

SOUHEGAN SCHOOL BOARD**June 18, 2009****FINAL MINUTES****Approved 8/18/09**

Chairman Coughlan opened the public hearing at 6:00 p.m.

I. PUBLIC HEARING

Dr. Jennings explained that the purpose of the public hearing is to let the Board and the public know about the administration's plans for the anticipated American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds.

Ms. Sparks reviewed the guiding principals of the ARRA including spending the funds quickly while creating jobs and improving student achievement. She then reviewed types of grants offered by the ARRA noting that the Souhegan is eligible for the IDEA Part B and Part B619 grants totaling in \$197,764. Ms. Sparks further reviewed the requirements of the ARRA grants such as public accountability, funds being accounted for separately, and the monies being used in ways that are linked to student achievement. She stated that the district plans are in line with the suggestions from the federal government as they include scientifically based interventions, and a focus on professional development. Ms. Spark reviewed a detailed list of the items to be included in the application such as READ 180 software to assist struggling readers with comprehension. She reminded the Board that the funds have to be obligated by September 30, 2011 and expended by December 30, 2011, the funds can not be used to supplant rather they can only be used to supplement, and an application for the funds will have to be completed this summer and again in October.

In response to a question from Mr. Foley, Ms. Sparks stated that the implementation of the programs has to occur within the two year time period.

In response to a question from Mr. Redmond, Ms. Sparks stated that she does not plan on these programs locking the district into any perpetual costs. Dr. Jennings stated that, for example, the people being trained as part of the Train the Trainers program have a two year obligation and that's all.

Mr. Coughlan noted that these funds would be going into the FY10 and FY11 budget.

Mr. Prescott stated that they looked carefully at whether the district would be in a bind two years down the road when the funds are gone and therefore chose to use the funds for a lot of consulting work. He also noted that the Read 180

program has a very low annual fee for the technology which will be rolled into the regular budget.

In response to a question from Ms. Ludt, Ms. Sparks explained that the administration has to be very careful that these funds will not be used to reduce the operating budget.

Chairman Coughlan closed the public hearing at 6:15 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING

Chairman Coughlan called the meeting to order at 6:16 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER ATTENDANCE

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, Nicole Heimark, Renee Sparks, Peg Silva, Bruce Chakrin, and Jim Miner.

Minutes Recorder: Heather Loewy Nichols

Chairman Coughlan called for public comment and heard none.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Principal's Report

Mr. Prescott thanked the Board for all they have done and noted that he has enjoyed his time working with everybody and the support he has received from the Board.

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Coughlan noted that a red maple was planted outside the office as recognition of Mr. Prescott's work at the school.

In response to a question from Ms. Janson, Mr. Prescott stated that two of the three teams did do the Power of One program this year and noted that all the teams have done it at one time or another. In response to another question from Ms. Janson, Mr. Prescott stated that it is possible to require each team to do certain projects. Ms. Silva noted that she was recently at a 10th grade meeting and they are planning on meeting this summer to discuss all the teams doing the Power of One program.

B. Community Council Report

The representative from Community Counsel was not present.

Ms. Mullens stated that the Community Counsel heard a proposal on recyclable paper goods for the annex cafeteria, filming meetings was voted down, the last meeting of the year was last week, and the group will start meeting again in the fall.

Bob Thompson stated that he put forward a proposal to reconfigure the student parking with the goal of not having students park in the dirt parking lot as it is a difficult place to supervise and the proposal passed.

Ms. Mullens also noted that there was a proposal to say the Pledge of Allegiance and have a moment of silence everyday that passed.

C. Committee Reports

1. Space Needs Committee

Ms. Ludt stated that the Space Needs Committee met and several people went on a tour of the building which was very useful. She explained that their report identifies areas that need attention, could be repurposed, or are ongoing space needs. She noted that they did not get to tour the outside facilities such as storage and athletic areas nor did they get to talk about green efforts. She stated that she is not sure of the next step but noted that it would be nice to identify something that could be fixed in the near future. She noted that the group will probably meet again for an additional tour.

2. Communications Committee

Dr. Jennings noted that the Communications Committee will be meeting next week.

Dr. Jennings introduced Jim Bosman and recommended him to the Board to be appointed as interim principal. Dr. Jennings explained that Mr. Bosman was one of the founding members of Souhegan High School and has since retired from education but he is willing to come out of retirement for one year. Dr. Jennings reviewed his credentials with the Board including several awards for science and math education. Dr. Jennings explained that Mr. Bosman has knowledge of the school and a commitment and sincere interest in helping the Board find the right leader for the following year.

In response to a question from Mr. Coughlan, Dr. Jennings explained that there is a process through the state which will allow for Mr. Bosman to be certified for one year and noted that his contract would be dependent on the certification.

In response to another question from Mr. Coughlan, Mr. Bosman stated that he would not be interested in a position for more than this year rather he is

IV. INTERIM PRINCIPAL

interested in helping the School Board find a good leader for the school and he feels that he can provide a temporary holding spot for the next person.

Ms. Ludt stated that it is nice to have Mr. Bosman at the table again.

In response to a question from Mr. Foley, Dr. Jennings stated that his contract will be a per diem contract for 215 days which is the same as the deans' contracts.

In response to a concern expressed by Mr. Redmond, Mr. Bosman stated that he is not worried about making progress with the staff even though he will be leaving in a year because he feels that the staff is committed to the students' education.

In response to comment from Mr. Redmond, Mr. Bosman stated that he was not looking for a principal position but he is interested in this one because he does know most of the staff and feels he can come back easily.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Ludt and SECONDED by Ms. Mullens to accept the recommendation made by Dr. Jennings for Mr. Bosman as Interim Principal.

Voting: 6 ayes; motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Bosman congratulated Mr. Prescott and stated that the school was lucky to have him and wished him good luck.

In response to a question from Chairman Coughlan, the Board asked to pull the minutes of May 21, 2009.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

Without objection the following consent agenda items were approved:

- A. Minutes**
 - 3. June 3, 2009**
- B. Budget**
 - 1. Treasurer's Report**
 - a. May 2009**
 - 2. Manifest**
 - a. May 2009**
- C. Transfer**
- D. Nominations**

A. Minutes

A MOTION was made by Mr. Redmond and SECONDED by Ms. Mullens

to accept the minutes of May 21, 2009 as amended.

Voting: 6 ayes; motion carried unanimously.

In response to a question from Ms. Ludt, Mr. Prescott stated that there are two part time positions still open; one for a speech language pathologist which he just interviewed for and one for a psychologist which may be tricky to fill but he is going to be talking to someone this week.

A. FY09 Goals

Ms. Heimarck explained that in 2007 the SAU embarked on a five year plan with the overall mission being to strive to engage, challenge, and support all learners. She explained that in Year One most of the schools had faculty centered goals and in Year Two the goals changed to student centered goals focusing on student progress and student achievement. She further explained that Souhegan engaged in NWEA for the first time this year which is an instructional assessment versus a masterly assessment and they tried to design goals around the assessment. She noted that they made sure that the goals are achievable but ambitious. Ms. Heimarck presented a NWEA norming chart for reading and math and explained that the first year of testing created a good baseline of data and will help in creating goals in the future.

Mr. Prescott stated that a literacy team that meets once a month for review and discussion has been formed. He stated that in Year One the goal was that 80% of their professional staff will receive at least 5 hours of training in literacy strategies and will use at least one strategy. He explained that the Year Two goal was that overall 50% of students in grades 9 and 10 would meet their NWEA target goals noting that the test was given before April vacation rather than in June as originally planned due to scheduling. Mr. Prescott then went on to review the goals in the different subject areas stating that in the Humanities the goal was that students will meet grade level expectations in vocabulary acquisition. He explained that when looking at past data the teachers found that complex vocabulary was an area of issue. The goal in Mathematics was that 50% of students meet target growth for NWEA and that students will continue to work on vocabulary acquisition. The goal in Science was that 85% of students will acquire the skills necessary to read, comprehend, and analyze science literature. In World Language the goal was that 75% of students will demonstrate reading comprehension by scoring proficient level or better on an effective communicator rubric.

Mr. Prescott then reviewed the progress of the students towards the stated goals. 49% of students reached or exceeding their target goals in Reading. He stated

VI. PRESENTATIONS

that the staff is still processing the results as they were hoping that the students would perform better. He noted that they are looking at the curriculum and seeing if any changes need to be made and also preparing reports that will be ready in fall to send to the students' next teachers. In Math 54% of students met their target growth which exceeded the overall goal. Mr. Prescott noted that NWEA recommends starting with a goal of 50%. He then reviewed a chart showing target growth versus overall growth for grade 9 and 10 in reading and math.

Ms. Silva explained that at the beginning of the year the literacy team created a literacy template, gave it to each teacher, and asked the teachers to complete it three times throughout the year. Ms. Silva explained that in Humanities students participated in Café Literati in which she did a two week writing workshop with each of the teams, and then the teachers took over to have the students complete a piece of writing. She further explained that over 200 papers were whittled down to 24 papers through a March Madness type bracket competition and the top 24 papers become part of the Café Literati. She noted that 250 people were in attendance including all the students that came to listen to their peers read their work. Ms. Silva further noted that one team piloted The Great Read of The Great Gatsby by having all the students read the book and then having each honors student paired with one community member for an intensive conversation about the book. This project then extended to the Grapes of Wrath and was opened up to whoever wanted to participate in the community member pairing. Ms. Silva stated that one 10th grade tracked their vocabulary assessments and found that when 10 to 15 words were assigned students did better than when 20 words were assigned.

Ms. Silva explained that in Science teachers focused on asking kids to look at their reading assignments as pieces of writing rather than from a consumer's point of view and had students read scientific literature on a weekly basis. Ms. Silva stated that in Marine Biology students had mastered 74% of the vocabulary in the beginning of the year but by the beginning of the third trimester students has mastered 82% of their vocabulary. She noted that teachers were also working on assigning the reading at the appropriate level for the student.

Ms. Silva explained that the World Language teachers realized that if they were going to emphasize reading as literary analysis they needed English partners to help with those skills. She stated that they developed a series of graphic organizers to help students and found that the students were more engaged and able to speak more in the target language.

Ms. Silva stated that in Math several teachers created extensive word walls to establish a language in the classroom and classes worked hard on looking at word problems as reading examples. She found that departments were working on strategies that will increase students comprehension on the standardized text for instance the Science teachers helping the students better comprehend non fiction work.

Ms. Silva noted that John Ranta is doing a three year career growth program on video literacy, as the definition of literacy includes video and oral skills, and John Ranta and Lisa Petrie are taking a broader view of literacy and creating tools for the teachers to use.

Mr. Prescott reviewed the next steps in the five year plan including the formulation of Year Three goals, analyzing NWEA data to inform the literacy team and instruction, continuing to develop Response To Intervention, continued collaboration district wide, focused reading and math instruction and support for below grade level students, and professional development in differentiated instruction.

In response to a question from Ms. Ludt, Mr. Prescott stated that he plans to spend time with Mr. Bosman before he leaves and Ms. Meaney, Mr. Gallo, and Ms. Heimark will still be available to assist in the transition.

In response to a question from Mr. Foley, Mr. Prescott stated that the staff has been working on differentiated instruction for years and part of the administrations' job is to figure out how to teach the data piece efficiently so they have to set aside time for instruction of the teachers.

Mr. Coughlan stated that based on the 60% overall growth it is clear to him that the instruction is not reaching all the students because 40% of the students did not make growth.

Mr. Prescott stated that the administration needs to look at the curriculum and noted that they have not had time to analyze the data yet but they will in the summer.

B. FY09 Budget Surplus

Ms. Shankel explained that she is presenting the FY09 budget report this evening so that the Board can make a better informed decision later in the agenda. She explained that the revenues are down due to less interest income however that was more then made up for by the \$90,000 in unanticipated Catastrophic Aid and Medicare funds. She further explained that there is

\$240,000 unencumbered funds remaining in the expenditure side of the budget. She noted that this is mostly due to professional development reimbursement not being as much as anticipated, a lower bid on copier maintenance, a lower bid for natural gas, and lower benefits expenditures. She stated that the total estimated undesignated fund balance is \$330,000 and at budget time they projected a little under \$200,000.

In response to a question from Mr. Redmond, Ms. Shankel explained that the district did have some savings due to less days of running the buses because of the ice storm.

In response to a question from Mr. Redmond, Ms. Shankel stated that the Board is permitted to spend the appropriated amount which means the \$240,000 the district was under budget in expenditures can be spent and the \$40,000 transfer that was approved through a warrant article can come out of the extra revenue.

A. Acceptance of ARRA funds

A MOTION was made by Mr. Foley and SECONDED by Ms. Mullens to accept the anticipated American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds in the amount of \$197,164.

Voting: 6 ayes; motion carried unanimously.

B. Expandable Trust

1. Artificial Turf

Ms. Shankel explained that the voters agreed to create the expendable trust in March for maintenance and design of artificial turf fields and in order to start the fund the Board needs to accept the donation that has been made by Mr. Redmond.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Ludt and SECONDED by Ms. Mullens that the School Board accept the artificial turf expandable trust fund donated by Dana Redmond as authorized by the vote of the School District meeting on Article 4 at the 2009 Annual School District Meeting.

Voting: 6 ayes; motion carried unanimously.

2. Facility Maintenance

Mr. Redmond explained that the facility maintenance fund was set up in 2007 with \$40,000 and this year another \$40,000 will go into the fund. He explained that he and Mr. Foley are on the expendable trust committee and they have been considering an irrigation project. He explained that currently Souhegan uses 2,000,000 gallons of water from Pennichuck to irrigate the fields and originally the plan for Souhegan was to use the river water for irrigation and the piping to

Souhegan School Board Meeting Minutes for June 18, 2009

**VII. ACTION
ITEMS**

do so was substantially completed. He further explained that a permit has been issued to pump from the Souhegan River and the lines are in but instead of coming from the river the water comes from Pennichuck. He stated that the district spends over \$10,000 on water to irrigate the fields. He explained that the district already has permission to pump water out of the river and it would cost about \$35,000 to complete project.

Mr. Miner showed the Board his proposed plan explained how the water can be drawn from the river using a submersed pump that sits just above the bottom of the river and connects to pipes that would run under the abutting conservation land and hook up to the present system. He also noted that the system would be expandable to the other fields and irrigation systems and that a well can not satisfy the needs of the fields.

In response to a question from Ms. Ludt, Mr. Miner stated that he has been told that they can not run the river dry and noted that golf courses in the area pull from the Souhegan and it does not run the river dry.

In response to a question from Mr. Redmond, Mr. Miner stated that he wants to be able to water the fields more than they do now in order to take better care of the fields. He noted that watering the fields overran the budget of \$4,000 this year.

In response to a question from Mr. Coughlan, Mr. Redmond stated that the district is permitted to use 150,000 gallons a minute which is much more than is necessary.

In response to a question from Ms. Janson, Mr. Miner explained that the pipes would run under the conservation land and that the district would let the owners of the conservation know about their plans but they would not be disturbing any of the conservation land.

Ms. Ludt stated that it would be useful, in the future, if the expandable trust committee could come to the Board and ask if they have recommendations for projects. Mr. Coughlan suggested that perhaps in the future the committee could meet more regularly with notice to the Board.

In response to a question from Ms. Ludt, Ms. Shankel stated that the Board could ask for the money that will be saved to go back into the fund because this will reduce the budget. She stated that it is a great project because the pay back is only three years and it shows good fiscal management.

The Board decided to schedule a public hearing prior to the SAU meeting regarding this issue.

Mr. Redmond stated that the Board and the administration spend a ton of time planning education and implementing improvements but that they have to start looking at the facilities while planning or the Board will get caught reacting to issues. He stated that he thinks that the Board should consider a facilities study being done by a professional group to see what the needs are from a program and facilities stand point. He stated that the study would cost between \$35,000 and \$40,000 but would create a road map for the Board for years to come.

Ms. Ludt stated that she thinks it is a good idea and it would garner better support from the public if the district had a third party professional opinion.

Mr. Miner stated that he thinks the high school will start having issues within the next five years with items such as heating, paving, and roofing and he thinks the professional aspect of having multiply engineers looking at what the district should be doing, in terms of maintenance and replacement, will save the district in the long run.

C. FY09 Budget Surplus Transfers

Bruce Chakrin explained that the current Mac lab is old and the staff has gone through an extensive process involving all the staff to determine the best next step. They decided that the best option is to replace the Mac lab with another Mac lab and include better art, music, and video editing software. He is asking for \$18,000 for the difference in the budgeted amount and the cost of the upgrade.

In response to a question from Mr. Foley, Mr. Chakrin stated that the proposal includes fairly inexpensive I-Macs augmented with external hard drives.

In response to a question from Mr. Redmond, Mr. Chakrin stated that this proposal does not bring the technology plan up to date from when it was cut due to budget issues.

In response to a question from Ms. Ludt regarding slow log in time, Mr. Chakrin stated that part of the issue is with the protections that have to be on the computers, and part is the wireless connection. He stated that he is looking to upgrade this in the future but he needs to get everything up to N speed in order to have the whole program running faster as the slowest component will slow the entire system down.

In response to a question from Ms. Ludt, Mr. Chakrin stated that sometimes there are some grant programs available but these usually focus on needier communities.

Mr. Chakrin explained that he proposing making the servers virtual services which allows the school to have one hefty server and then put four or five virtual servers on the machine. He explained that this saves money on power, cooling and support.

Mr. Chakrin reviewed the technology request including server memory, a virtual server, core switch, and a virtual desktop, noting that these kinds of projects will prevent the district from spending more money in the future.

In response to a question from Ms. Ludt, Ms. Shankel explained that E-Rate funds are used for SAU wide used systems.

In response to a question from Ms. Ludt, Ms. Shankel explained that the SAU does not know if the district will be given ARRA Item 2D funds and this type of purchase may not be appropriate for those funds. Bruce explained that typically 2D items are not related to infrastructure projects but rather directly related to student use and if the district receives any of those funds it will be less than \$1,000. Ms. Shankel reminded the Board that the use of any stimulus funds must be tied to student performance. Ms. Ludt stated that she felt that the Mac lab sounds like it would be improving student performance. Bruce stated that it may fit the requirements if the district receives any funds.

In response to a question from Mr. Foley, Bruce stated that the proposal includes 30 to 40 thin clients.

In response to a question from Mr. Foley, Bruce stated that this proposal will supplement the ongoing replacement program.

Mr. Miner reviewed his proposal for maintenance items that had previously been dropped off the budget including a dump body replacement, grounds work, showcase track lighting installation, and heating system preventive main and repairs.

Ms. Ludt asked that a telephone be put in the weight room and that Mr. Miner consider doing something with the lockers.

Ms. Shankel suggested that the Board may want to wait for a facilities study to appropriately handle the locker situation.

Ms. Mullens noted that the showcase lighting was voted down at Community Counsel because they found it to not be a worthwhile use of funds. Mr. Miner stated that he does not know of a cheaper option as most of the cost is to bring electricity to that area.

The Board discussed possible scenarios to pay for the presented projects.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Redmond and SECONDED by Ms. Mullens to approve the expenditure of \$117,736 for the proposed technology and facilities items, the irrigation proposal and \$7,500 worth of items from the facilities committee's list.

Voting: 6 ayes; motion carried unanimously.

A. Later Start Proposal

Ms. Ludt stated that the Later Start Committee put out a survey and while they did not receive a lot of responses, most of them were favorable.

Ms. Ludt noted that there was a report in the Union Leader where non local people thought that children should just be put to bed earlier.

Dr. Jennings noted that there were concerns at the last Mont Vernon meeting but she assured the public that there would be public communication. She also noted that the SAU will discuss the impact of later starts on the collective bargaining agreement.

Ms. Ludt stated that it has come to her attention that the increased athletic fee could be a hardship for families with multiple children in multiple sports and suggested that the Board consider putting a per family cap on the fee.

Mr. Coughlan suggested that the Board look at the data after a year.

Mr. Redmond suggested that someone should look at the fundraising and see that the money is going to the area of greatest need.

Ms. Mullens stated that she thinks that other schools put a cap on their fees just because it is a reasonable thing to do.

Mr. Coughlan stated that the fall fees will be paid before the next meeting and the Board needs a concrete proposal, so he suggested putting the issue on the August agenda and that the Athletic Committee work with the Athletic Director on a proposal.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Mullens and SECONDED by Mr. Foley to

VIII. DISCUSSION

IX. OTHER

X. REVIEW OF

adjourn the meeting.

Voting: 6 ayes; motion carried unanimously.

**MEETING/
ADJOURN**

Chairman Coughlan declared the meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.