. Thomas Driscoll added that they spent a lot of time on the budget with
100 an increase with enrollment.

101 The Board thanked Ms. Tremblay, Mr. Manning and Mr. Driscoll.

102 VI. Superintendent's Report

103 Superintendent Steel noted that each of them have cookbook from Director of School Nutrition,
104 Mr. John Lash. These recipes are used throughout the SAU with artwork from the students inside
105 of it. This was his gift to the Board.

106 The Board thanked Mr. Lash.

107 Superintendent Evaluation

108 He then explained that his contract is automatically renewed every November 1st if they take no
109 action. Furthermore, if they do not want him as their Superintendent they have to let him know
110 by November 1st. He sent out a survey, internally, to allow them to give him feedback and he
111 shared those responses with Chair, Ms. Facey. He would like to be as transparent as possible, yet
112 there are some responses that are sensitive to how they do things within the schools. He would
113 want them to think of the timeline going forward.

114 School Start Time

115 He then went through the sequence of events.

116 He then went through the conclusions: research supports a shift to secondary school schedules,
117 changes cannot come at the expense of elementary student schedules, a single bell time is not
118 fiscally possible, and swapping schedules is the best solution.

119 Superintendent Steel then gave his recommendation that the SAU Board, at the next meeting,
120 commit to shift in start/end times effective September 2020. The school year after next.

121 He then discussed the planning guidelines, first Elementary school to start no earlier than 8:00
122 am. AMS/SHS to end as close to 3:30PM as possible, impact to student athletes limited as much
123 as possible, limit impact to SHS/AMS clubs/activities as much as possible, expand before and
124 after care options for parents and keep elementary students in daylight.

125 He then reviewed the timeline starting in January 2019. SAU Board commits to fall, 2020 change
126 in times SAU Board commissions to develop implementation plan by November 1st 2019.
127 January-October 2019, Planning Committee works within planning guidelines to fine tune
128 schedules and logistics, reports to the SAU Board in October or November, 2019. November
129 2019, SAU Board adopts official plan and authorizes any changes necessary.

130 Ms. Kuzsma asked if having a period in the morning for middle and high school students was
131 counterproductive to what they are doing.

132 Superintendent Steel discussed that there is protective time for students to participate in clubs
133 outside of athletics. Additionally, the HS is also looking at alternative schedules in the future as
134 well.

135 Ms. Behm explained that they are still giving them some extra time. They can also have more
136 community support if there is a period in the morning.

137 Mr. Glover asked about the start time research for the different age groups.

138 Mr. Steel replied that for adolescents it is between 8:30-9:00AM.

139 Ms. Landwehrle replied that there is no research for elementary school start times.

140 Mr. Eckhoff asked if there are other school districts, local or around the State, that they can gain
141 guidance from.

142 Mr. Steel replied that many are investigating and some have already changed and shared
143 information with them.

144 Mr. Eckhoff asked about the NHIAA and if they are supportive of the change.

145 Mr. Steel noted that there seems to be movement in this direction.

146 Mr. Glover commented that they not forget that this is good for the students.

147 Mr. Steel added that the feedback from the public has been helpful and informative. He
148 understands that not everyone is going to love it.

149 Ms. Behm mentioned that they have to be sensitive to the families and make this as smooth as
150 possible to the parents.

151 Mr. Brown remarked that they might lose drivers due to the new schedule.

152 Ms. Behm added that Milford is also looking at their schedules. She knows that it is on their
153 agenda as something that they are considering.

154 Strategic Planning Update

155 Mr. Steel then noted that they have visited every single faculty member to let them know where
156 they are as an SAU.

157 Mr. Steel explained that at this point they need help and believes that they should look at hiring
158 help. There is still a need to engage stakeholder groups in future vision for our schools, finalize
159 portrait of a graduate work, develop an implementation plan to operationalize their vision and
160 have a need for an experienced outside consultant to assist.

161 He further explained that they met with two firms, received proposals from both (one withdrew
162 their proposal) and recommended the SAU hire Battelle for Kids at a cost of \$41K.

163 He then reviewed the timeline adding that they would have their first meeting on January 16th.

164 He then noted his recommended action to approve the hiring of Battelle for Kids to perform as a
165 strategic planning consultant to the SAU at an expense of \$41,000.

166 Yes, they do have the money to cover the cost and it is a valuable use of their resources.

167 Mr. Manning added that today he spoke with Mr. Matt McLennan and he really liked what this
168 group did for them. It allowed for the entire school district to get into alignment and
169 wholeheartedly recommended them.

170 Mr. Manning then gave his support in hiring Battelle for Kids as a consultant.

171 Ms. Facey added that she is also in support and they have been working hard at getting this
172 accomplished for a while they are already doing a lot of these things already. One of their first
173 comments was to engage the community.

174 Mr. Hinz asked if there are measurable objectives to look for success in the end. He then asked
175 about travel costs since they are from Ohio.

176 Mr. Steel discussed that they need a plan for what they are actually going to do. Second, there is
177 another SAU in the State that is using them and they are working around their schedule to save
178 money.

179 Ms. Facey added that they had a previous strategic plan that did not give them what they needed.

180 Mr. Hinz asked if there are payments tied to measurable objectives.

181 Mr. Steel noted that the company will receive payment afterwards.

182 Mr. Driscoll asked if they can speak to some of the results of where they want to go.

183 Mr. Manning responded that he has seen three different strategic plans from three different
184 school districts and they are all different. They are going to get out of it what they put into it.
185 Next, they tried to do stuff on their own. The biggest thing was that they needed someone to do
186 the community engagement piece. They do not have that. The one question mark he has with this
187 group is that a strategic plan is not a strategy. 1. They want outcomes, 2. They want a strategy,
188 competitive advantage. Having talked to this board member they will understand that and be able
189 to accommodate that.

190 Mr. Driscoll asked what other school district is also using them.

191 Mr. Manning replied, Milford.

192 Mr. Glover asked about the raw data that they will be giving them.

193 Superintendent Steel replied that it will be a lot from the past few years.

194 Mr. Glover asked if they will be getting regular updates.

195 Ms. Facey replied that they will be coming to their Board Meetings and will be very engaged.
196 Ms. Behm added that they did a successful job at their church and is in support of a vetted group
197 that moves them forward.

198 Mr. Manning added that one of the biggest reasons why they need this is getting out to the
199 community, it is critical.

200 Mr. O'Keefe asked when did they realize outside help.

201 Mr. Manning replied, 4 years ago.

202 Ms. Facey discussed that they were in a period of transition. She added that she was approached
203 by a group and it has been an ongoing discussion of the 4 Chairs. The previous group decided to
204 back out and now they are discussing one group.

205 Mr. Glover asked if it was a fixed fee or hours based.

206 Mr. Steel replied, it is fixed fee.

207 Mr. Driscoll asked are they committed to the full \$41K.

208 Mr. Steel replied that they haven't fully negotiated the contract but he always puts incremental
209 opportunities to back out.

210 Mr. Manning remarked if they put it out for bids it will be considerably higher. He then
211 discussed that they cannot do what they want to do without outside help.

212 Mr. Glover asked what can they expect from the community, what is their process.

213 Superintendent Steel noted that it will be largely what they design.

214 Mr. Manning discussed that they have declared where they want to go with personalized
215 learning. They are getting a good value with all that they are asking for.

216 **Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma motioned to approve the hiring of Battelle for Kids to perform as a**
217 **strategic planning consultant to the SAU at an expense of \$41,000. Mr. John Glover**
218 **seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

219 Mr. Glover asked Superintendent Steel for his slide deck.

220 Superintendent Steel replied, yes.

221 Ms. Facey asked Mr. Steel to briefly review where they are with Consolidation.

222 Consolidation

223 Mr. Steel noted that there was a meeting with counsel regarding the concept of the ASD part of
224 the expanded Coop.

225 The key question was surrounding 5 graders, with the MV 5th graders staying at the MVVS. The
 226 answer is probably, yes. The issue hinges on if the State Board of Education would decide if it
 227 was appropriate or not.

228 Mr. Glover asked about a timeline.

229 Mr. Steel replied it would not happen this March, most likely, March of 2020. The
 230 Board thanked Superintendent Steel.

231 VII. Consent Agenda

232 **Mr. Steve Coughlan motioned to approve the Consent Agenda items 1. Minutes 11 15 2018**
 233 **and 2. November 2018 Treasurer's Report. Ms. Galen Tremblay seconded the motion. The**
 234 **vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

235 VIII. FY'18 Audit Presentation

236 Mr. Mike Campo, CPA Director, Plodzik and Sanderson, Concord NH, first discussed that the
 237 Finance Department has done a fantastic job in providing them with all the information that they
 238 needed to complete this report despite not having a BA.

239 He then reviewed the Fund Balance on page 40 of the Audit Report they started with about
 240 \$82,000 and they ended up with a \$35,618 Fund Balance.

241 He then reviewed Page 1, noting that the SAU has operated very efficiently.

242 He then commended the SAU Finance Department, in particular, Finance Director, Ms. Katie
 243 Hannan.

244 Ms. Behm thanked Mr. Campo for taking the time to commend their staff.

245 Mr. Campo noted that he works with 60 school districts in 30 towns and what the SAU #39 has
 246 is incredible.

247 Mr. Campo explained that the Capital Asset Policy needs some revision, as it fails to define what
 248 a true Capital Asset is. Additionally, with an SAU and a Capital Asset Policy, it needs to be
 249 appropriate for each entity.

250 In general, rotate the policies, review/revise and adopt. Do not go more than 5 years without
 251 going in front of the Board. It is a blanket statement that he tells everyone.

252 **Ms. Galen Tremblay motioned to approve the audit. Ms. Terri Behm seconded the motion.**
 253 **The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

254 IX. SAU Policy Review and Adoption

255 Ms. Tremblay noted that this is the first batch but not adopted at the SAU level.

Mr. Steven O’Keefe motioned to accept the policies AC, ADB, ADC, BDA, BEA, BEC, BEDC, BEDH and BG. Mr. Jim Manning seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.

X. Update on HB 1612

Assistant Superintendent, Ms. Christine Landwehrle, discussed that HB 1612 is about data and security in our schools. The big thing it calls for is a data and security plan to be adopted by the Board by June 30th 2019. She has been working closely with Director of Technology, Mr. Bruce Chakrin and Mr. Greg Rodriguez, Network Administrator, looking at all their computers, servers and software. It is a big undertaking but the Tech Department has been working early on. They are working on one security and data plan to go to the SAU Board in May and then the individual boards in June.

Ms. Tremblay added that there was a new policy around the same thing it will need to be adopted at the SAU and then each district level board.

Mr. Glover asked if they can put it on the agenda for each month so they can see it along the way.

Mr. Coughlan asked about cost.

Ms. Landwehrle replied that they use so much different software, and there are companies that help you to compile information. They will be looking to subscribe to that type of service.

Mr. Glover noted that they will probably have to have discussions in non-public session. Ms. Landwehrle replied that they are in good shape and a lot of work had been planned and is underway.

The Board thanked Ms. Landwehrle.

XI. Special Services Bus Contract

Superintendent Steel discussed that the contract in front of you replaces the contract that is in place. It is a new 5-year contract and by far the most cost effective and it is in the best interest of the district. It has been reviewed by counsel, which the old one wasn’t.

Mr. Glover asked about it being on a special warrant article.

Mr. Steel replied, no. if the voters voted it down they would have to abide by the No Means No Law.

Ms. Behm remarked that she is glad that this is vetted.

Mr. Steel noted that Director of Operations, Mr. Porter Dodge and Director of Student Services, Ms. Meg Beauchamp has done an exceptional job with extensive hours in getting this contract together.

289 Mr. O'Keefe thanked them both. He then asked about the survivability of this company and the
 290 protections for the SAU.

291 Mr. Steel explained that you never get 100% with any company and they have expanded. Yes,
 292 they are a small business, yet, this is an acceptable risk.

293 Mr. Hinz asked about the fuel cost of \$4.00 per gallon.

294 Mr. Dodge remarked that they are only responsible for costs above \$4.00 per gallon.

295 Mr. Steel noted that they pay for gas.

296 Mr. Brown asked about #10, in regards to school cancellations.

297 Discussion ensued.

298 **Ms. Galen Tremblay motioned to approve the Caring Hands Contract based on the**
 299 **conversation that they had at the SAU #39 Board meeting, pending clarification on school**
 300 **cancellation before 5 am in that they do not pay for that day. Mr. Howard Brown**
 301 **seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

302 XII. Non-Public Session

303 **Ms. Galen Tremblay motioned to enter into Non-Public Session 91-A:3 (a), (b), (c) at**
 304 **8:04PM. Ms. Elizabeth Kuzsma seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion**
 305 **passed.**

306 Ms. Facey called a Roll call: Tremblay- Yes, Kuzsma- Yes, Glover-Yes, Behm-Yes,
 307 HinzYes, Manning- Yes, Brown-Yes, Facey-Yes, Coughlan-Yes, Driscoll- Yes, O'Keefe-Yes
 308 and
 309 Eckhoff-Yes

310 **Motion made to exit Non-Public session at 8:20 PM by Steve Coughlin and seconded by**
 311 **Stephen O'Keefe. Motion Passed.**

312 **Returned to Public Session at 8:20 PM and Amy Facey adjourned the meeting at 8:20PM.**
 313 **No vote taken.**

314 XIII. **Meeting Adjourned at 8:20PM**