

1 **Souhegan Cooperative School District**

2 **Thursday, December 1, 2011**

3
4 **PRESENT**

5
6 Souhegan Cooperative School Board: Howard Brown, Steve Coughlan, Chair Chris
7 Janson, Jeanne Ludt, Mary Lou Mullens, Fran Harrow, and Pim Grondstra

8
9 Administrative Team: Nicole Heimarck, Jon Ingram, Betty Shankel, Renea Sparks, Bob
10 Thompson, John Smith, Colleen Meany and Peter Warburton

11
12 Community Council: Scott Doyle

13
14 Minute Taker: Beth Penney

15
16 **CALL TO ORDER**

CALL TO ORDER

17 Ms. Janson called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.

18 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

19 Principal's Report

20 Mr. Ingram introduced the Girls Varsity Soccer team to present to Ms. Janson.

21 Four members of the team presented to the board discussing their season and that they
22 had not won the state championship since 2003. They won the state championship in
23 overtime. The girls presented a plaque to Ms. Janson.

24 Mr. Ingram stated that Peyton Kent was selected as the tournament MVP.

25 The board congratulated the team.

26 Mr. Ingram wanted to publicly recognize Carolyn Shattuck, who is a top flutist and was
27 selected for the state band.

28 Mr. Ingram stated that 17 staff members went to the Fall Forum in Providence RI.

29 Mr. Ingram discussed a community meeting, centering on sportsmanship, would be
30 taking place on Monday Dec 5th from 9:20-9:40am, which will be facilitated by students.
31 He stated that SHS found themselves in a pickle with NHAA because at the close of semi
32 final and final games fans took to field and NHAA frowns upon that. The focus of the
33 meeting is to discuss what we do well and what is expected of one another as fans at
34 sporting events and co-curricular events. They have invited coaches to the meeting also.

35 Mr. Ingram stated that he would like to begin to share student work with the board. The
36 work tonight is from the 10Y American Studies Project. The assignment was to portray a
37 positive event or image from the 1920's or Great Gatsby. He explained the steps of the

38 project and that it was assessed on the following ALE's: Effective Communicator,
39 Complex Thinker, and Self Directed Learner. The pieces were displayed in an art show
40 for the final project. He stated that this is a unique assessment tool to get a sense of
41 student understanding.

42 Mr. Warburton introduced Dr. Ken Hood a former superintendent and a staff member
43 from AMS Linda Farrington (Dr. Hood's Daughter) and Nook from Thailand.

44 Dr. Hood discussed a one-year exchange program through the company Spiral
45 International. Mr. Hood discussed the new federal rules for exchange students and stated
46 that SHS has already been approved to host exchange students. Dr. Hood discussed the
47 students would come for a year and pay tuition. They would stay with host families
48 while here. The prospective students would have to pass tests and be able to provide both
49 medical and academic records to come. SHS would get an opportunity to interview each
50 student via Skype. Dr. Hood discussed the responsibility of Spiral and of the school for
51 these students. He also discussed how many students could come per year. He talked
52 about how SHS students could become Spiral Ambassadors while the exchange students
53 were at SHS.

54 Mr. Warburton stated that this is a beginning conversation and is opening an opportunity
55 for Amherst and Mont Vernon students and families. There are lots of things to do
56 before a final decision is made. The idea will be put on an agenda in the future.

57 Dr. Hood's daughter, Linda, discussed the program this summer, which had 30 people
58 from China come to Amherst and 15 families hosted them. She discussed what the
59 students did while they were here and how it was a positive opportunity for both AMS
60 and SHS students and families.

61 Community Council Report

62 Scott discussed that the council passed a proposal allowing eating on carpeted areas and a
63 proposal to create a school fight song. The fight song will be a competition for students to
64 help choose the song. The council also locked down their ideas for the Semi-formal
65 dance, which is the annual fundraiser. This year it will be "Semi On Ice".

66 Ms. Mullens stated that students or community members could write the fight song and
67 that everyone is excited about the idea.

68 Committee Reports

69 There were no committee reports.

PUBLIC TIME

70 PUBLIC TIME

71 No public present.

CONSENT AGENDA

72 **CONSENT AGENDA**

73 Minutes November 3, 2011,

74 Mr. Coughlan asked to the pull minutes for November 3rd.

75 **Ms. Harrow made a motion to accept the consent agenda containing the Treasurer's**
76 **Report October 2011. Ms. Mullens seconded the motion and the vote was**
77 **unanimous.**

78 Mr. Coughlan asked to make the following changes to the November 3rd minutes: line 27,
79 Burlington Mass. To see how Tablets were replacing textbooks; giving every student a
80 device; line 66, from community council TO PTSA; line 195 not board, change to I'm
81 informed

82 **Mr. Grondstra made a motion to accept the November 3rd minutes as changed. Mr.**
83 **Brown seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

84 **PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS**

PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS

85 FY11 Auditor's Report- Vachon, Clukay & Co.

86 Karen Taylor the Director of Finance introduced the Audit manager Jared Vartanian and
87 discussed the process of the audit.

88 Mr. Vartanian complimented the finance office for their accurate and timely information.
89 He summarized the required communication and the process of the audit. There were no
90 adjustments and no findings. There was a small recommendation to require an additional
91 signature for receiving money fro the Student Activity fund. He discussed a change in
92 standard 54 and how the reports would now look. He stated that the district received the
93 highest level of opinions. The district had a favorable budget variance, off set the tax
94 rate, and existing debt was paid down.

95 Ms. Harrow stated that the student activities piece happens regularly and she thought it
96 had been fixed.

97 Ms. Taylor and the board discussed the past changes and how it is a work in progress.
98 They are working to designate people for the exchange of cash or checks, which now
99 need two signatures.

100

101 Security Considerations

102 Mr. Miner discussed how the security was reviewed including the Gale report and
103 community council. He discussed that the lock down system for the exterior doors was

104 from the Gale report and the community council recommended installing cameras in the
105 parking areas.

106 Ms. Ludt stated that the school board charged the community council to review security
107 at the school and they came back with recommendations.

108 Mr. Miner showed a map of the parking areas and discussed different options – A –
109 Senior upper parking with lights; B – new parking area along entrance to school

110 Option A: 2 cameras \$18,378 Option B: 1 Camera \$8,515 Both: \$26, 873

111 Mr. Miner discussed the cameras are wide angle, 180 degree cameras and are the most up
112 to date for clarity and resolution.

113 Mr. Miner stated the lights installation of 4 lights with poles would cost a total of
114 \$45,000.

115 Mr. Miner discussed how they were able to reduce the installation price by \$15,000.

116 Mr. Miner and the board discussed that the cameras would come with a 16 channel DVR
117 leaving room for expansion. They also discussed how four lights were determined and
118 where to put the lights. The clarity and facial recognition capabilities of the cameras were
119 also discussed. The cameras would be more of a deterrent, but Officer Smith also stated
120 that the recordings can be zoomed and the clarity is very good. The cameras were not put
121 out to bid because there are no other vendors offering the same quality as the cameras and
122 these would be the same cameras as what is installed at AMS and Clark/ Wilkins.

123 Ms. Janson asked if there were other places that the school would like to see cameras.

124 Mr. Warburton described the back entrance to the gym as an area of concern.

125 Mr. Ingram explained that in the evening many students move cars to that area for late
126 athletic or theater events. The lot is dark and close to the woods. He is concerned about
127 the safety of the lot and of the building.

128 Mr. Miner stated that it would cost \$4,765 for each additional camera and the electrical
129 could be used from the building.

130 Mr. Grondstra asked if there were no financial issues how many cameras would the
131 school want.

132 Mr. Ingram stated that based on past discussions starting two years ago with the
133 community council, 4 cameras would be a good starting point.

134 Ms. Ludt stated that the evidence from the incident reports does not support the fourth
135 camera behind the gym.

136 Ms. Janson stated that the school has already done many security updates based on the
137 recommendations from the Gale report and community council. The cameras and door
138 locking system are the big-ticket items.

139 Mr. Miner reshown the presentation for the locking system from Nov. 3rd. He discussed
140 the pricing in two phases or in one phase. The full project would cost \$290,896.82 for 28
141 exterior locks and 137 interior locks. The installation has to be done when school is not in
142 session and will take a total of 8-10 weeks for the full project.

143 Ms. Shankel discussed the NH retirement that needed to be paid and that not all of the
144 money that was set aside was used. There is \$150,000 available for these projects.

145 Ms. Harrow stated that \$71,000 could be used for 3 cameras and 4 lights, and the external
146 locking doors could also be funded.

147 Ms. Mullens stated that she agrees with Ms. Harrow. She stated that the door locking
148 system prices are only being held till March. She does not want to wait to risk the budget
149 or warrant articles passing.

150 **Ms. Mullens made a motion to use the pension savings to pay \$71,000 for the**
151 **purchase of 3 cameras and 4 lights and pay almost \$78,000 for the purchase of the**
152 **exterior locking system and computer hardware, totaling \$149,000. Ms. Harrow**
153 **seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

154 FY13 Budget Draft 2

155 Ms. Janson thanked the budget finance committee for their work.

156 Changes and Revenue projection

157 Ms. Shankel discussed changes and revenues. She stated that there was a proposal for the
158 reduction of one FTE, regular education teacher, but no decision has been made about
159 where that reduction would occur.

160 The board and Mr. Ingram discussed how this difficult decision was made. They
161 discussed enrollment numbers for the current year and the projected numbers for next
162 year. 9th and 10th grade teams were discussed and the possibility of mini teams at both
163 grade levels. They also discussed the current need for an increase of 0.5 FTE in special
164 education.

165 Mr. Ingram clarified that the reduction would not necessarily be the elimination of a
166 whole teacher. He stated that there maybe a decrease by 0.25 FTE here and there. He

167 discussed how the administration would look at the numbers to eliminate a FTE.

168 The board expressed their concern for removing this 1.0 FTE position. Mr. Ingram
169 explained why this was a responsible decision and that he would be happy to not have to
170 eliminate a FTE because it would give the flexibility to offer an expansion in course
171 offerings. The board and Mr. Ingram also discussed that other types of positions
172 including administration are being looked at for the future.

173 Mr. Warburton stated that there would be a budget increase of 0.34% without eliminating
174 the 1.0 FTE.

175 Ms. Shankel discussed other changes in athletics because of title nine coaches and the
176 requirement for ice for the hockey team. She stated that the licensing requirement for
177 software was added and the request for goal posts was removed.

178 The board and Ms. Shankel discussed the increase in the stipend for coaches and how it
179 was a concern. The board understands the argument Mr. Bigley presented. The PPC
180 contract is not up till next year.

181 Mr. Coughlan reminded the board that the PPC has no authority over the increases and
182 how they are divided and that the principal decides how the funds are allocated.

183 The board discussed the coaching stipend increase verse eliminating a 1.0 FTE teacher.
184 The intent to change the coaching stipends was to create equity and to do that there needs
185 to be an increase in the stipends. The risk of losing coaches with increasing the stipends
186 was discussed. Losing coaches is always a risk. The coaching stipends could be looked
187 at again to see if less of an increase could occur.

188 Ms. Shankel discussed a few transcription errors. She also discussed the reduced
189 interscholastic travel by \$20,000 because it was over budgeted. The FY13 summary
190 general fund is a 0.8% increase and reduction in total budget of -1.9%. She discussed the
191 bond paid off in FY13 and that the FY13 budget was 2.25% over FY12 when started and
192 she explained why. She stated that the \$269,419 is the warrant article for the employee
193 agreement.

194 Ms. Shankel discussed revenue calculations. This is an estimate and no vote happens for
195 revenues and they are adjusted every fall. Many factors are not available when creating
196 the budget because of the projected revenue. A 1% unreserved fund balance is estimated.
197 Building aid is going down and Cat. aid will be funded at a level amount. Grants and
198 Medicate are remaining flat. There is no transportation reimbursement expected. The
199 food service has gone down, but also have expenditures. The revenue will cover the
200 expenditures, and food service may end up with a surplus. Any food service dollars must
201 be spent in food service area. \$16,802,674 needs to be funded by the budget. Amherst
202 and Mont Vernon taxpayers share this number. This would be a 27-cent increase in
203 Amherst and 31-cent increase in Mont Vernon on the tax rate.

204 The board discussed the Unreserved Fund Balance and Drivers education costs with Ms.
205 Shankel.

206 Committee report out

207 Ms. Mullens reported out about technology, whom seems to being doing a good job at
208 keeping costs reasonable while keeping infrastructure and equipment up to date.

209 Ms. Harrow reported out about special education. There are higher increases for FY13,
210 determined by the number of IEPs. She discussed the parts of the 1.2 FTE increase. She
211 stated that the other increases are out of district costs and caused by the number of
212 students and is required by federal law.

213 Mr. Grondstra reported out about athletics. There is an increase of 13% because the goal
214 was to make the budget much more transparent. The AD has gone through and done a
215 good job at classifying where money is being spent. He discussed the stipend increases
216 and stated that if the board takes out the \$21,000 increase for stipends there is still a 8.4%
217 increase in the proposed athletic budget.

218 Tom Silvia stated that the AD did a good job. The AD had noticed the theme of past
219 budgets was that a lot of money was allocated toward transportation and then the money
220 was used in other areas.

221 The board discussed the tier fee structure and how they are not sure if it is working.
222 Fundraising is still happening and Mr. Bigely is working hard to tackle that issue.

223 Mr. Brown reported out about transportation and food service. There was a decrease in
224 interscholastic transportation, but an increase for special education. The overall
225 transportation increase is 3.54%. Food services have done a great job of reducing their
226 budget. Mr. Brown stated that he has a lot of respect for their work.

227 Dan Foley stated that there is little room to reduce in special education transportation.
228 The food service is impressive and students are supporting the cafeteria more and this is
229 helping with the revenue.

230 Ms. Janson reported out on the administrative parts of the budget. The administration is
231 getting a small salary increase of 1% this year because they took no increase last year.
232 They looked at the number of administration and what the school started with and when
233 another dean of faculty was added. This is currently an appropriate number of
234 administrators. The school is looking long term at other models for administrators and
235 support staff.

236 Ms. Ludt reported out on buildings and grounds. She passed out answers to questions
237 and the proposal for FY13 and the FY12 budget. She stated the \$10,000 request for the
238 sidewalk extension was removed and suggested putting a lined crosswalk in for the

239 interim. The need for this is mostly because parents drop their students off for both AMS
240 and SHS in one spot so AMS students are crossing. Ms. Ludt stated that there was also a
241 reduction in water because of new river irrigation. There were many places where there is
242 a reduction. There is a phone maintenance contract because of the new phone system and
243 this is a reoccurring cost yearly. There are many electrical repairs because of out of date
244 light fixtures. This part of the budget went down 6.14%. Ms. Ludt stated that she
245 appreciates the good work Mr. Miner does to keep the budget reasonable.

246 Mr. Coughlan reported out about curriculum. He stated that 90% of the budget is driven
247 by the number of FTE teachers. The committee did not discuss the decrease of one FTE
248 teacher because that was a late reduction to draft 2 of the budget. The committee spent
249 time discussing the ups and downs of line items. Everything was well justified and there
250 are no questions about any of the items and good reasons for all of them.

251 Lorri Hayes asked if the historical perspective of how many teachers are needed was
252 evaluated. She also discussed that by reducing teachers by 0.25 FTE would decrease the
253 NH retirement and the reduction could be greater than projected.

254 Mr. Ingram discussed that the enrollment needs to be compared to the programmatic
255 changes. The last 2 to 3 budget cycles have been a breaking point for reducing staff and
256 that this might be a reasonable time to reduce staff. He stated that if the board would like
257 to put the 1.0 FTE back in the budget he would be more than happy to do so.

258 The board discussed past cuts in staff in the last few years, mostly in special education.
259 They also discussed the decrease in the bond and money for the expendable trust.

260 Ms. Harrow stated that she is very hesitant to cut a teacher if having an increasing
261 population of students even if the increase is small. She would not like to see them
262 putting the budget in a place where it would be less than default budget. She asked if the
263 teacher is cut how close would the default budget be in future years? She stated that it is
264 hard to justify cutting a teacher for FY13. She would rather cut things than people and
265 program.

266 Ms. Ludt stated that she is struggling with 25% increase to the SRO salary. She stated
267 that the taxpayers did vote for the increase in pay for the police. She asked if the district
268 has an obligation or control over that number?

269 Mr. Warburton stated that no the district does not have any control, we pay 180 days of
270 his salary and this is a contract with the town.

271 Mr. Warburton and Mr. Ingram discussed Ms. Harrow's thoughts about not cutting a 1.0
272 FTE, but then the budget would increase in these difficult financial times.

273 Ms. Coughlan stated that he would never ask to cut a FTE, but to hear the administration
274 say that they could survive if the cut was made. This is a valid response for the economic

275 situation we are in.

276 Ms. Ludt stated that the board has been cutting teachers over the last four years. If the
277 board makes this decision then we need to know what our default budget looks like and
278 need to know what the other two school districts budgets look like.

279 Ms. Harrow stated the cost of 1.0 FTE is \$73,000 and we are talking about \$21,000 for
280 increases for coaches. Ms. Harrow stated she is not apposed to an increase for coaches,
281 but this needs to happen in a contract year and should be the first priority next year with
282 the new contract. She stated to the keep teacher rather than increase coaching stipends.
283 Ms. Harrow asked if there is anywhere we can find another \$30,000 to make a zero
284 percent increase?

285 Mr. Coughlan stated that there is a \$7,500 reduction for driver's education. He stated he
286 would support the stipend increase to have equity in the stipends. By waiting to change
287 the stipends later may be harder. He would like the board to take one step towards that
288 equity.

289 Tom Silvia asked why there couldn't be an increase in the budget. He stated he
290 understands that the board is considering the economic times, but the town of Amherst is
291 doing well and the per capita income has gone up. He stated that it is not unreasonable to
292 have a small increase in the budget.

293 Mr. Grondstra ran the numbers for the tax impact of putting the FTE back in. Amherst
294 would go from 27 cents to 31 cents and Mont Vernon would go from 31 cents to 34
295 cents. There is a tax impact but it is minimal and there is already a tax impact without
296 cutting the FTE.

297 The board discussed the tax impact for the towns of Amherst and Mont Vernon. They
298 also discussed the budget increases for the other districts in the town.

299 The board discussed keeping the 1.0 FTE, increasing the coaching stipends by less and
300 having a small increase in the budget.

301 Mr. Warburton asked if the administration could prepare the budget with half the
302 coaching stipend increase and putting the FTE back in. They will also prepare the default
303 budget.

304 The Board agreed that would be ok.

305 Warrant Articles

306 Moved to a work session on Tuesday Dec. 6th at 6pm.

307 Allocation of ARRA-IDEA Grant Funds

308 Ms. Sparks stated that there was \$197,765 allocated and \$197,112.01 was spent. The
309 reason all of the money was not spent was because for programs some salary lines had
310 associated costs and fluctuations.

311 The Board thanked Ms. Sparks.

312 **ACTION ITEMS**

ACTION ITEMS

313 Policy IMGA – Service Animal – 2nd Reading

314 No changes were made since the last reading.

315 Ms. Ludt stated that the district paid money to talk to an attorney to ensure the wording of
316 this policy is ok. She would like to get free advise in the future from the School Board
317 Association.

318 Mr. Warburton stated that this was a special circumstance.

319 **Ms. Harrow made a motion to adopt the policy IMGA. Ms. Mullens seconded the**
320 **motion and the vote was unanimous.**

321 Policy DIA – Fund Balances – 2nd Reading

322 **Mr. Coughlan made a motion to rename the existing policy DIA to policy DIAM**
323 **(Board Review and Signing of Manifests). Mr. Brown seconded the motion and the**
324 **vote was unanimous.**

325 **Mr. Brown made a motion to adopt policy DIA. Ms. Harrow seconded the motion**
326 **and the vote was unanimous.**

327 The board discussed the need to review the manifest policy.

328 **DISCUSSION**

DISCUSSION

329 School Board goals

330 The board discussed looking at key performance indicators as a good recommendation
331 and measurement to have. The adopted SAU goals were briefly discussed. The board
332 discussed that these ideas could help in preparation for the deliberative session. They also
333 discussed surveying past graduates and how SHS is looking into starting an alumni
334 database. They will continue this discussion after budget season.

335

336 Ms. Janson offered to collect ideas before then.

337

338 **Ms. Harrow made a motion to go into Non-public session at 9:12 p.m.**
339 **under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). Mr. Brown seconded the motion and the role**
340 **call was all yes.**

341

**NON-PUBLIC
SESSION**

342 **A personnel matter was discussed.**

343

344 **Mr. Ingram discussed a survey to be completed by Souhegan High School staff.**

345

346 **MOTION TO EXIT NON PUBLIC SESSION:**

347

348 **At 10:02 hours Mary Lou Mullens made a motion to exit non-public session.**

349 **Motion seconded by Fran Harrow. Unanimously accepted by roll call vote:**

350 **Coughlan: yes, Grondstra: yes, Janson: yes, Ludt: yes, Mullens: yes, Brown: yes,**

351 **Harrow: yes.**

352

353 **Discussion: Communication Problems**

354

355 A discussion was had about the communication of questions to administration during the
356 budget process.

357

358 **Discussion: Reconfiguration of Information Room for Board Meetings**

359

360 Superintendent Warburton stated that there was probably going to be a reconfiguration of
361 the information room for future board meetings.

362

363 **MOTION TO ADJORN:**

364

365 At 10:10 hours Mary Lou Mullens made a motion to adjourn. Motion seconded by Fran
366 Harrow and was unanimously accepted.

367

368