

MINUTES
SOUHEGAN COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD
October 19, 2006
Souhegan High School – Annex Room 222

Page 805

Chair Steve Coughlan called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Present:

ATTENDANCE

Souhegan Cooperative School Board: Steve Coughlan, Jeanne Ludt, Phyllis Thomas, John Walsh, and Janet Gaynor (left at 7:15 p.m.)

Administrative Team: Nicole Heimarck, Ted Houlihan, Dr. Mary Jennings, Colleen Meaney, Scott Prescott, and Elizabeth Shankel

Community Council: Frank Cinque

Minutes Recorder: Lyn Jennings

Steve Coughlan announced Jan Phelps' intent to resign from the school board effective immediately. Steve read aloud Jan Phelps' letter of resignation to members of the board as well as meeting attendees. Jan said she had thought long and hard and determined she cannot give the time and effort it requires to serve on the school board at this time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A motion was made by John Walsh and seconded by Phyllis Thomas to accept Jan Phelps' letter of resignation with regret. All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

Cynthia Dokmo, the School District Moderator was at the school board meeting to announce the members of the Finance Advisory Committee. Cynthia first provided the committee members names that were not able to attend the meeting and she then had the committee members present at the meeting introduce themselves. The committee includes May Balsama, Allise Desmet, Fran Harrow, and Marilyn Peterman.

Committee members present at the board meeting included:

Christine Morley and Dan Foley.

The liaison from the school board to the Finance Advisory Committee was Jan Phelps so John Walsh volunteered to take over this position.

Cynthia told members of the board Anne Dodd from Mont Vernon would not be able to serve on the committee. She said she was having a difficult time getting someone from Mont Vernon to serve on the committee.

John Walsh said he would try and get someone to serve on the committee from Mont Vernon.

A. Administration – Board members received a copy of Scott

Prescott’s School Board Report dated October 2006 in their board packets.

Scott told members of the board the PSAT’s for Juniors went very smoothly. Scott said George Ruffell the Guidance Director did a really nice job coordinating the exam.

Seniors just had their Senior Class trip to Mt. Monandnock, and Scott said the trip went very well.

Scott said High School students would take the NECAP exam in November. He said it’s being given later than the other grades because it is a pilot program.

Phyllis Thomas asked if the Math Modules were part of the regular curriculum. Scott said they are not grade specific, he said a student might be taking another math class as well while working on a Math Module.

Dr. Jennings wanted to thank the school board for the Ice Cream Social they put on for the staff and faculty at the high school. She said it was very successful and the faculty seemed to enjoy it.

B. Community Council – Board members received a copy of the Community Council Report dated 10/18/06, which was addressed to the School Board and submitted by Brittany Daniels.

Brittany was unable to attend the meeting therefore, Frank Cinque from the Community Council attended the school board meeting. Steve Coughlan asked about the reference to “John Smith Juniors” and what they did.

Frank Cinque told members of the board John Smith Juniors make sure they follow theft with John Smith so it doesn’t get out of hand.

Steve said he noticed all the planning for Fang Fest, and wanted to know when it was. Frank said Monday afternoon, October 23, 2006 is when it begins and it ends on Friday, October 27, 2006.

Dr. Jennings asked if she should come to one of the events and Frank suggested she go see the Fang Fest skits on Friday afternoon, since they are supposed to be very funny this year.

C. Professional Development Committee – Steve Coughlan said he would appoint himself as the liaison for the committee since no else expressed interest.

Steve Coughlan invited comments from the public but none were forthcoming.

**PUBLIC TIME /
PRESENTATIONS**

A. Annual and Deliberative Sessions – Voter’s Guide – Steve said last year board members agreed to discuss the preparation for this years Voter’s Guide in October to determine who would be doing what so the board would be

ACTION ITEMS

ahead of the process.

Steve said last year Janet Gaynor, Jeanne Ludt and Janet Phelps worked on the Voter's Guide. Steve said they did an excellent job and he was wondering if they would be willing to work on it together again this year.

Janet said she wanted to be able to have a little more say in the content of the guide. Discussion followed.

Janet, Jeanne and Phyllis agreed to work on the Voter's Guide together.

B. Town of Amherst Capital Plan – Steve asked to defer this agenda item until the next board meeting.

A. Safety and Security Committee – Board Input – Scott said it would be premature for him to provide the board with the committee's decisions and recommendations at this time. He said he could provide the board with information as it relates to the process the committee is following as well as their timeline.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Scott said he welcomed the board's thoughts and input.

Scott highlighted the process – In the Spring, the Safety and Security Committee was formed. John Smith and Scott Prescott met with Ted Houlihan and John Young. The committee invited two teachers as well as two students from Community Council and Zoe Quindazzi Ilaqua.

Scott said he and John Smith met with local and state safety officials. State officials did not want to make any recommendations prior to school being in session.

The committee received reports from the Police, Fire, Greg Champlain, and the State Agency involved with Emergency Management planning.

Scott said the committee read the material and broke it into sections. The committee discussed items they should talk about as a group and then took specific areas and discussed those in their smaller groups.

The information was prioritized and from it, they created a punch list of to do items, which have no budgetary implications.

They will also provide a list of recommendations that will have an impact on the budget which involve safety and security. These recommendations will be presented in mid to late November.

Dr. Jennings said based on the above report, Scott would probably be able to present some preliminary ideas to the board on December 12, 2006.

Board members were asked to provide their input regarding Safety and Security.

Phyllis Thomas said she read an article that said we didn't want to have to lock up our campuses. She said she would like to see students learn to act in their own defense. She suggested this be

part of the program taught to students.

Janet Gaynor said she wanted students to know it is okay to tell someone when something bad is going to happen.

Janet said in the past she was against cameras in school however, she may have been swayed towards using them since they could prevent many episodes from occurring. She said make sure students practice the drills and understand what to do in case of an emergency.

Jeanne Ludt said practice is important. She said she wants the students and faculty to be so good at lockdowns they could do it in their sleep.

She said the committee has discussed preventing intruders in the school as well as protecting the possessions in the school.

Jeanne said the committee is excellent and the report given to the committee was very thorough.

John Walsh said he likes the committees approach. He also said he liked Phyllis's comment about the kids becoming a vital component in this process.

Dr. Jennings suggested that everyone take responsibility for anyone entering the building. She said for example, if she enters the high school and someone doesn't know her, the adult or student should pick up on it right away and ask who she is prior to her entry.

B. Souhegan Board Goals 06-07 – First Draft – Dr. Jennings told members of the board Scott Prescott and Nicole Heimarck worked on the first draft last week. Dr. Jennings asked that board members look over the document and offer their input and suggestions.

Steve Coughlan asked members of the board to be prepared to offer what they as a board are doing towards these goals at the next board meeting.

Jeanne Ludt said for Goal # 2 – Ensure improved communication between and among all parts, the board provides Connections articles on a monthly basis.

C. Wellness Policy – 1st Reading – Board members received a copy of the Wellness Policy for their 1st Reading.

John Walsh commented that the policy was very broad.

Jeanne Ludt said at the last SAU Board meeting, she suggested adding a statement that said adequate space and equipment would be provided, and since it hadn't been put into this draft, she wondered what happened to her suggestion.

Nicole said she brought Jeanne's suggestion back to some of the committee members, and they agreed that resources shouldn't necessarily be put into the policy statement. Nicole said committee members thought it should go into the strategic plan.

Nicole said she went back to committee meeting minutes and they said in their discussion, they deliberately left out resources from the policy statement.

Jeanne said she thought the administration as well as the board needs to show a commitment to the policy and by adding this into the policy she believed it would.

Steve told members of the board to date Amherst and Mont Vernon have chosen not to include it in their policy.

John Walsh asked what the negative impact would be by putting it in the policy.

Dr. Jennings summarized the alternatives for board members:

- 1) Leave the policy as is, lobby for the inclusion in the Strategic Plan.
- 2) Leave it as is and read the other policy to see if it talks about adequate space and equipment.
- 3) Amend this policy.

Phyllis Thomas thinks Jeanne's recommendation belongs in the Strategic Plan, not the policy.

Board members agreed they would not act until the next board meeting.

Dr. Jennings and Jeanne Ludt will meet and come back with their recommendations at the next reading.

D. SAU OFFICES – Amherst Master Plan - Dr. Jennings reminded board members at the last SAU meeting they received a copy of the SAU Office options along with the District costs associated with these options. The options included renovating the current SAU Offices at the Brick School, renovating Clark School or leasing space.

Jeanne Ludt said she thought about the options as presented at the last SAU meeting and questioned the legality.

Jeanne said as it stands, Amherst leases the Brick School to Amherst and Mont Vernon therefore, we are not to pay for any areas of improvement/renovations or we would not be abiding by the terms of the lease.

Steve summarized two possible solutions:

- 1) Obtain joint ownership of the building wherever the SAU was located.
- 2) Amherst to be the landlord – they would need to charge additional rent for the use of the facility. They couldn't charge for the renovations.

As the lease stands right now, the Amherst School District is responsible for the maintenance.

At the last SAU meeting John mentioned Clark may have a daycare center, and Colleen did some research regarding this alternative.

Dr. Jennings said yes, two rooms were discussed one for a daycare facility and one to house a Pre-K program.

Dr. Jennings said it is not a good idea to have joint ownership of property.

Steve said it is important to know what we want to do so Amherst has an idea going forward in order to make a decision on which option is best for the district.

Steve asked board members if they could share their preference regarding the SAU Offices. Steve said if Amherst adopted the plan to renovate the Brick School, would the board be comfortable with staying at the Brick School?

John Walsh and Jeanne Ludt both agreed if the office were viable they would support this option.

Steve asked members of the board if Amherst adopted the Clark School plan, would they be comfortable with this decision.

John Walsh said he would support this plan however; he would like to hear more about the Daycare center as well as the access to it.

Jeanne agreed she would support this option as well.

John said he prefers the Clark School option if it meets the needs of the SAU.

Board members reviewed the Consent Agenda per Steve Coughlan it is adopted.

CONSENT AGENDA

Steve Coughlan explained to members of the board the process for replacing Jan Phelps. Steve said the person who replaces Jan would serve on the school board until the March election. To serve after the March election, the person would fill a one-year term. The following year, it would be to serve a three-year term.

Steve said they would advertise in the local newspapers for a week or two. Interested candidates should write a letter of interest. The board will have a meeting to interview the interested candidates. The meeting will be scheduled for November 9, 2006. The meeting will be for board members to interview the candidates, there is no need for the administration to be present.

**REVIEW OF
MEETING /
ADJOURNMENT**

Steve said Jan served on four committees, Phyllis Thomas agreed to take over Publicity/Communications; Steve Coughlan agreed to review the manifests with Phyllis until a new committee member is appointed; and John Walsh agreed to serve on the SAU Strategic Goals Committee.

A motion was made by Phyllis Thomas and seconded by John Walsh to nominate John Rizzi as Secretary. All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Phyllis Thomas moved to adjourn. John Walsh seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.