

**SOUHEGAN SCHOOL BOARD**

**March 19, 2009**

**Approved 4/16/09**

**ORGANIZATONAL MEETING**

Dr. Mary Jennings called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

**Present**

Souhegan School Board: Chairman Steve Coughlan, Jeanne Ludt, Mary Lou Mullens, Christine Janson, Dana Redmond, and Dan Foley

Administrative Team: Scott Prescott, Colleen Meaney, Dr. Mary Jennings, and Lisa Ambrosio.

Minutes Recorder: Heather Loewy Nichols

**A. Chairman**

Dr. Jennings called for nominations for Chairman of the Board.

Mr. Redmond nominated Mr. Coughlan as Chairman. Mr. Foley seconded the nomination.

**A MOTION was made by Ms. Mullens and SECONDED by Mr. Redmond to unanimously elect Mr. Coughlan as Chairman of the Board.**

**Voting: 6 ayes; motion carried. Dr. Jennings declared Mr. Coughlan to be Chairman of the Board.**

**B. Vice Chair**

Chairman Coughlan called for nominations for Vice Chairman.

**Mr. Foley nominated Ms. Ludt. Mr. Redmond seconded the nomination.**

**Voting: 6 ayes; Chairman Coughlan declared Ms. Ludt to be Vice Chair of the Board.**

**C. Secretary**

Chairman Coughlan called for nominations for Secretary of the Board.

**Ms. Mullens nominated Ms. Janson. Mr. Ludt seconded the nomination.**

**Voting: 6 ayes; Chairman Coughlan declared Ms. Janson to be Secretary of the Board.**

The Board appointed the Board Members to the following committee assignments:

- CIP : Mr. Coughlan

**I. CALL TO ORDER  
ATTENDANCE**

**II. ELECTION OF  
SCHOOL BOARD  
OFFICERS**

**III. COMMITTEE  
ASSIGNMENTS**

- Community Counsel Liaison: Ms. Mullens
- Advisory Finance Committee Liaison : Mr. Redmond
- Manifest : (Primary signature) Ms. Mullens for the first six months and Ms. Janson for the last six months, (Secondary signature) Ms. Ludt
- Policy: Ms. Ludt and Ms. Coughlin
- PPC: Ms. Coughlin, Mr. Coughlan
- PTSA Liaison: Ms. Janson
- Publicity/Communications: Mr. Foley, Ms. Janson, and Ms. Ludt
- Recreation Liaison : Mr. Redmond and Mr. Foley
- Technology Committee: Mr. Foley and Mr. Coughlan
- Expendable Trust Advisory committee: Mr. Redmond and Mr. Foley
- School Start Time: Ms. Ludt, Ms. Mullens, and Ms. Coughlin
- Space needs/usage: Ms. Ludt and Mr. Coughlan

Mr. Coughlan explained that the current Treasurer is Ann Logan and the current Clerk is Nancy Baker. The Board decided to defer the appointments until the next meeting to allow the Chairman to speak to the incumbents.

The organizational portion of the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

#### **IV. APPOINTMENT OF SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICIALS**

### **REGULAR MEETING**

Chairman Coughlan called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Chairman Coughlan called for public comment and heard none.

#### **A. Spanish Advance Topics**

Kris Gallo introduced Sarah Laurent, French and Spanish Teacher, who has been teaching at Souhegan High School for seven years. Ms. Laurent explained that she is from France and has been living in the US for 10 years. She stated that she teaches the Spanish Advance Topics class, which is the equivalent of Spanish 5. She further explained that in order to create the curriculum for the class she went to Mexico for 6 weeks, went to workshops, and took classes. She also noted that she is finishing her masters at Revier College. She explained that the students presenting tonight are from her Trimester II class, which teaches culture through music and movies. She introduced Jacquelyn McKenney who stated that she enjoys the conversational nature of the class because she is pursuing Spanish so she can learn the language for traveling. She presented one of the portfolios she completed to the Board. Ms. Laurent introduced Laura Thompson to the Board

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

#### **II. PUBLIC TIME**

#### **III. PRESENTATIONS**

who present her portfolio.

In response to a question from Mr. Foley, Ms. Laurent stated that the students watched four movies and she made sure that each movie had a tie to a historical event.

In response to a question from Mr. Coughlan, Ms. Laurent stated that there are 17 students in the class.

### **B. Humanities**

Ms. Gallo introduced Adam Serial, 9<sup>th</sup> grade Humanities teacher, who has been a teacher at Souhegan High School for five years. Mr. Serial then introduced three of his students and played a video they created for the class to the Board.

Mr. Coughlan noted that the budget and all the warrant articles passed and stated that he is grateful for the voter support.

## **IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **A. Principal's Report**

Mr. Prescott noted that his report was in the Board's package but added that eighth grade orientation for the parents was held last night and that 150 to 200 parents attended. He stated that the teachers did a great job giving a 20-minute presentation about Souhegan overall and then freshman year specifically. He further noted that the guidance teachers will go to the Middle School for registration and then eighth graders will come to the High School in the spring for orientation.

Mr. Prescott also noted that the staff is investigating starting a Spanish Honors Society at a nominal cost.

In response to a request by the Board, Mr. Prescott presented a Discipline Statistic Summary to the Board and noted that Bob Thompson is in Quebec City with some students currently but the Board may want to discuss the statistics with him later. He also noted that vandalism, in the form of graffiti, tends to pop up in stints, but they are usually able to track down the perpetrators quickly and end the issue. He also noted that theft issues tend to be the same.

In response to a question from Mr. Redmond, Mr. Prescott stated that the current protocols have been reviewed with the staff and additional steps have been added. He also noted that some doors have been changed so that they automatically lock and cannot be left open.

Ms. Ludt also noted that Community Council thoroughly reviewed the option of security cameras and decided that the additional protocols were more

appropriate.

Ms. Mullens noted that at the parent orientation it would be great to have positive statistics available to the parents. Ms. Jansen stated that she felt like the staff did not show all their strengths and suggested that a piece of freshman student work might be nice to present. Ms. Ludt stated that whenever the administration makes a presentation they have to assume that it is the first time the audience is hearing about Souhegan.

In response to a question from Mr. Foley, Mr. Prescott stated that the more major problems are from a small percentage of the students who are the repeat offenders but they make an effort to keep the student in school and are also working on other consequences such as giving back to the community if the student has offended the community.

In response to a question from Ms. Janson, Mr. Prescott stated that there were some issues with the Fang Fest skits but he did not realize until after the fact because you had to be part of the group to understand. He stated that consequences were dolled out and it is possible that the school will not be allowing the skits anymore.

The Board asked Mr. Prescott to have Mr. Thompson consider creative discipline options to present to the Board and invite Officer Smith to come to a meeting of the Board.

### **B. Community Council Report**

David Brundage member appeared before the Board and explained that the Council is considering a proposal from Mr. Thompson to remove offsite privileges for 60 days for students who disobey the substance abuse policy. He also explained that they are considering a request to help fund plates and other items for an upcoming presentation and for recycling bins. He also noted that the group's investigation of cafeteria practices should be concluding soon. Lastly, he stated that soon the group would be holding elections for executive positions.

In response to a question from the Board, the David Brundage stated that the substance abuse proposal is in addition to the current consequence which is a 10 day suspension unless the students sees the drug/alcohol counselor in which case the suspension is reduced to 3 days,

In response to a question from Chairman Coughlan, the Board asked that the

**V. CONSENT**

minutes and the activities fund report be pulled from the consent agenda.

## AGENDA

Without objection the following consent agenda items were approved:

### **B. Budget**

#### **1. Treasurer's Report**

##### **a. February 2009**

#### **2. Manifest**

##### **a. February 2009**

### **C. MS -22**

### **E. Donations**

### **A. Minutes**

**The Board approved the minutes of February 19, 2009 as amended.**

**Voting: 4 ayes; Mr. Redmond abstained.**

### **D. Activities Fund Report**

In response to a question from Ms. Ludt, Mr. Prescott, stated that until recently the activity fund was being used to fund uniforms but now the budget is funding new uniforms in a rotation, but sometimes the teams decide to buy uniforms on their own if they want newer ones sooner, or to purchase equipment if they want the items to be replaced more quickly or they want additional equipment.

In response to a question from Ms. Ludt, Mr. Prescott explained that some of the \$28,000 in the football account was rolled over from the Booster's Clubs private account as an agreement between the school and the booster club in order to gain non-profit status for the club and to gain more control regarding the purchases for the district.

Mr. Prescott confirmed that gate fees and user fees go into the general fund.

In response to a question from Ms. Ludt, Mr. Prescott stated that the radio station is not operating currently but there are still funds in case students wanted to start it back up again.

In response to a question from Ms. Ludt, Mr. Prescott stated that music students work on raising funds to offset the cost of trips such as to Florida.

### **A. 2009-10 Professional Staff**

After review, a MOTION was made by Ms. Mullens and SECONDED by Mr. Foley to approve the nominations as proposed by the Superintendent.

Dr. Jennings noted that the nomination list reflects a cut in staffing of 4.75

## **VI. NOMINATIONS**

teachers, but still addresses the needs of the students.

Voting: 6 ayes; motion carried unanimously.

#### **A. AP Classes Extra Time**

In response to a previous request from the Board, Dr. Jennings proposed some transfers to cover the cost of ice storm make up time for the AP classes. Mr. Prescott explained that the cost represents one day per AP teacher and noted that after the curriculum is done this would allow students to spend time to better prepare for the AP tests with the teachers, probably during vacation. Dr. Jennings stated that the total cost is \$2,275.

**A MOTION was made by Mr. Foley and SECONDED by Ms. Janson to approve the budget transfer.**

**Voting: 6 ayes; motion carried unanimously.**

#### **B. Calendar**

Dr. Jennings explained that she has presented this calendar to the other two Boards and they approved it contingent on all Boards approving it. She explained that the 2009-2010 calendar has some restrictions that had to be dealt with and that this calendar was formed in consultation with the unions, the professional teachers group, and the administration. She also explained that the state is requiring that the calendar have 10 days for snow make up built in to it but noted that this can include in service days. She also noted that labor day is not until September 7<sup>th</sup> this year and the AEA does not allow staff to return to work more than six days before Labor Day. She also noted that February and April vacations are the week follow Massachusetts' vacations and that there is no election day this year so accommodations are not necessary. She explained that the first proposed in service day is on October 9<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with Columbus Day and a curriculum day has been added on Presidents day

Ms. Ludt proposed that the district get rid of April and February vacation and instead have one March vacation.

Mr. Coughlan noted that in previous discussions the teachers were anxious to have the two breaks to allow for the students to have breaks.

In response to a question from Mr. Redmond, Dr. Jennings stated that no other schools in the areas have made any dramatic changes to their schedules.

**A MOTION was made by Mr. Redmond and SECONDED by Mr. Foley to approve the calendar as presented.**

## **VII. ACTION ITEMS**

**A MOTION was made by Ms. Ludt and SECONDED by Ms. Janson to amend the motion to combine February and April vacation into one week in March.**

Mr. Redmond stated that he felt it is to dramatic a move with not enough information and that the experts have all decided that this calendar is appropriate.

Mr. Foley stated that he was nervous about voting in the change without getting feedback from the public. He also noted that ending school too early in the year might also cause issues.

Ms. Janson stated that she agrees with Mr. Foley but feels that the Board dropped the ball on the issue and should look at the suggestion over the next year.

**Voting (on amendment): 5 opposed, 1 abstention; the amendment failed.**

Mr. Coughlan asked that the issue be put on the SAU agenda for next year.

Ms. Mullens asked that the calendar be discussed at an SAU meeting before it goes to individual boards next year.

**Voting: 5 ayes; motion carried unanimously.**

In response to a suggestion from Ms. Ludt, Dr. Jennings suggested that public relations be one of the issues that the Communications Committee deals with.

## **VIII. OTHER**

In response to a question from Mr. Coughlan, the Board suggested the following agenda items for the upcoming year: merit pay, discipline issues with Mr. Thompson, math program changes, department head reports, report from Jim Miner, report from the Athletic Director, and a report from the Communications Committee.

The Board discussed the change of venue and being video taped.

**A MOTION was made by Mr. Redmond and SECONDED by Ms. Mullens to adjourn the meeting.**

## **IX. REVIEW OF MEETING/ ADJOURN**

**Voting: 6 ayes; motion carried unanimously.**

Chairman Coughlan declared the meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m.