

1 **SOUHEGAN COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD**
2 **Tuesday, August 18, 2015**

3
4 **PRESENT**

5
6 Souhegan Cooperative School Board: Mary Lou Mullens, Howard Brown, Chris Janson,
7 Pim Grondstra, Jeanne Ludt, and David Chen

8
9 Administrative Team: Peter Warburton, Rob Scully, Christine Landwerhle, and Meg
10 Beauchamp

11
12 Minute Taker: Beth Penney

13
14 **CALL TO ORDER**

15
16 Ms. Mullens called the meeting to order at 6:08pm.

17
18 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

19 Principal's Report

20
21 Mr. Scully handed out the summer version of the Principal's Report. He discussed the
22 upcoming retreat, in-service day, and the first week of school. He thanked the stadium
23 project committee for their impressive public forum and their hard work. He thanked the
24 building and grounds crew because everything looks great. He thanked Christine and
25 Nicole for the Summer Literacy Institute. He gave an update about PACE and described
26 the summer work for PACE. He showed the Board an outline of the work. He described
27 some of the things that are up-coming for PACE and how new schools will be joining.
28 There will be a more detailed presentation about PACE on a future agenda. He discussed
29 Co-curricular participation being 717 students for all of last year, which is an 85%
30 participation rate. He highlighted the Summer Literacy Institute and discussed what it
31 was. The school sent a majority of the Social Studies and Humanities teachers to the
32 institute. Many teachers from the entire SAU participated also. He discussed the key
33 values for the institute. He discussed how teachers worked together to make connections
34 in the curriculum SAU wide.

35
36 Ms. Mullens asked about continuing work on the Math curriculum.

37
38 Ms. Landwerhle discussed how she is meeting with the Math Coach and curriculum chair
39 about the work that will happen during the in-service day. She discussed the meetings
40 happening about the new math course.

41
42 Mr. Scully discussed The Presidential Award for Science Teaching that was granted to
43 Jennifer Deenik. The school is really proud of her work and she is a good role model for
44 the other teachers. He hopes to get her to share some of her experience from receiving
45 that award.

47 Ms. Ludt asked to invite Jenny to come to a meeting to recognize her publicly. She also
48 asked about new student registration.

49
50 Ms. Mullens stated that Jenny is on the agenda for the next meeting.

51
52 Mr. Scully stated that the registration update is about a week old. There has been a gain
53 of about 12 students more than forecasted and registration is August 31st. A majority of
54 the registration is online.

55
56 Mr. Warburton stated that they have past four or five year's worth of data for 8th graders
57 going to other schools. This year there are only two students. The SAU will give the
58 Board that information.

59
60 Mr. Chen asked about the Computer Science program and if that was going to be shown
61 to the Board.

62
63 Mr. Chen and Mr. Scully discussed connecting students with companies to get computer
64 science skills. They discussed the hope and potential to offer courses in the future and
65 growing the Computer Science program at the school.

66
67 Mr. Chen stated that a number of students have gone off to college and have no
68 programming experience.

69
70 Mr. Scully stated that they are hearing the same feedback and are looking outside the
71 school to build partnerships and also working internally to work on getting a coding class
72 and put more emphasis on STEM. Computer Science was one of the programs that was
73 cut two years ago from the budget.

74
75 Ms. Mullens stated that the Budget Study Committee discussed putting Computer
76 Science into the next budget and there are potential opportunities for a club or a trimester
77 course.

78
79 Mr. Scully agreed and stated that there will also be a focus on STEM initiatives in the
80 next budget.

81
82 Community Council Report

83
84 Ms. Mullens stated that the new Board representative would attend in September.
85 Community Council will be presenting a budget to the Board in September.

86
87 **ACTION ITEMS**

88
89 SHS Stadium Project

90
91 Ms. Shankel discussed the public forum on August 6th and the questions that came from
92 that event. She presented answers to those questions. The cost associated with the

93 replacement of the turf field is required every 10-12 years and the cost is estimated to be
94 \$350,000. The causes of the field breaking down are from sun exposure and the stitching
95 of field lines coming undone. Excessive activity does not break down the turf. The
96 projected field rental would be 350 hours at \$120/hr. Over the 10 years, the field will
97 raise about \$420,000 and will cover the cost of the replacement of the field. She
98 discussed how the fields are rented and that this field should be rented by the hour. The
99 schools have priority for use of the fields and do not get charged. She discussed if you are
100 an Amherst user the fee is different. Organizations who rent the fields include clubs for
101 soccer and lacrosse. When the schools are not using the fields the Recreation Department
102 does the renting and collects the fees. There is a one-time cost of \$3000 for a brush used
103 every 100 hours on the field and \$500 for chemical testing recommended by George
104 Bower.

105
106 George Bower stated that he recommended chemical testing a sample of the material
107 used for the field to help the public be at ease and to better understand that the material
108 has no health risk. The school could also ask the supplier to provide the school with the
109 data when this project goes out to bid. The school needs to ask to send the data from a
110 certified lab.

111
112 Mr. Brown asked if there should there be an annual test.

113
114 Mr. Bower stated that they do not need to do that. They could if they wanted to know if
115 there was a ground water risk, but the school is on a well. If they want to do that a devise
116 should be installed to be able to draw a water sample.

117
118 Ms. Ludt asked if there was any need to test for Mersa.

119
120 Mr. Bower stated that this is not an issue on the field because UV light and air breaks it
121 down easily. The field gets cleaned 2 times a year to ward off mold, but this is not a real
122 issue or risk in this climate.

123
124 Ms. Ludt asked if the field gets covered in the winter and if the snow is an issue.

125
126 Mr. Bower explained that the field does not get covered and the snow does not impact the
127 field. He discussed the Michael's parking lot in Amherst and how that system is similar
128 to the set-up of the turf field. There are very similar projects already present in Amherst.

129
130 Ms. Shankel stated that cleaning of the turf field will happen two times per year and will
131 cost \$4000 annually. The field-brushing labor will be less than the current mowing labor
132 for that field. There will be no reduction in maintenance staff. There will be a savings of
133 \$3000-\$5000 from not seeding, herbicides, pesticides, and paint. The labor will be offset
134 so the maintenance team can spend more time on the other fields. Protective netting for
135 use of the track and field at the same time was recommended. The cost for the netting is
136 \$20,000 and storage could be an additional issue.

137

138 Ms. Mullens discussed the concern about the use of the track and that the netting should
139 be considered because the taxpayers spent a lot of money on the track. The track should
140 be available for use.

141
142 Ms. Janson asked if the cost of the netting should be included in the fundraising.
143

144 The Board discussed the user fees of the track and that the schools do not pay to use the
145 track. The netting is not permanent and would be removed. The netting is not hard to put
146 up. There is consideration for storage needs and it should be put in the budget for this
147 year. The storage always gets cut before the budget goes to the taxpayers. They
148 discussed what was done in the past when the field and track were in use at the same
149 time. It was use the track at your own risk in the past. The track and field will be used a
150 lot more now that the track is redone and the field will be turf.

151
152 Mr. Bower discussed the use of the track for Club Track and field. He discussed how it
153 makes it difficult to use the track if a team is in the field.
154

155 Ms. Shankel stated that there is no recommendation about temperature issues with the
156 field. The school uses heat protocols already. The synthetic turf today is a much
157 different product than it was three years ago even.
158

159 Ms. Mullens discussed that at the public forum there were not a lot of concerns about
160 safety or cost. They already have promises for part of the money and need the Board's
161 approval to go forward to collect the money. The money will go into the Amherst
162 Community Foundation Fund.
163

164 Ms. Shankel stated that the point of putting the money into this fund is so that if the
165 school does not reach the goal then they can refund the money to the donors.
166

167 Ms. Ludt wondered why some professional athletes do not like turf like the US National
168 Woman's Soccer team.
169

170 Ms. Shankel discussed that abrasions can occur and how the turf product is much better
171 than it was 3 years ago. There are no divots in a turf field so there are no twisted ankles
172 and the divot will not deflect the ball differently that expected. She discussed a study
173 done for a soccer team and that less injuries occurred on the turf field.
174

175 Mr. Bower discussed that the Woman's Soccer team had trained on grass and the game
176 on grass is slower than on turf.
177

178 Ms. Shankel showed a chart from the study showing injury occurrence on grass compared
179 to turf.
180

181 Mr. Grondstra introduced Brian Hall who is the co-chair for the fundraising committee.
182

183 Mr. Hall stated that the committee is waiting for the approval from the Board to move
184 forward. The committee has pledges for about \$760,000 and they are very optimistic that
185 the goal can be reached by December 31st. They are still working on fundraisers. There
186 will be a brick fundraiser and there will be a link on the town and school websites.

187
188 Mr. Chen discussed that the Board should approve the brick design.

189
190 Ms. Ludt wondered if the brick wall could be used for practice.

191
192 Ms. Janson asked about the issue around where user fees go now.

193
194 Ms. Shankel stated that they are in the process of working out how to put user fees aside
195 to be used for the turf field and the new agreement will be worked out with the
196 Recreation Department.

197
198 **Mr. Gronstra made a motion that the Board move forward with the Souhegan High**
199 **School Stadium Project, contingent upon adequate funds being raised to complete**
200 **the project and a method to collect and retain user fees for turf replacement agreed**
201 **to with the Town of Amherst. Mr. Chen seconded the motion.**

202
203 Ms. Ludt asked about the replacement of the field in ten years and asked about why that
204 is connected to the user fee money.

205
206 Ms. Mullens discussed the reason for this is so that the school does not have to ask the
207 taxpayers every ten years to put in money to replace the turf.

208
209 Ms. Shankel and the Board discussed the lease agreed upon in 2008 that the Amherst
210 Recreation Department would rent and collect the money for the field rentals.

211
212 Mr. Chen discussed that people ask before donating about if the replacement is going to
213 come forward to the taxpayers. This idea would help with that discussion with potential
214 donors.

215
216 Mr. Hall stated that this idea to use rental fees is a critical discussion when speaking with
217 donors and people do not want to put the replacement of the turf field on the tax payers in
218 the future.

219
220 Ms. Shankel discussed that when they did research they read many times that the turf
221 field paid for itself in 3 or so years.

222
223 The Board discussed the rental fee, the amount of money raised, and the replacement cost
224 in ten years. The Board can always adjust the rental fee in future years. This is an
225 ongoing process.

226
227 **The vote was unanimous.**

228

229 **Mr. Grondstra made a motion that the Board appoint Amherst Community**
230 **Foundation, to collect and maintain all funds raised in relation to the Souhegan**
231 **High School Stadium Project. When the project commences, the Foundation shall**
232 **release the funds to the Souhegan Cooperative School Board as requested to cover**
233 **the costs of the project. When the project is completed, any remaining funds shall**
234 **be deposited to the Souhegan Cooperative School District Expendable Trust for**
235 **Artificial Turf. If the Board determines that the funds raised are inadequate to**
236 **move forward with the project, the Foundation is authorized to refund amounts**
237 **raised to the individual donors. Mr. Chen seconded the motion.**
238

239 Mr. Brown asked if the Board would have to implement an Expendable Trust for this.
240

241 Ms. Shankel stated that this trust fund exists already and that the Amherst Community
242 Foundation already made a motion to accept this fundraising.
243

244 Mr. Bower suggested that the money be handled in accordance with state law. The
245 organization receiving the money on the behalf of the school has those financial controls
246 in place.
247

248 Ms. Shankel stated that this group is a 501c3 and has those financial controls.
249

250 **Mr. Chen made the following Amendment to the motion that the Board appoint**
251 **Amherst Community Foundation, a charitable organization in compliance with 501**
252 **(c) (3) regulations. Mr. Grondstra seconded the amendment.**
253

254 Ms. Janson stated that she would like to have a copy of the motion made by the Amherst
255 Community Foundation.
256

257 **The vote was unanimous.**
258

259 **Mr. Gronstra made a motion that the Board request that the Town of Amherst**
260 **Board of Selectmen and the Amherst School Board enter into discussions with the**
261 **Souhegan Cooperative School Board to determine the most appropriate way to**
262 **allocate Souhegan field user fees for the replacement of the synthetic turf should the**
263 **Souhegan High School Stadium Project be completed. Mr. Chen seconded the**
264 **motion.**
265

266 Ms. Ludt asked for clarification about this motion.
267

268 Ms. Shankel stated that the agreement now stated that the user fees are used by the
269 Amherst Recreation Department. This motion would ensure the money would be set
270 aside by the Recreation Department for the replacement of the turf field. The motion is to
271 help with the logisitics of how the rental fees will be handled. Two Board members from
272 Amherst, two Board members from SHS, a Selectman, and some administration will sit
273 down and figure out this agreement. This motion is to start this process.
274

275 The Board discussed how Amherst Recreation Department rents the fields and how they
276 need to discuss what is in the best interest of the schools.

277
278 Mr. Bower stated that the Track and Field program has hosted Youth meets every spring
279 and the money raised are added to the revolving fund and often help to purchase things
280 for the track and field, which is given back to the high school for these projects.

281
282 Ms. Ludt asked why the Amherst School Board is involved.

283
284 Ms. Shankel stated that the lease from 2008 includes the Amherst School Board,
285 Souhegan Cooperative School Board and the Recreation Department.

286
287 **The vote was unanimous.**

288
289 **APPOINTMENT OF SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICIALS**

290 Jan Bunker – Deputy Treasurer

291
292 **Mr. Chen made a motion to accept Jan Bunker as the Deputy Treasurer. Mr.**
293 **Brown seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

294
295 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

296
297 None present.

298
299 **CONSENT AGENDA**

300
301 Mr. Chen pulled the June 4th minutes.

302
303 Mr. Chen made the following changes to the minutes: line 118 – adjustments as a debit

304 **Mr. Brown made a motion to accept the amended Minutes from June 4, 2015 and**
305 **the June 10, 2015 minutes, Treasurer’s reports June 2014 – May 2015 and July**
306 **2015, Rebate to General Fund \$932 from Market Velocity, Inc. and \$960 from**
307 **Market Velocity, Inc., Donations to Student Activity Fund \$1,039.61 from The**
308 **Benevity Community Impact Fund and \$1,350 from the University System of New**
309 **Hampshire, and the Budget transfers. Mr. Grondstra seconded the motion and the**
310 **vote was unanimous.**

311 **ACTION ITEMS**

312 **Policies – 1st Reading - BCA –School Board Member Ethics,**
313 **BA –Evaluation of School Board, GBG – Staff Protection**

314
315 The Board discussed the name of policies and if SHS has policy BA. There needs to be
316 an addendum added to this policy. The addendum discussed a Board self-evaluation.
317 The policy committee needs to get someone from each district to sit down and look at
318 where these policies are all listed.

319
320 Mr. Brown discussed the different policies that are similar and the need to make the
321 policies the same in all three districts. The policy committee needs to also compare the
322 master lists to the website and the letters associated for each School Board in the SAU.
323
324 Mr. Brown and Ms. Ludt discussed why the letters maybe different on the policies. One
325 or two people need to do this work and then bring it to the policy committee.
326
327 Mr. Warburton discussed looking at the policies to ensure the letters are correct and
328 aligned. The Boards should also look at a few policies each meeting to stay current on
329 the policies.
330
331 Ms. Ludt stated that there are 22 policies that need to be on the website by state law and
332 they are not on the website.
333
334 Ms. Mullens stated that the Board should have a standing policy update each month to
335 update or go over policies because they have hundreds of policies.
336
337 The Board discussed a policy that employees get \$250 for damage to their car in the
338 parking lot (policy GBG). The Board discussed bringing this to PPC and the policy
339 committee.
340
341 Mr. Warburton stated that these concerns should be discussed at the next policy
342 committee.
343
344 Ms. Ludt discussed how Amherst has a policy BCA, but SHS does not and they need to
345 consider it. This policy is missing what happens if there is a violation to the code of
346 Ethics.
347
348 Ms. Mullens stated that the attorney stated that they cannot dismiss a Board member.
349
350 Mr. Warburton discussed a policy from Exeter that is very similar to the BCA policy.
351
352 The Board discussed taking the policy to the policy committee versus adopting it now
353 and then changing it. The Board discussed having Board members sign the policy each
354 year.
355
356 Ms. Ludt asked if the policies are somewhere and if they are not on the website does the
357 SAU still have them in a book somewhere.
358
359 Ms. Shankel stated that that they attempted to put them all on the website and it is not a
360 guarantee.
361
362 Ms. Ludt stated that new legislation asks for new policies and this needs to be looked at
363 every year.
364

365 Ms. Shankel stated that she feels the policy committee and administrators have been
366 keeping up with the policies.

367
368 Mr. Warburton stated that they have done due diligence, but they need to look at the
369 policies again. There are many new policies at the high school level. All the districts
370 should have all of the same policies. The SAU should have the policies in a book
371 somewhere also. The policy committee will work on this, this fall.

372
373 Mr. Brown went through the policies required by law last year and worked to bring them
374 forward. He has not done that this year yet.

375
376 Ms. Mullens discussed policies JCA and JEC are policies that need to be amended.

377
378 Mr. Brown discussed the change in the law for these two policies.

379
380 Ms. Mullens thanked Ms. Ludt for her work to bring this to the Board's attention.

381
382 Field Trips – Florida, Italy, and Europe

383
384 Ms. Mullens stated that the field trips are in the agenda packet.

385
386 Ms. Mullens discussed the Florida Baseball trip and why it was denied in the past and
387 reminded the Board about the students coming to speak to the Board.

388
389 Mr. Brown stated that he does not have a problem with the Baseball trip, except he asked
390 why the Band director is going.

391
392 Mr. Pim Grondstra stated that Mr. Carl Benevides is a coach.

393
394 The Board discussed that for this trip there is no indication of classes being missed by the
395 chaperones. The Board discussed the educational value of the trip.

396
397 Mr. Scully stated that Mike and Carl are teachers and coaches for this trip.

398
399 The Board discussed that Mike and Carl will miss 3 days of school. These teachers will
400 create a plan for coverage once the school years starts. The Board needs more
401 clarification on how classes will be covered. They discussed if the afterschool band
402 group will be impacted by this trip. They asked that the field trip form always be typed.
403 They discussed including the cost for potential substitutes needed.

404
405 Joe Grasset attended the meeting to answer questions from the Board about the
406 experience. Joe discussed the experience of being at the Pirates training facility with
407 minor league players who share their experiences with the team and have a different
408 perspective on things.

409
410 Mr. Chen asked about the educational values besides baseball.

411
412 Joe Grasset discussed the learning around things that have shaped the players life. The
413 most important discussion was about character. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity.
414
415 Ms. Mullens thanked Joe for being at the meeting.
416
417 Ms. Ludt asked about the dates of the trip and why these dates were chosen.
418
419 Joe Grasset discussed that this is before the SHS team's season starts and when the
420 Pirates leave the stadium.
421
422 The Board decided to wait on making a decision until they get more information.
423
424 Ms. Mullens discussed the Italy and Greece trip. This is the 5th time this trip has gone.
425
426 The Board discussed that this is before April vacation. They wondered why this trip does
427 not happen when school is over.
428
429 Ms. Mullens suggested waiting to make a decision on all three of these trips till
430 September when Peter Gagnon can be here. The trips were supposed to be on the
431 September agenda and they were put on this one by mistake.
432
433 The Board discussed the process Peter goes through to vet these trips.
434
435 Mr. Warburton asked if there are any trips that do not come before the Board.
436
437 Mr. Scully stated yes, he does turn some trips away and does not bring them before the
438 Board. Any trip outside of New England comes before the Board.
439
440 Mr. Chen asked about the benefit of the Board being involved at all. He stated that one
441 way to handle it is to only let trips go when school is not in session. He discussed
442 students who cannot afford the trips. He wondered if the trips should be ruled on at all.
443
444 Ms. Mullens discussed that there is a policy that any trip outside of New England the
445 Board needs to approve. She discussed past Board discussions about the equity of the
446 trips.
447
448 The Board discussed the Board being involved and the financial piece. Many other
449 schools take these trips once school is out or during vacation. There are certain trips that
450 have to happen in certain times of the year. The Board would like to know what other
451 school districts do. They would like to ask Peter to look into that.
452
453 Mr. Scully discussed the school trip landscape and how it is changing.
454
455 Mr. Chen stated that this is a position of liability for the Board to condone each trip.
456

457 Ms. Shankel stated that when teachers do the recruiting for the trips in the school and
458 with our students the school is responsible and it is better to have a process. Having the
459 Board review the trips is important.

460

461 Mr. Brown stated that this process would continue to evolve. The Board and staff are
462 getting better at working together to get trips approved.

463

464 Ms. Mullens discussed agenda items for September. She discussed that in the future
465 having the August Board meeting be a work session and this discussion will be on the
466 agenda for the next meeting.

467

468 **Mr. Grondstra made a motion to adjourn at 8:18pm. Ms. Janson seconded the**
469 **motion and the vote was unanimous.**

470

471