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SOUHEGAN COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD

Thursday, October 4, 2012

PRESENT

Souhegan Cooperative School Board: Chair Chris Janson, Howard Brown, Fran Harrow, Mary Lou Mullens, Peter Maresco, and Pim Grondstra (6:29pm)

Administrative Team: Peter Warburton, Jon Ingram, Rob Scully, Renea Sparks, Kathy White, Nicole Heimark

Community Council: Casey Foulks

Minute Taker: Beth Penney

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Janson called the meeting to order at 6:07pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Principal's Report

Karen Chininis reported out via video about the activities of student services. It is college application season, currently. She gave all of the positive results for the class of 2012. 81% of the students are attending a 4-year institution, which includes schools like MIT, Tufts, Columbia, University of Virginia and many more. This fall many students are doing early action/ decision. There has already been one college night last week and another one will be held soon. There are common app. and resume writing workshops happening after school. The school is prepping for SAT, NECAP, and PSATs. All of the councilors and some faculty have been trained in suicide prevention and will present to the faculty next week.

Mr. Ingram stated that the decile elimination did not impact college acceptances for the students. Hollis is also looking at getting rid of class rank.

Mr. Ingram stated that the Oct. 1 enrollment was 811 students. He passed out a packet to the board discussing the leaving and incoming students. 8 of the 27 withdrawals went to private schools. The enrollment number is low because there were 10-15 less summer enrollment students than prior years.

Mr. Ingram discussed an email from Mike Beliveau discussing a JV Football game at Conval where the team showed good sportsmanship and word is out about that game. He also stated that NECAPs start Tuesday for 4 days of testing. The schedule was created by teachers and there are lots of staff volunteers to help with the testing.

33 Update on Task Forces

34 Mr. Ingram stated that the Scheduling Task Force gave their proposal to Community
35 Council.

36 The Advisory Task Force presented to the board:

37 John Ranta, Jeanne Ludt, Lisa Kent, and Christina Len (Wally Wallace and John Young
38 were not present)

39 Mr. Ranta reviewed the advisory program. The task force made recommendations to
40 reinforce the program or change parts of the program. The advisory program is at the core
41 of SHS. All of the SHS staff has looked at the recommendations and given feedback.
42 Some students have also looked at the recommendations. The recommendations include
43 topics like: expectations for advisors, the advisory coordinator position, behavior
44 practice, no longer having a band a chorus advisory, and many more.

45 The board and the task force discussed the load of the advisory coordinator being reduced
46 so the coordinator would be available for all of the advisory periods. Implementation of
47 the advisory training would happen at the summer retreat and at newcomer meetings.
48 The advisory food policy was discussed. It was not changed, but the task force did
49 recommend that advisories decide with in the group and getting food once a trimester was
50 encouraged. Using one day a week for SAT prep for juniors was also discussed. The idea
51 is a good one, but not all kids need SAT prep and there is already a lot of academic work
52 happening in advisory junior year including the computer literacy report and the post
53 grad plan. Looping of advisories was also discussed. This idea started in 1992, but has a
54 structure of decision; all students vote by secret ballot. All students and the advisor have
55 to vote yes or the looping does not happen. It is rare for the looping to happen. The task
56 force visited 6 schools and many condoned that students stay together for grades 9-12
57 because of personal connections and seeing the growth of the students is beneficial.

58 Community Council Report

59 Casey Foulks stated that this has been a busy year. He discussed that the council and
60 community members took a retreat day to kick off the year to do team building activities,
61 discuss the format of the meeting, Mr. Coughlan gave a speech about common rules and
62 practices at meetings, nominations for council positions happened, and the first formal
63 meeting took place. There was very positive feedback from the retreat. Under classman
64 were very engaged and vocal. He discussed proposals the council had seen so far,
65 including,

66 - Proposal for Hope for Gus week a fundraiser for Muscular Dystrophy. The request was
67 for money for a 5K run. The proposal passed and the event only used \$400.

68 - Proposal from teachers to have Fang Fest moved to the week of Oct. 15th week because
69 the senior hike and PSATs were also happening that week. The proposal did not pass,
70 because people do not want Fang fest the same week as PSATs.

71 -Proposal for Red Ribbon Week to have the student body form into a giant ribbon and a
72 helicopter will take picture. There has been no decision yet for this proposal.

73 Ms. Mullens stated that the retreat was great, a day well spent, and kicked the year off
74 well.

75 Committee Reports

76 Ms. Mullens stated that the Athletic Facilities committee has had 3 meetings. The
77 selectman and Nancy McMillan from the recreation department were invited. The
78 meetings were used to discuss the Gale recommendations and Ken Bigley's
79 recommendations. The funding discussion happened at the same time. The feasibility
80 firms will come to talk with the Athletic Facility Committee about what they would do to
81 determine the feasibility of raising money and how much they thought was a viable and
82 realistic goal for the Amherst and Mont Vernon communities.

83 The cost would be \$40,000-\$60,000 for their services, which would help with fundraising
84 and marketing. If the group decides to go forward with a firm, then the committee would
85 come to the board to get approval for the expenditure.

86 Mr. Grondstra stated that the feasibility firms could help to identify if we have capability
87 with in the greater community to raise the funds needed. The main objective is to keep
88 the cost out of the taxpayer's wallets.

89 The board agreed to check back in once the committee had met with the firms and have a
90 better understanding of what they can do for the school.

91 PUBLIC TIME

92 None present.

93 CONSENT AGENDA

94 **Mr. Brown made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda containing the Minutes:**
95 **September 6, 2012 and Treasurer's Report: August 2012. Ms. Harrow seconded the**
96 **motion and the vote was unanimous and Ms. Mullens abstained.**

97 PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS

98 FY14 Budget

99 Cynthia Dokmo introduced the advisory committee:

100 Peter Stearns, Dan Foley (MV), Lorri Hayes(MV), Kathie Nunley, Marilyn Peterman,
101 Julie Livingston, Tom Silvia, and David Chen as an alternate.

102 The board determined that Ms. Harrow would be the liaison to the committee.

103

104 Committee Assignments

105 Administration - Janson

106 Special Education - Harrow

107 Facilities - Grondstra

108 Food/ Transportation - Mullens

109 Curriculum - Coughlan

110 Technology - Brown

111 Athletics - Maresco

112 Deliberative Dates

113 The board discussed changing the deliberative date to a Saturday. It was determined to
114 use February 2nd as the date and the 9th as the snow date. The Amherst Board will have
115 their session the same day and the district with the shortest presentation will go first.

116 **DISCUSSION**

117 Professional Nominations

118 Ms. White stated that Jackie Simmonds has a strong background in business and
119 marketing. She can continue on with the Nashua Community College Credit also. She
120 started last week and Ms. White is going in on a regular basis. She does not have an
121 advisory, but is filling in when Ms. White cannot meet with her advisory.

122 **Ms. Harrow made a motion to accept Ms. White's nomination to hire Jackie**
123 **Simmonds to fill her teaching roles. Mr. Maresco seconded the motion and the vote**
124 **was unanimous.**

125 Mr. Ingram stated that he would like to nominate Dick Miller for the interim Athletic
126 Director position. He has already been filling in and is also still in the classroom. The
127 search for his replacement has started and one round of interviews has happened. The
128 department will absorb all of the other history related things Mr. Miller has done in the
129 past.

130 Ms. White stated that she is working to find another person to be the Senior Project

131 coordinator.

132 **Ms. Mullens made a motion to accept the nomination to make Dick Miller the**
133 **interim Athletic Director. Mr. Brown seconded the motion and the vote was**
134 **unanimous.**

135 Athletic Handbooks

136 Mr. Ingram stated that he has a draft and is working with the writing center coordinator to
137 look at it for grammar and formatting. Mr. Grondstra and Mr. Maresco will discuss with
138 Mr. Miller how to proceed. He would still like feedback from the board.

139 Ms. Mullens asked if the survey of the students on Survey monkey will still happen.

140 Mr. Ingram stated yes. Diane, Ken, and Dick met before Ken left.

141 Update on funding for new athletic facility

142 A student, Meghan Kolopsky is the co-chair and Mr. Ingram is temporarily the other co-
143 chair. See above for other comments.

144 The meeting took a break at 7:11pm and resumed at 7:15pm.

145 FY14 Budget Continued

146 Budget Assumptions

147 Ms. Shankel stated that Dan Foley would be the chair for the finance committee
148 this year.

149 Ms. Shankel presented the Budget Assumptions presentation for the FY14 budget as
150 found in the agenda packet.

151 Mr. Ingram presented about budget assumptions for enrollments, Student load,
152 Administration, Curriculum development, Instructional Assessment, Regular Education,
153 Special Education, Guidance, Custodial and Support staff and Nutritional Services.

154 Mr. Brown asked if the drop of 49 students from the projected budget would have an
155 affect on the student fee structure.

156 Mr. Ingram stated that he hopes not and that they have not seen an effect yet.

157 Ms. Shankel continued with the Budget Assumption presentation.

158 Ms. Mullens asked how teacher evaluation and supervision would affect the budget.

159 Ms. Shankel stated that the program review will be happening and they are not sure if it
160 will take resources like materials and professional development.

161 Ms. Heimark stated that they are exploring the current administration structure and what
162 is the break point, how many staff members can one administrator handle.

163 Mr. Maresco asked about the inclusion task force.

164 Mr. Ingram stated that there was a concern about inclusion, a task force was assigned,
165 and they are looking at inclusion in the classroom. The task force will present to the
166 board in November.

167 Ms. Shankel continued with the Budget Assumptions presentation.

168 Mr. Maresco stated that he is struggling with the process to develop the budget because
169 what options does the district have to reduce the budget.

170 Ms. Shankel stated that they try to make saving and have created savings in the past.
171 There are huge cost savings in technology. Purchases are put out to bid to save money
172 especially in technology and buildings and grounds. There are fixed costs that we
173 struggle to know how to handle. The building is huge asset to the towns and it needs to
174 be maintained.

175 Mr. Maresco stated that he does not think that the district is doing anything wrong. The
176 budget will be a bigger number than last year.

177 Ms. Mullens stated that before we even start to budget there is already a 2.2% increase
178 for just health and retirement benefits. We have cut 2.2% to keep a flat budget. Staff and
179 administration are doing a good job with course offerings. The bottom line is educating
180 the students and keeping the coalition principles. Research shows that class size and time
181 for professional development and preparation is important to student success.

182 Mr. Warburton stated that the budget is difficult but there are still places to cut. The goal
183 is to come in at a zero increase or below.

184 Ms. Livingston stated that increasing costs mirror what taxpayers are going through
185 already. Large companies are not offering retirement benefits for new employees and
186 instead giving a bump in 401K. For the expenditures for capital equipment, we need to be
187 clear about what is the return on the investment and how that can be rolled in to how it
188 will save the district money.

189 Ms. Shankel stated that districts are required by law to pay NH retirement. The state is
190 looking at changing the plan to a defined contribution plan, but the district does not have

191 the control to make changes.

192 Mr. Grondstra asked why there is reference to FY07 in the summary of benefits.

193 Ms. Shankel stated that this is because FY07 is when NH retirement increases started to
194 happen and the same time frame when health care premiums increased.

195 Ms. Janson stated that in November the board would see the initial budget. Mr. Foley
196 will get back to Ms. Janson about the advisory finance committee assignments.

197 Policies: EEAA- Video and Audio Surveillance

198 Mr. Brown stated that the Amherst board has already adopted this and Mont Vernon will
199 not have a policy because they do not have cameras.

200 Ms. Mullens stated that she and Mr. Brown made changes from the Amherst policy. She
201 discussed what is different from the Amherst policy and why those changes were made.

202 The board discussed removing the third paragraph because it was vague and redundant.

203 Ms. Mullens stated that they would look at the last paragraphs because they want to
204 ensure they go along with the retention policy EHB. This would be discussed with Mr.
205 Warburton.

206 The board discussed the erasing of the video taken and how that can be done. The school
207 needs to have the company come back to answer questions about the surveillance
208 cameras and that question will be one of them. Mr. Warburton asked Mr. Ingram to set
209 the meeting up with the company to get the questions answered.

210 The board discussed at length the need of the video being part of the students record. The
211 conclusion they came to is: that if the video is kept it will be part of their discipline
212 record and not the educational record, therefore it will not leave the school. They also
213 discussed the policy EBH and how it relates to and may conflict with that issue. The tape
214 is a much harsher reminder of what happened versus a written note. The discipline files
215 are private and confidential and do not travel from the school. Only the dean of students
216 and the principal can view those files.

217 Mr. Brown stated that this is new territory and they will have to figure out how to save a
218 clip or the video. He stated that he and Ms. Mullens would make the following changes
219 to the policy: change educational record to discipline record; remove the third paragraph;
220 check conflicts with policy EHB; check to see if videos can be deleted after 30 days.

221 The board discussed how the cameras work in the school and questions they still have
222 about how the cameras work.

223 **INFORMATIONAL**

224 October 1st enrollment data

225 Mr. Warburton stated that as of October first SHS has 811 students. SAU wide the
226 enrollments are down 123 students.

227 The board discussed the idea that this may relate to the number of empty houses or
228 people who are empty nesters staying because their house value has decreased. Mont
229 Vernon has dropped from 231 students to 194. In the 7th grade next year there will be a
230 drop of 46 students. In the Amherst School District, they have reduced the number of
231 teachers by 22 since 2008.

232 Staff Breakfast – October 30th or December 11th

233 The Board decided to have the breakfast on December 11th from 7am -7:45am.

234 Fall Forum Round Table

235 Ms. Janson stated that she and Mr. Warburton would be holding a round table at the Fall
236 Forum about how to steward a coalition school through different issues like AP classes,
237 Budgets, and more. They are also trying to get people from the Parker school on the panel
238 with them. The format will be an open discussion.

239 Ms. Mullens asked them to give the board feedback at the December meeting.

240 Admin Survey Plan

241 Mr. Warburton discussed the staff survey given in December and June for feedback about
242 the administration. He wants to better understand why they are getting a poor response to
243 the number of people that fills the survey out.

244
245 The board discussed giving incentive and providing scheduled time, which has been tried
246 and there was still only a 70% response. The board discussed using CFG or having small
247 group round tables. Small round tables allow for open communication and when people
248 feel heard that is half the battle. They also discussed that one of the districts policies
249 requires written feedback in some form. They discussed having actionable feedback and
250 that the current survey is hard to extract information from. They discussed how
251 sometimes people do not fill out a survey because they feel nothing ever comes of the
252 feedback.

253
254 The board discussed where to have the discussion about the staff survey whether it should
255 be during a staff meeting, in CFG, or at a coordinators meeting.

256
257 Mr. Warburton stated that he would discuss with the administration on how to proceed
258 and discuss the issues with the staff. If something were going to change there would
259 need to be permission and a vote from the school board. He stated that he would check
260 back in with the board when he has a time frame.

261

262 Other

263

264 Mr. Brown stated that Scotty approached him about the golf cart losing charge at 10 or 11
265 am in the morning. Dick Miller is working to put together costs for the board for a
266 replacement.

267

268 Mr. Ingram discussed the idea of an electric truck. He stated that the district does pay a
269 stipend to Scotty in the winter for the use of his vehicle.

270

271 **Mr. Grondstra made a motion to adjourn at 8:57pm. Ms. Harrow seconded the**
272 **motion and the vote was unanimous.**