

1 Souhegan Cooperative Board Meeting

2 Monday, May 11th , 2020

3 Meeting Minutes- Approved 06 02 2020

4 Attendees:

5 Administrative Team: Michele Croteau- SAU #39 Business Administrator

6 Souhegan Cooperative School Board: Pim Grondstra- Chair, Amy Facey- Vice Chair, Stephanie
7 Grund- Secretary, Steve Coughlan, Laura Taylor, George Torres and David Chen.

8 Board Minutes: Danae A. Marotta

9 Public: Delaney Facques- SHS Community Council Liaison

10 I. Call to Order

11 **Chair of the Souhegan Cooperative School Board Chair, Mr. Pim Grondstra, called the**
12 **meeting to order at 9:13PM**

13 II. Opening Items

14 Mr. Grondstra noted that they have already covered the Superintendent's Report during the SAU
15 meeting.

16 III. Public Comment I of II

17 No Public Comment

18 IV. Committee Updates

19 Mr. Chen asked if SAU #39 Business Administrator, Ms. Michele Croteau, was standing in for
20 Superintendent, Mr. Adam Steel.

21 Mr. Grondstra commented that Ms. Croteau is Superintendent Steel's designee. He noted that it
22 was allowed via the policy, and he has recently reviewed the policy.

23 Mr. Chen asked if they have a meeting date with Athletic Director, Mr. Dan Wyborney.

24 Mr. Grondstra replied that he has not heard back from him.

25 Ms. Facey noted that she has an update on the Communications Committee. Ms. Cliff Ann
26 Wales contacted her and wanted to discuss some communication with their new digital
27 magazine. She is looking for senior pictures and to create a college and list them. They are
28 looking at ways that they can honor the students through the new digital platform. Additionally,
29 they are thinking about possibly highlighting Community Council proposals.

30 Ms. Facey suggested they have something in there with important events, showing how the
31 buildings are being utilized by the community.

32 The Board thanked Ms. Facey.

33 Mr. Chen questioned if they were using the Senior pictures.

34 Ms. Facey replied that they cannot just take the Senior pictures. They are going through
35 Advisories and asking the students for pictures. It is completely voluntary.

36 Ms. Taylor commented that in Policy BDD it states that you hold all meetings with the
37 Superintendent.

38 Mr. Grondstra remarked that they had a designee in the past and it has never been an issue
39 before. He added that he is sorry that some of the board feels that way.

40 V. Community Council Update

41 Ms. Delaney Facques, SHS Community Council Liaison, added that they are discussing the new
42 transcript and the new schedule proposal. Hopefully they will be able to vote on both of them on
43 Wednesday.

44 Mr. Grondstra commented that they are looking forward to the update.

45 Mr. Grondstra added that there are multiple topics that are on the agenda and they scheduled an
46 additional meeting on Tuesday, May 19th.

47 Ms. Taylor noted that the Policy Committee is being restructured and there was supposed to be
48 an update at the SAU Board. They are planning on pushing 15 policies through all at once and
49 everyone should be forewarned.

50 Mr. Coughlan explained that the idea was to go through a Policy Season. They would save up
51 policies that need to be considered from June to October. It is not the intention to do 100 at a
52 time but it gives them time to think about them all together. That was discussed at the SAU
53 board over a year ago and they are going to try it out.

54 Mr. Grondstra added that they will see how successful it is.

55 Mr. Coughlan replied, yes.

56 Mr. Chen asked if it makes sense to do them all in one meeting, it can be long.

57 Mr. Coughlan commented that it is possible that it does not work as envisioned.

58 Mr. Chen suggested that they meet on a second day in October to review the policies.

59 Mr. Coughlan replied that is for Chairman Grondstra to make that decision.

60 Ms. Taylor remarked that there are 22 policies on the list so far. She asked if they can put it on
61 the Trello so that the board members know what is coming.

62 Mr. Grondstra remarked that all the policies that they are going to review are on the Trello for
63 the month.

64 Ms. Taylor questioned if the Policy Committee wanted the 22 policies to go through all at once.

65 Mr. Coughlan replied that they have not talked about the details, but it is to be done in this
66 season.

67 Ms. Taylor asked if they can put it on Trello, from what Ms. Abby Wallace, Superintendent
68 Steel's Executive Assistant, shared.

69 Mr. Grondstra clarified that the policies are brought forward as a first reading.

70 Mr. Coughlan noted that aside from the process and they there is a first reading and then a gap
71 and a second reading and a vote.

72 Mr. Grondstra remarked that her prefers written things and they should put the process in the
73 Trello so that people can see it and understand it.

74 Mr. Coughlan noted that there are graphics and he is sure that they can get that out to everyone.

75 VI. Consent Agenda

76 **Mr. Chen motioned to approve the Consent Agenda item 1. March 2020 Treasurer's**
77 **Report. Ms. Grund seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

78 **Mr. Grondstra called a roll call: Grondstra-Yes, Facey-Yes, Grund-Yes, Coughlan- Yes,**
79 **Torres-Yes, Chen- Yes and Taylor- Yes.**

80 VII. First Reading Policies- DAF, EHAB, and IJL/KEC

81 Mr. Coughlan added that it was reviewed by the SAU Board. This is a first reading and they have
82 the opportunity to ask questions, it is the process to get them approved at the next meeting.

83 He explained that DAF- Administration of Federal Grants was a required policy. EHAB- Data
84 Governance and Security is a required policy and they should have adopted it long ago.
85 IJL/KEC-Learning Resources Selection and Reconsideration is the existing policy and they are
86 unifying under the Souhegan policy. It would not change any operation from a Souhegan
87 standpoint.

88 Mr. Torres inquired if these are new policies.

89 Mr. Coughlan replied that IJL/KEC is an amendment, DAF and EHAB is new.

90 Mr. Torres questioned if these are for guidance or for these controls actually tested.

91 Ms. Croteau replied that they are just playing catch up. There were changes to the federal
92 regulations that condensed several circulars that governed the management of those federal
93 funds. They were always compliant, but their policy did not state that.

94 Mr. Torres inquired if they are required to take the lowest bid.

95 Ms. Croteau replied that there are procurement guidelines. You are not always required to
96 purchase via a sealed bid. She then explained the process. Architects are not required to go out to
97 bid.

98 Ms. Grund asked if they should define "agents" on letter "D", Policy EHAB.

99 Mr. Coughlan added that if they were outsourcing IT, then they would be their agents.

100 Mr. Chen inquired where EHAB originated.

- 101 Mr. Coughlan replied that the legislature and the NHSBA did not write this.
- 102 Mr. Chen suggested that they have a brief synopsis for the policies.
- 103 Mr. Coughlan noted that he will bring that up to the Policy Committee having an executive
104 summary brief.
- 105 Mr. Chen added if they can include the amendments that would be helpful.
- 106 Ms. Taylor remarked that EHAB had the date of June 30th, 2019. She questioned if it was an
107 outdated policy.
- 108 Ms. Facey added that the plan needed to be completed by that date, June 30th, 2019.
- 109 Mr. Grondstra asked for other questions or comments.
- 110 There were no other questions or comments and Mr. Grondstra noted that they will move those
111 policies on to the second reading.
- 112 Ms. Croteau clarified that EHAB was in response to HB 1416- Data Management. That was the
113 source of the policy.
- 114 VIII. Open Action Items- Discussion
- 115 Ms. Grund added that they have the following:
- 116 1. Principal Selection Process
 - 117 2. School Start Time
 - 118 3. Five Year Budget
 - 119 4. Capital Maintenance Priority List
 - 120 5. Transcripts/ Grading and Reporting
 - 121 6. Bus Contracts
- 122 Mr. Grondstra noted that it is on Wednesday's agenda and should be a fairly quick discussion.
123 They just want to make sure that they address all concerns.
- 124 Ms. Croteau noted that they have issued a credit that is spread over the months of May and June.
125 The credit addresses a fuel credit and a staffing credit as well. They did keep their drivers on
126 staff for some time and then furloughed them. With Caring Hands, she did reach out to them as
127 well and they had conversations about a credit. They did pay through April and they had
128 discussed on holding on May and June.
- 129 Mr. Grondstra requested more of an update at the June meeting.
- 130 Ms. Grund added that 7. Vocational Education Process is the last one on the list.
- 131 Mr. Grondstra noted that they will discuss it on Wednesday.
- 132 Mr. Chen noted that he is on that committee at the State level. He commented that he is not sure
133 if the students are getting much out of it since they are not going to the facility.
- 134 Mr. Grondstra added that they can discuss that on Wednesday.

135 Ms. Taylor asked about Empower and the time it is taking each week. It is her understanding that
136 there is a process for replacing Empower and they are about 18 months away from that. She does
137 not know if it is reasonable.

138 Mr. Grondstra added that he thought it would have been addressed at the SAU meeting. They can
139 certainly bring it up on Wednesday with Superintendent Steel.

140 Mr. Chen noted that he would like to get CBE back on the agenda again. He added that he is
141 getting a lot of negative feedback from parents. He does not know if they have consensus on the
142 Board.

143 Mr. Grondstra added that he will bring it up on Wednesday. If they need to go into more depth,
144 then they can have a separate meeting.

145 Mr. Chen remarked that he is getting lost on what they are calling Dual Enrollment and Running
146 Start it. He is concerned why they only have \$291k in the UFB. He is curious how come they
147 don't have more.

148 Ms. Croteau replied that she would be happy to provide more information. First, they have had a
149 significant number of retirements. She can certainly go through and provide an update.

150 Mr. Chen asked if she can look at that again.

151 Mr. Coughlan noted that with the power failure they had expenses as well.

152 Mr. Grondstra requested Ms. Croteau provide an update and post it to Trello.

153 Mr. Chen asked about best in class programs and what they can do about improvements to the
154 school. He proposed that they get rid of snow days.

155 Mr. Grondstra remarked that in Mont Vernon they lose power easily.

156 Ms. Facey noted that she is interested in how they are going to evaluate the overall efficacy with
157 the online learning system, academically, work study practices, social emotional, and the
158 expectations of teachers and staff. They may end up doing this again so what can they learn and
159 how can they improve their practices going forward.

160 Mr. Grondstra added that VLACS might be able to impart some wisdom and help guide them.

161 Ms. Grund added that they need to add 8. What do classes look like in the building in the fall.
162 What costs are involved etc.

163 Mr. Grondstra commented that he agrees.

164 Ms. Taylor mentioned that they should pursue data from parents and students.

165 Mr. Grondstra noted that he agrees.

166 Ms. Croteau asked for clarification on what type of feedback she is looking for.

167 Ms. Taylor replied, the overall experience with remote learning. She would like to see the raw
168 data rather than a pie chart.

169 Mr. Chen asked if they have a survey that they can send out.

170 IX. Project priority list

171 Mr. Grondstra added that everyone should have had a chance to review the project priority list.

172 Mr. Chen inquired what is a safe margin not to spend.

173 Discussion ensued.

174 Ms. Croteau shared her screen showing the SHS End of Year Projects 2020 document.

175 She explained that the Operating Budget has a period of time and it dictates your funding from
176 July 1st to June 30th. The school district cannot carry over the money from one year to the next
177 unless it is approved by the voters or if you are working on any projects. They have to have a
178 valid agreement with a vendor and last year when they were talking about shovel ready projects
179 that what was meant by that. It is not enough to say that they want to hold the money, she has to
180 have a vendor, valid quote and a contract in place.

181 Mr. Grondstra asked if any of that exists for any of these projects.

182 Ms. Croteau replied, very loosely formed. The one that is furthest down the road is the classroom
183 renovation. That is the one that Superintendent Steel would advocate for most strongly.

184 Mr. Grondstra questioned how confident is she with the amount of \$291k.

185 Ms. Croteau replied that they can also inquire if the project can be staggered or staged.

186 Mr. Chen mentioned that he would rather leave some funds still left on the table. He asked for a
187 closer UFB estimate.

188 Ms. Facey remarked that they do have a Capital Maintenance Fund and have about \$250k in that
189 that fund.

190 Ms. Croteau replied that they could access that for the capital project.

191 Mr. Chen noted that they do not want to go to a Public Hearing.

192 Ms. Facey added that if they think that they are close to have the funding then they need to talk
193 about it seriously.

194 Ms. Taylor asked about the Science room and doubling them in size.

195 Ms. Facey added that they are having a meeting on the 21st and they will discuss it then.

196 Ms. Croteau displayed her screen with the most recent draft from Lavallee Brensinger.

197 Discussion ensued.

198 Ms. Facey added that maybe for Wednesday's meeting (5/19) they can have Superintendent Steel
199 give them an update from Lavallee Brensinger.

200 Mr. Torres asked if some of the projects would be covered in Souhegan 2.0.

201 Mr. Chen noted that he remembered that Mr. Steel had mentioned that the classrooms are a part
202 of 2.0.

203 Discussion ensued.

204 Ms. Facey added that these are stand alone.

205 Ms. Grund noted that they need to go through the priority of the other items.

206 Mr. Coughlan commented that he would like to give the money back to the taxpayers. They can
207 have a direct impact on their tax bills, starting in December. He wants to do the projects, but it is
208 not the right time.

209 Mr. Chen disagreed with him and this may be the only money they get to spend. It is expedient
210 now and some of these projects can be done over the summer. He added that the CCTV in the
211 Annex Stairwell can be done. He questioned who made the priority list.

212 Ms. Croteau added that Mr. John Robichaud had made the list and she had reviewed it. She
213 added that she can review it again but for the most part she is comfortable with it.

214 Ms. Taylor mentioned that if #2 resolves the HVAC she supports it. It is part of the educational
215 value.

216 Ms. Facey remarked that she has heard that repeatedly and it is a learning environment issue.

217 Ms. Grund mentioned that the distraction of the HVAC system may make sense to the taxpayers.
218 They would understand that it impacts all of the students.

219 Mr. Grondstra asked Ms. Croteau when they have to give their decisions.

220 Ms. Croteau noted the sooner the better with work orders. The total building management
221 upgrades is the total of the three lines.

222 Mr. Chen replied, \$219k.

223 Ms. Croteau replied, yes. She added that they can use some projects from the UFB and some
224 projects using funds from the Capital Reserve Fund.

225 Ms. Facey noted that these are projects that were not in the budget and therefore did not have
226 taxpayer approval. She is comfortable with this process in that they are discussing them at public
227 board meetings. She would not be comfortable unless it is discussed at a subsequent board
228 meeting.

229 Ms. Taylor asked for clarification on 2A.

230 Ms. Croteau added that it is not the entire project and the majority of the issues would be
231 resolved with the front-end piece. She would have to verify to be sure.

232 Mr. Coughlan explained how last year they went to leveling the tax rate.

233 Ms. Facey mentioned that it is important to have an emergency fund.

234 Mr. Grondstra added that they should take a closer look and decide at the June meeting. He
235 would like to give the public time to weigh it.

236 Ms. Facey remarked that going forward she would like to have this information a month earlier.

237 Mr. Grondstra commented that they need to make sure that it happens.

238 Ms. Croteau added that the further away they are from the end of the year the less accurate it can
239 be, sort of like a catch twenty-two.

240 Mr. Chen asked if this was from a potential bid.

241 Ms. Croteau replied that it was from a vendor.

242 Mr. Chen added that they are close to a contract. He then suggested that they do the HVAC in
243 the Annex, locker rooms and CCTV.

244 Mr. Grondstra added that everyone should take a close look and be ready to decide at the June
245 meeting.

246 Ms. Croteau added that the next board meeting would be the latest. She asked for the board to
247 send her the questions so that she can get those answered.

248 X. PPC Policies

249 Mr. Grondstra added that these are the policies that were approved with the warrant article. The
250 voters did approve it and they are essentially in place.

251 Mr. Coughlan replied, correct. He added that GCBA had a small scribe's error.

252 **Ms. Facey motioned to approve the policies GCBA, GCM and GCBDA. Mr. Coughlan**
253 **seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed. (7-0)**

254 **Mr. Grondstra called a roll call: Grondstra-Yes, Facey-Yes, Grund-Yes, Coughlan- Yes,**
255 **Torres-Yes, Chen- Yes and Taylor- Yes.**

256 XI. Public Comment II of II

257 None

258 XII. Meeting Adjourned

259 **Ms. Facey motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:48PM. Mr. Chen seconded the motion.**
260 **The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

261 **Mr. Grondstra called a roll call: Grondstra-Yes, Facey-Yes, Grund-Yes, Coughlan- Yes,**
262 **Torres-Yes, Chen- Yes and Taylor- Yes.**

263