

**MINUTES**  
**SOUHEGAN COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD**  
**December 21, 2006**  
**Souhegan High School – Annex Room 222**

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Chair Steve Coughlan called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. **CALL TO ORDER**

Present:

**ATTENDANCE**

Souhegan Cooperative School Board: Steve Coughlan, Janet Gaynor, Jeanne Ludt (arrived at 7:13 p.m.), Dana Redmond, John Rizzi, Phyllis Thomas, and John Walsh.

Administrative Team: Dr. Mary Jennings, Colleen Meaney, Scott Prescott, Elizabeth Shankel, and Kathy Skoglund

Finance Advisory Committee: May Balsama, Dan Foley, Fran Harrow, Christine Morley and Marilyn Peterman

Community Council: Brittany Daniels

Minutes Recorder: Lyn Jennings

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

The Consent Agenda was approved per Steve Coughlan.

**CONSENT AGENDA**  
**PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSION**

A. Co-Curricular Revolving Fund – Board members received a handout from Betty Shankel, which provided the details of establishing a School District Athletic Participation Fund in 2001.

Betty explained this fund has never been used, and was not set up the correct way. She said it should not be an expendable trust.

John Walsh asked how many revolving funds they have at Souhegan and Betty Shankel said one, Fund 79.

John Walsh suggested dissolving the revolving fund that has never been used

Dana Redmond asked how you get money out. Betty said she looks for authorization from the school.

Dana asked who actually approves the expenditures and Betty said Diane does.

Phyllis Thomas said if we are actually spending money out of the Co-Curricular Revolving Fund, we need to have some accountability as to what the funds are being spent on. It was explained athletic user fees, gate receipts, booster club fundraising and other activities flow through this account.

Dr. Jennings stated during her tenure in Massachusetts while using the audit firm of Melanson Heath, they could not have a student activity fund; everything had to go through the central office. Dr. Jennings said it is different in New Hampshire and the central office is doing them a courtesy by writing them checks.

John Walsh suggested Scott Prescott and Betty Shankel get together to make a recommendation at a future board meeting to come up with a resolution with regards to accountability. John said if the current process is okay with the auditors then he is fine with the current process.

Steve Coughlan said he wanted more visibility as to how these funds were being spent. He said he would think there is a lot more detail based on what is being spent out of the fund.

Scott Prescott provided a handout dated 11/29/06 titled Job/Project Report 7/1/2005 through 6/30/2006.

The handout detailed the Class Description, Income Opening, Income Receipts, Expenses Uncategorized, Expenses Disburse and Overall Total.

Discussion and questions followed regarding the handout.

- A. Fifth Class Proposal – FY07 Budget – Steve Coughlan said some teachers are required to teach a fifth class. Since it was too late to implement the fifth class proposal in last years budget the school board agreed to look at the budget in the fall and if
- ACTION ITEMS**

possible they would implement the program per the negotiated PPC Agreement.

Steve said he asked Scott and Betty to look at the current budget to see if it would be affordable to implement this year. It was determined it would cost an additional \$20,000 to implement the fifth class compensation. Both Scott and Betty said it would not be wise to spend it on the fifth class this year.

John Walsh moved to not pay the fifth class compensation this year, which was seconded by John Rizzi. All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

B. NHSAA Policy Review – Steve Coughlan explained at the last SAU meeting this information was presented to all school board members. Steve said Pam Dudoff is leading a charge for all the policies to be reviewed across all three boards. Steve explained the first step in the process is the review of each board's individual policies. The result will be a list of what is good, what is bad, and what is missing.

Steve said at the SAU Board meeting it was suggested the individual boards approve to expend \$900 from the school board legal line in order for the NHSAA to perform a policy review.

Steve Coughlan explained he has mixed feels about doing this, and he asked Betty if they had enough money in the legal line to do it. Betty confirmed they had the \$900 needed.

Phyllis Thomas said she believed this was a valuable lesson all the boards needed to approve.

A motion was made by Phyllis Thomas to expend \$900 to have the NHSBA review our policies. John Rizzi seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

A. Recommendations – PPC Agreements – Steve Coughlan said they had reached an agreement with the PPC on Monday. Steve said they have drafted two agreements, one for the Professional Staff and one for the Support Staff, which would be signed on January 8, 2007.

Board members received copies of the Agreements for the Professional Staff and Support Staff for the School Year 2007-2008.

Steve Coughlan reviewed the agreements with the board.

The following changes were highlighted in the Professional Staff Agreement for 2007-2008:

- Base Salary will be \$35,805, which is an increase of \$1,705.
- Longevity – Professional staff who have completed 10 years or more of service will be paid \$500 starting in year 11. Professional staff who have completed 15 years or more of service will be paid an additional \$1,000, totaling \$1,500 starting in year 16.
- Professional Development funding will be increased to \$650 per FTE and continue to be funded at 100%.
- Membership dues for the Souhegan PTSA will be subject to automatic reduction for Professional Staff (this will require signature authorization for each participating staff member).

The following changes were highlighted in the Support Staff Agreement for 2007-2008:

- Base Salary will be \$8.66 per hour, with no change except as described in the Assignment and Qualification Rates chart.
- The assignments and qualifications hourly rates for the Food Service and Custodian job Assignments are modified for hires on or after July 1, 2007. Staff hired on or before June 30, 2007 will continue to use the prior formula. Steve

explained only new hires would be impacted by this change.

- The Retirement benefit is given back to the support staff. Notice of intent to retire must be submitted to the board on or before January 1 of the year preceding retirement. An employee shall receive a one-time cash payment of \$2,500 by May 31<sup>st</sup> preceding the designated year of actual retirement. In the final year of employment, the employee will receive a one-time salary adjustment of \$4,250.
- Professional Development – Policy GCJA is amended to increase the reimbursement rate for approved in service activities for support staff from \$230 to \$275.
- Personnel Manual – SAU 39 commits to producing an up-to-date version of the Personnel Policy Manual prior to the start of the 2007-08 school year.

Dr. Jennings explained the new HR Director would be starting at the SAU on January 15, 2007. She said one of her new jobs would be to create a Personnel Manual.

Steve explained the board would vote to approve the agreements between the Souhegan Cooperative School Board and the Professional Staff as well as the Support Staff at the board meeting on January 11, 2007.

B. FY08 Budget – Draft 2 – Scott Prescott presented Draft 2 of the Souhegan High School Budget Presentation for FY08.

A Budget Summary was provided:

- Overall proposed increase of 6.83%
- Areas driving increase:
  - Salaries and Benefits
  - Special Education
  - Replacement Technology
  - Interscholastics

Scott presented a Summary of First and Second Level Cuts.

- First level of cuts reduces many areas of the budget with significant cuts in salary set aside, teaching supplies, and special education.
- Results in a reduction of \$165,685, which brings the budget increase from 6.83% to 5.81%.
- Second level of cuts reduces staff and technology.
- Results in an additional reduction of \$140,925, which is 5.81% to 4.93%.

Scott highlighted the First Level cuts by Series.

1100 Series:

- Salary Adjustments
- Substitutes – Scott said the figure now is more accurate than what they've had in the past.
- Classroom speakers – eliminated
- Textbooks – Biggest cut was in this line item.
- Software reductions
- Instructional Equipment – miscellaneous items
- Replacement Equipment – miscellaneous items
- Dues and Memberships

Christine Morley asked what type of impact the cuts in the textbooks line would have on the students and teachers.

Scott Prescott said the teachers will continue to use the worn out textbooks they currently have and the biggest impact would be felt in health where they do not have enough textbooks.

1200 Series:

- New Equipment
- Speech Therapy – this line should have come out of the budget since it's not needed any more.
- Out of District Placements – The administration took a lot of this money out because they trust they can access money if needed.

1400 Series:

- Interscholastic Coaches – Alpine and Swimming have been cut.
- Interscholastic Supplies – Scott did not take out the uniforms, he took out the soccer goals and nets as well as the ice and pool time.
- Safety and Security.

Jeanne Ludt asked if the \$5 increase in the athletic fee last year is helping. Scott said it is not making much of a difference.

1600 Series:

- Alternative Program – left little in this line item since there is only five students.
- Health Supplies

2200 Series:

- Summer Curriculum Work – level funded this line item.
- Technology Staff Development
- Career Development Academy
- Library Computer Software – cut the card cataloging system
- Replacement Equipment Library

2400 Series:

- Recruitment/Advertising
- Conferences and Travel

2600 Series:

- Plumbing Repairs

2700 Series:

- Field Trips
- Field Trips – Scholarships – This will cover half

the cost for teachers; they will phase in covering the full amount over time.

2800 Series:

- Technology Supplies
- Technology Infrastructure

2900 Series:

- Adjustments in Benefits figures

Scott presented a First Level of Cuts Summary:

- Results in a cut of \$165,685
- Changes the Percent Increase from 6.83% to 5.81%.

Scott presented the Second Level of Cuts totaling \$140,925.

Scott said the Level Two Cuts came out of the 1100 Series.

- Teacher Salaries - \$55,000 – one teacher
- New Equipment Technology
- Equipment Replacement Technology – Scott said the bulk of the money would come out of this line item. They would not be replacing a number of desktops and laptops.

Christine Morley asked what the impact on the classrooms would be if they eliminated desktops and laptops.

Scott said it depends on how the computers hold up.

Scott presented a Summary of the Second Level of Cuts:

- Results in a cut of an additional \$140,925.
- Changes the percent increase from 5.81% to 4.93%.

Board members as well as the Finance Advisory Committee were given the opportunity to ask questions

regarding Scott's presentation of the revised budget.

Phyllis Thomas asked what percentage of the 6.83% increase involved Special Education Costs being transferred from the Amherst District to the Souhegan District. Phyllis also asked what percentage of the 6.83% increase is due to salary increases.

Christine Morley asked if the district's share of retirement increases is a one-time thing or a continuing trend.

Dr. Jennings said it is really based on the performance of the investments. She said this is hard to predict year-to-year because it's based on the investments made by the retirement board. Dr. Jennings said what they are noticing each year is less state aid.

Betty Shankel agreed with Dr. Jennings, she said the increased cost of retirement to the district was due to the poor performance of the NH Retirement Fund, whether the district will see an increased cost again next year depends on how the fund performs in the future.

John Walsh congratulated the administration for getting through all this information and presenting Level One and Level Two cuts. John asked Steve Coughlan's opinion on cutting \$78,000 from the Technology proposal for the Level Two cuts.

Steve Coughlan said he thinks this is going to come back and pose a problem for the board and administration in the future. He also looks at cutting the textbooks in the Level One cuts as a problem too.

John Walsh suggested taking the proposals as presented by Scott Prescott and thinking about them and having another meeting in early January to decide what is best for the Souhegan District. John said they have some hard choices to make, he would like some time to digest the information then come back in early January and commit to a budget decision.

Jeanne suggested board members identify some key areas they are thinking about changing. Jeanne said she would like to see the money put back in for the textbooks, and Wintercession. Jeanne said she would

also like some money put in for building design or site management for a Wellness Facility, she said she does not want to be short changed by not planning.

John Walsh said this budget is pretty much a maintenance budget and unless they stop this trend, they won't be the school they have been.

Board members agreed to have another board meeting to discuss the budget on January 3, 2007.

C. Warrant Articles - Board members received a copy of the Draft Warrant Articles for FY08 dated December 12, 2006.

The first warrant article presented by Dr. Jennings was as follows:

To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate up to \$40,000 from the year-end undesignated fund balance (surplus) if available on July 1, 2007 to be added to the previously established Supplemental Building Revenue Fund (also known as the School Building Maintenance Fund).

Dr. Jennings explained money would only be appropriated to this fund if there were money left over at the end of the year.

There is no tax impact regarding this warrant article.

A motion was made by Phyllis Thomas and seconded by Jeanne Ludt to place the above warrant article as presented by Dr. Jennings on the 2007 warrant. All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

The next warrant article was presented as follows:

Dr. Jennings explained this is a new Expendable Trust Fund.

To see if the school district will vote to create an expendable trust fund under the provisions of RSA

198:20c, to be known as the fund for unfunded liabilities for retiring employees, for the purpose of payment of retirement benefits currently accruing. Furthermore, to raise and appropriate \$25,000 toward this purpose and to name the school board as agents to expend from this fund.

Dr. Jennings said if this Expendable Trust Fund were approved, they would be able to save for retiring employees year to year.

Discussion followed.

Steve Coughlan said he would rather pay for this upfront because it is a real liability if its not planned for in advance.

Jeanne Ludt asked if \$25,000 was enough money. Betty Shankel said it was a start.

A motion was made by John Walsh and seconded by John Rizzi to add the above article as presented by Dr. Jennings to the 2007 Warrant. All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

Board members discussed additional warrant article options.

A motion was made by Phyllis Thomas and seconded by John Rizzi to propose a warrant article to create a Capital Reserve Fund for Technology which will be funded through surplus.

Discussion followed regarding the motion.

The proposed amount to begin the fund was discussed and Phyllis thought \$20,000 would be a good starting figure.

John Walsh said he has concerns about creating a fund like this since it would take their eye off the real target which is to implement the long-term Technology Plan. Steve Coughlan agreed saying if this warrant were to go forward he believes it would need to have \$300,000 to

start.

The Finance Advisory Committee said they did not agree that this article should go on the warrant.

A motion was made by Phyllis Thomas to withdraw her motion to propose a warrant article to create a Capital Reserve Fund for Technology which will be funded through surplus. John Rizzi seconded the motion.

Dr. Jennings said they did not bring an article forward to put money in the Special Education Reserve Fund this year, but if the board wanted to, they could bring an article forward for their approval.

Dr. Jennings said they most likely would need to dip into the Special Education Fund this year. Kathy Skoglund agreed.

Phyllis Thomas suggested they wait until the next budget cycle to bring an article forward to put money into the Special Education Reserve Fund. Phyllis said this way, the voters will see we had to use money this year and will see the need to replenish or add to it next year.

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 9:15 p.m.

**REVIEW OF MEETING /  
ADJOURNMENT**