

Souhegan Cooperative School Board

Monday, January 8th, 2018

Meeting Minutes

Administrative Team: Superintendent of Schools- Peter Warburton, Adam Steel- Business Administrator, and Rob Scully- Principal SHS.

Souhegan Cooperative School Board- Chair- Howard Brown, Pim Grondstra, David Chen, Steve Coughlan, Amy Facey, Jim Manning and Dwayne Purvis (via phone).

Minute Taker: Danae Marotta

I. CALL TO ORDER – Chair Howard Brown

Chair Mr. Howard Brown called the meeting to order at 6:14 PM.

II. WORKSESSION

Business Administrator, Mr. Adam Steel, noted that the first order of business is the default budget. He discussed that they must disclose the calculation, they can revise their position up until the moment ballots are printed. He added that it builds trust with the community.

Mr. Brown asked about the increases and decreases, on the first page, and looking for clarification.

Mr. Steel noted that it is the increased coaching stipend. He added that it should not be there.

Mr. Coughlan added that they did the stipend in the last agreement and it is not a contractual agreement, they do not count.

Mr. Brown asked if it was only sports.

Mr. Chen remarked that he does not get why it is not in the default budget. He added that is not in the current year. Things that are not included, it is not obligated by law, debt service, contracts, one-time charges, he doesn't see why it should be a part of the default.

Mr. Steel added that he agrees.

Mr. Brown then asked about "Student Support Services".

Mr. Steel asked if they taking the coaching stipends out.

The Board agreed, yes.

Mr. Chen added that it is what the statute states.

Mr. Manning added that with the ASD Board they followed the statutes to the letter of the law. He noted that they would have removed it as well.

Mr. Steel in the spreadsheet there is every single acct number then the FY 18 budget, which is the starting point then the proposed budget then which one they are going to use as the default.

Mr. Purvis asked about line #101, new Athletic Director salary.

Mr. Steel discussed that with Mr. Dick Miller's salary, it lags a year behind budget wise.

- 34 Mr. Purvis asked when does the PPC contract apply.
- 35 Mr. Coughlan added that Mr. Dick Miller's salary is not included in the negotiations.
- 36 Mr. Purvis added that they know that they are going to hire a new Athletic Director.
- 37 Mr. Steel added that he doesn't know if the Board accepted his retirement yet.
- 38 He added that the Social Studies teaching position is also out of the default as well.
- 39 Mr. Purvis when they look at line #13, that increase, he is assuming are the contractual obligations.
- 40 Mr. Steel discussed that it makes up of three things, 1. The amount of the PPC warrant article, from last
41 year that was passed, that was added to this budget line, 2. The STEP and 3. changes in salary due to
42 teacher turnover. He added that you can look further in the "personnel default" page to look line by line.
- 43 Mr. Purvis then asked about summer school teachers.
- 44 Mr. Steel noted that the function numbers were different and it can be confusing. He noted that
45 1430 is the correct function number for summer school. He added that they moved it from
46 "regular education".
- 47 Mr. Purvis added that he thought summer school paid for itself.
- 48 Mr. Coughlan replied it does but they have to budget the expense here and revenue someplace
49 else.
- 50 Mr. Purvis asked about the special education costs rising and where is the Board and community
51 going to draw the line.
- 52 He then noted that they had discussed strict interpretation.
- 53 Mr. Peter Warburton added that it is contractually obligating, under 504 plus ESL.
- 54 Mr. Manning added that a student can get a 504 their senior year of high school.
- 55 Mr. Chen noted that he knows that they are obligated but what if a student drops out.
- 56 Mr. Steel remarked that the moment ballots are printed in early March, that is the default budget.
57 He added that it will then go to surplus the following year, as long as the Board doesn't use it for
58 something else. He then advised against that.
- 59 Mr. Coughlan noted that the board makes the decision in both cases. He added that it also has to
60 with your Director of Student Services.
- 61 Mr. Purvis added that the sky is not the limit.
- 62 Mr. Manning noted that the Board can weigh in but it is not their role and decision. He added
63 that they guide the super, that is the only person.
- 64 Mr. Coughlan added his support for Ms. Meg Beauchamp, Director of Student Services.
- 65 Mr. Purvis noted that he appreciates his opinion.

66 Mr. Chen added that he has a question about line #9 about furniture and if it was taken out of the
67 budget. He added that the increase is \$5,800. He then asked why is it in the proposed budget at
68 all.

69 Mr. Steel noted that he understands that it can be confusing and there should be four different
70 columns. He then explained the contractual obligation line. He added that he kept the State
71 system in terms of the columns but added a lot more detail. He then gave line #392 as an
72 example.

73 He then gave an example of a one-time expense.

74 Mr. Manning noted that the line 392# is that there are other additional items and are not a one-
75 time expenditure.

76 Mr. Chen asked about the 1:1 initiative.

77 Mr. Coughlan noted that accounting is confusing the Board's intent.

78 Mr. Chen added that he is not looking to make costs repetitive.

79 Mr. Steel added that they spend that much every year for tech infrastructure.

80 Mr. Chen noted that it seems illogical in how they are doing it.

81 Mr. Steel replied, that is the statute. He discussed that he is looking for a clear cut way to do the
82 default. The best method is to do it the same way year after year.

83 Mr. Brown noted that it is important for all the districts to do their default the same way.

84 Mr. Manning asked if there was a scenario where it opens them up to liability.

85 Mr. Steel then gave the Board an example about Pelham, NH. He added that it is unlikely that
86 they could be taken to court for a low default budget, but possible.

87 He added that the best course of action is to get the budget passed.

88 Mr. Chen remarked that there are 6 different ways that districts do their default budget
89 calculations.

90 Mr. Purvis asked about lines #51 and #52.

91 Mr. Steel noted that line #51 is for a laser engraver cutter. He added that is a one-time expense.
92 He added that he went through this line by line.

93 Mr. Chen added that when it says "new" implies a one-time expense.

94 Discussion ensued over new technology.

95 Ms. Facey asked if it was a one-time expenditure, or a recurring expenditure, she noted that it
96 can go either way.

97 Mr. Purvis asked about line #88.

- 98 Mr. Steel noted that #88, in regards to Special Education, it is a legal obligation.
- 99 Mr. Chen commented that if a student needs a reading machine they do not get one every year.
- 100 Mr. Steel noted that it will go up and down with what is proposed. He added that sometimes it
101 goes up and down. He added that they do not always take the higher number.
- 102 Mr. Chen commented on the software for this, as a \$10, difference. He then asked if it is a new
103 license.
- 104 Mr. Steel explained that it is all a legal obligation.
- 105 Mr. Purvis asked about line #121, "Student Body Activity Stipends".
- 106 Mr. Steel noted that it is close to what they spent this year. He added that it is probably close to
107 the situation with coaching stipends.
- 108 He then read the activities that it includes. He noted that he will check what was spent in that
109 account. He added that they are budgeting for \$52,000. They spent \$46,000 the past three years.
- 110 Mr. Coughlan added that there is nothing contractual about this.
- 111 Superintendent Warburton asked Mr. Coughlan if they did they do anything with that line in PPC
112 last year.
- 113 Mr. Coughlan replied, no.
- 114 Mr. Purvis asked about line #214, "Career Development Academy".
- 115 Mr. Steel noted that it was for a person, TLC Coaches.
- 116 Mr. Chen commented that the description software is confusing, especially if it is recurring.
- 117 Mr. Steel replied, he can make that distinction if the Board prefers.
- 118 Mr. Chen asked if the boilers have a new maintenance contract.
- 119 Mr. Steel noted that oil is speculative.
- 120 Mr. Purvis asked about line #319. He noted that they seem to be going with the proposed.
- 121 Mr. Steel noted that it is a contractual obligation.
- 122 Mr. Purvis asked for clarification on that one, he thought that they had a deal with the ASD.
- 123 Mr. Steel remarked that is the 1/3 of the maintenance reorganization. He explained that 3
124 maintenance people will be hired by the ASD and will provide ASD and SCSD with services. He
125 added that SCCD will pay 1/3rd of the cost of those three people.
- 126 Mr. Steel then explained that it is a contractual obligation, and that they will be saving money.
127 He added that instead of hiring out they would just have it in-house.
- 128 Mr. Purvis then asked about savings in terms of maintenance.

- 129 Mr. Chen asked about identified employees, he added that they had an issue with retirement
130 benefits.
- 131 Mr. Coughlan noted that it does not apply in this case.
- 132 Mr. Chen asked are there other areas where they can do this.
- 133 Mr. Steel noted that the default budget is now down about \$49,000 from when they started.
- 134 Mr. Purvis asked about line #354 and #360.
- 135 Mr. Steel noted that it was for a \$6,000 golf cart.
- 136 Mr. Chen asked about line #361.
- 137 Mr. Purvis asked about line #366 “Storage Trailers” and #372.
- 138 Mr. Steel added that for all the transportation he used the proposed amount. He noted that they
139 are saving money in transportation somewhere else.
- 140 Mr. Chen asked about small wares.
- 141 Mr. Steel added that they are now down \$69,000 for a default amount of \$17,652,897.
- 142 Mr. Purvis asked about line #319.
- 143 Mr. Purvis asked for the student activity fund.
- 144 **Mr. Steve Coughlan motioned to accept the default budget for FY 19 in the amount of**
145 **\$17,652,897. Ms. Amy Facey seconded the Motion. The vote was unanimous Motion passed.**
- 146 **Mr. Brown called a Roll Call: Brown-Yes, Manning-Yes, Facey-Yes, Chen-Yes, Purvis-Yes,**
147 **Grondstra-Yes, and Coughlan- Yes.**
- 148 Mr. Steel then noted that they need to go over the slide deck for the presentation on Wednesday,
- 149 Mr. Brown replied that he will speak on the Operating Budget.
- 150 Mr. Coughlan noted that he would like to do PPC.
- 151 Mr. Manning added that he will speak to the Mission/Vision.
- 152 Mr. Coughlan added that the Mission drives the presentation.
- 153 Mr. Manning asked what is the story. He added that the approach these are the challenges,
154 developing a Strategic Plan they are trying to satisfy the budget with declining enrollment.
- 155 Mr. Steel noted that at the Public Hearing they will be gathering feedback.
- 156 Mr. Purvis asked why are we bringing up information that is not valid. He added that projections
157 beyond 3 years are not valid.
- 158 Mr. Chen agreed.

159 Mr. Manning asked what is the purpose of showing enrollment by grade.
160 Superintendent Warburton added that it has been asked about every year.
161 Mr. Manning added that they are looking at enrollment to make a projection.
162 Mr. Purvis added that it was projected for 714 and today, it is projected for 739. He added that
163 the projections from year to year were up 25.
164 Ms. Facey added that they have almost 800 students now and they are not showing that.
165 Mr. Steel then reviewed the enrollment chart. He added that next year they are projecting 740.
166 Mr. Manning added if they are going to show enrollment they need to work with the data they
167 have.
168 Mr. Steel noted that there are different ways to predict enrollment given birth rates near Boston
169 and neighboring towns.
170 Mr. Manning added if you are going to put the enrollment data out there then it needs to serve a
171 purpose.
172 Mr. Brown discussed a time where they were over their data
173 Mr. Manning commented that the Public Hearing is where they build the story for the
174 deliberative session.
175 Mr. Purvis added that they do not want to appear to be hiding anything.
176 Mr. Steel then took an enrollment slide out.
177 Mr. Grondstra asked about the “Major Stories” slide and asked if it should be by the operating
178 budget.
179 Mr. Manning suggested changing “Major Stories” to “Key Budget Drivers”.
180 He added that it is a part of the story that they are letting the public know that they know what is
181 going on.
182 Mr. Chen noted that he has learned about the Public School Infrastructure Commission, in
183 technology and security. He added that they need to apply for it and have a plan. He
184 recommended that they research it and apply for funding.
185 Mr. Steel added that Amherst application is not accepted yet and Ms. Stephanie Grund, Finance
186 Department member, is working to resubmit it.
187 **Mr. David Chen motioned to direct Adam Steele, Business Manager, to expeditiously**
188 **research, recommend, and apply for the funding that may be applicable to the Souhegan**
189 **Cooperative School District, a security system or other purposes from Public School**
190 **Infrastructure Commission fund could be sought. The Business Manager or designee will**
191 **report on a regular basis to the board via email and officially on the February 1, 2018 and**

192 **subsequent board meetings. Mr. Steve Coughlan seconded the Motion. The vote was**
193 **unanimous, Motion passed.**

194 Ms. Facey noted that they are also waiting for Community Council's recommendation.

195 Mr. Chen noted that there is only \$19 million and it is going fast.

196 Mr. Steel added that whatever plan they do they have to commit to.

197 Mr. Manning asked about the grant.

198 Discussion ensued.

199 Principal Scully noted that to get on this quicker

200 III. REVIEW OF MEETING

201 IV. ADJOURN

202 **Mr. Pim Grondstra motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:04PM. Mr. Steve Coughlan**
203 **seconded the Motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

204 **Mr. Brown called a Roll Call: Brown-Yes, Manning-Yes, Facey-Yes, Chen-Yes, Purvis-**
205 **Yes, Grondstra-Yes, and Coughlan- Yes.**

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