

Sunapee School Board Meeting

SCES Media Center

October 4, 2017

Call to Order:

School Board Chair Skarin called the School Board meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

Paul Skarin

Brian Garland

Edward Andersen

Jesse Tyler

April Royce

Others Present:

Russell Holden, Superintendent

Sean Moynihan, SMHS Principal

Meagan Reed, SMHS Asst. Principal

Terra Geer, Director of Student Services

Jodi Bergen, SCES Principal

Jackie Balch, Student Representative

Ray Palin, SMHS Teacher

Jim O'Shaughnessy, attorney for Drummond Woodsum

Pledge/Moment of Meditation

The Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence were led by School Board Chair Skarin.

Minutes:

Edward Andersen moved to approve the public minutes of the September 6, 2017 school board meeting as presented.

April Royce seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous

Motion passes

Agenda Review:

Add action item – Approval of Girls Outdoor Club Field Trip

Public Forum:

None

Public Forum Presentation – Jim O’Shaughnessy

Jim O’Shaughnessy, attorney at Drummond Woodsum, gave the following presentation to the Board:

- He stated that he came to discuss policy BEDH – Public Forum.
- A school board’s role is to approve manifests, create policy, and approve budgets. School boards rarely decide personnel or student issues.
- They are under no obligation to provide the public time to speak. Law requires them to let the public watch and listen.
- The board can create a public forum per a policy, in which they can put time limits and guidelines. The guidelines can state that no offensive, vulgar, or threatening language can be used.
- Most school boards have adopted a limited public forum; allowing the public only to comment on topics on the agenda.
- The NHSBA (New Hampshire School Boards Association) follows national policy, and most school districts follow the NHSBA.
- The issue around public forum arises when the public becomes critical of personnel. The public can talk about programs within the district, but there are policies and procedures to address personnel issues.
- If there is an issue with personnel, a member of the public must follow the chain of command – principal, superintendent, school board, state.
- It is important to have policies in place because personnel matters are not a problem for the board to solve. It does not fall under their purview.

Chair Skarin noted that currently the policy states that there is a limited public forum at the beginning of the agenda and an open forum at the end.

Attorney O’Shaughnessy stated that it’s important that the Board set the rules for the open forum at the beginning of every meeting. The Board also needs to state in their policy what that line is going to be. Otherwise, the public can say anything they want as it is open.

Jesse asked how the Sunapee public forum policy compares to other districts. Attorney O'Shaugnessy stated that is similar, but that the open forum piece isn't clear. He noted that the District shouldn't say they want discretion; they should set clear standards.

Attorney O'Shaugnessy explained that any guidelines put in place will make it a limited public forum as an open forum means open to any subject. He recommends a limited public forum with a policy that explicitly states the process personnel issues need to go through.

Attorney O'Shaugnessy explained that the policy needs to be limited to the business of the Board. Student and personnel issues are not under the purview of any school board. A second, limited forum should state that it will allow the public to voice concerns under the authority of the Board. He also noted this means concerns or accolades. Which means specific comments about students and teachers, whether good or bad, cannot be heard.

Attorney O'Shaugnessy stated he would like to contact the ACLU before he would ask the Board to vote on a revised BEDH policy. He noted that an employee can bring a defamation/slander suit against the Board, if the Board allows the public to say defamatory comments during a public forum.

Attorney O'Shaugnessy stated it would take a couple of weeks for him to revise the policy. Then the policy would need to come before the Policy Committee. It would then have to be approved at the November and December Board meetings. He recommends that the Board append the regulations to the back of policy until the revised policy is approved.

Board Chair Skarin allowed Ray Porter, Goshen, to ask a few questions:

- He stated he appreciates the attorney contacting the ACLU.
- He asked whether the Board has direct authority over the superintendent – yes, they do.
- Can the public bring forth complaints on personnel at a Board meeting? – yes, but they're a public employee, which means that Board can vote to go into nonpublic to receive criticism of employee.
- If the Board limits to agenda items only, an employee contract is up for renewal, can't the public discuss that renewal? – employee nominations and renewals should be done in nonpublic. Only the superintendent has a right to renew or non-renew. The Board can only elect the list. If a member of the public wanted to comment, it would have to be in nonpublic.

The Board thanked Attorney O'Shaugnessy and Board Chair Skarin called a five-minute recess at 7:58 p.m.

Board Chair Skarin called the meeting to order at 8:03 p.m.

Student Representative:

Student representative, Jackie Balch, gave the Board the following good news:

- Spirit Week was last week – Dress Up Days were enjoyed.
- The National Honor Society held a \$200 Penny Drive for hurricane relief efforts.
- Last Saturday, Student Council held the bonfire and dance. They raised a lot of money.
- The middle and high school volleyball, golf, and soccer teams are doing well. The bass team came in sixth in the championship.

SCES Good News:

Jodi Bergen gave the Board the following good news:

- Seven new students enrolled this week, with one more enrolling in the middle of the month. This brings the total enrollment as of Oct. 1 to 163, not including preschool.
- Everyday Math has been implemented in grades pre-k thru fifth this year. Consultant, Betty Erickson, will be coming tomorrow to provide professional development. This will be held in the Sherburne gym.

SMHS Good News:

Sean Moynihan gave the Board the following good news:

- College Night is tomorrow.
- Tom Coverdale took the eleventh grade to see "A Doll's House".
- The sixth grade Nature's Classroom trip is back.

Superintendent's Report:

Superintendent Holden gave the following report to the Board:

- The Intertown Record has a story on the bus evacuation drill held at the end of the summer. A bus was tipped, so that emergency responders could practice what to do during that type of situation.
- October 1 enrollment has SMHS at 248 and SCES at 174 (with preschool), for a total of 421 students.
- The next Superintendent Forum will be held on October 19 at 6 p.m. in the Abbott Library.
- He attended the bass fishing championship. He thanked Rob Messenger for coaching the Sunapee team.

- He and Principal Moynihan are working with Chief Cahill on a restorative justice program. Instead of handling criminal minor cases judiciously, it will be handled by a more local community board.

Strategic Plan Update – 2017-2018 Objectives:

Principal Bergen and Principal Moynihan discussed which objectives they will address for this school year:

- SCES – addressing timeline for competencies. The timeline they laid out in the plan is too aggressive.
- SMHS – The first Professional Development Day is Friday. They will be reviewing competencies at the high school and meeting in groups in the middle school.
 - This year there are five different committees:
 - English and math supports
 - Co-curricular and academic schedules
 - STEAM
 - Advisory Program
 - Pilot group for surveys in classrooms

Approval of Policies:

April Royce moved to approve the first reading of:

- DIH – Fraud Prevention and Fiscal Management
- DKA – Payroll Procedures/Schedules
- EBCA – Emergency Plans
- EHAA – Computer Security, E-Mail, and Internet Communications
- GBCD – Background Investigation and Criminal Records Check
- IGE – Parental Objections to Specific Course Material
- IHAK – Character and Citizenship Education
- IHAM – Health Education and Exemption from Instruction
- IHAM-R – Health and Sex Education Exemption: Opt-Out Form
- IHCD – Advanced Coursework/Advanced Placement Courses
- ILD – Non-Educational Surveys and Questionnaires
- JICD – Student Discipline and Due Process
- JICFA – Hazing
- JLF – Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect

April commented that most of these policies were changed due to legislation passed.

Brian Garland seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous

Motion passes

Approval of Updated Athletic Handbook - Eligibility:

Principal Moynihan stated that there are guidelines by the State that make students ineligible to play if they have failing grades. The Sunapee School Districts guidelines are more stringent, but can be appealed. Most students get academic supports. The updated guidelines in the handbook now state that if a student has one failing grade, they will need to immediately see the athletic director for academic supports, can still attend practices, but not games. Those with two failing grades will not be allowed to play, but will still receive academic supports.

The Board discussed the need for all extra-curricular activities to follow in the same vein, so that all students are getting the supports they need academically.

April Royce moved to approve the athletic handbook as amended.

Brian Garland seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous

Motion passes

Approval of the 2018-2019 Budget Timeline:

April Royce moved to approve the 2018-2019 budget timeline as presented.

Edward Andersen seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Motion passes.

Approval of Proposed Professional Development Master Plan:

Superintendent Holden noted that it is a State requirement that a Professional Development Master Plan be created and submitted for approval. This master plan will run from 2017-2022. This is the process in which teachers become recertified. The Professional Development Committee meets monthly.

Brian Garland moved to approve the Professional Development Master Plan for 2017-2022 as presented.

Edward Andersen seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Motion passes.

Approval of Girls Outdoor Field Trip:

Principal Moynihan stated teacher, Dawn Emory, is asking to provide this trip. She used to hold this trip annually, but hasn't done so in some four or five years. The same planning process as the outdoor field trip that Tom Coverdale takes will be followed.

April Royce moved to approve the high school girls outdoor field trip as presented.

Jesse Tyler seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Motion passes.

2016-2017 State Assessment Results:

Superintendent Holden noted that Sunapee's scores are above State and National averages.

Principal Bergen noted that elementary students are progressing to proficient in English and math. The science NECAP results improved from 60% to 65%. The 2016-2017 school year will be the last year for the SBAC and science NECAP.

Principal Moynihan noted that the SBAC results showed a double-digit gap compared with the State. The eleventh-grade science NECAP results were great, but the eighth-grade science NECAP results were disappointing. The SAT results showed 100 points greater than the State average. The AP results are also impressive with most students receiving scores that would attain college credit.

Manifest:

April Royce moved to approve A/P manifests:

- 2018-04 - \$71,388.43
- 2018-05 - \$226,966.43

April Royce moved to approve payroll manifests:

- 2018-06 - \$458,355.66

Brian Garland seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous

Motion passes

Public Forum:

John Augustine, Sunapee resident, asked if the SBAC results for Sunapee don't really show accurate measures, because Sunapee has different demographics than the rest of the State; you are not comparing apples to apples. For instance, Sunapee has lower free/reduced and English language learner numbers. He would like to see the Sunapee test scores compared with school districts with similar demographics.

Ray Porter, Goshen, thanked the Board for bringing attorney Jim O'Shaugnessy and allowing the public to comment.

Agenda for November 1, 2017 at the SMHS music room:

- Trail Project Presentation
- Policy BEDH and the field trip policy
- Budget binders
- Safety Evaluation of SCES

Non-Public Session:

None

Adjournment:

April Royce moved to adjourn at 8:46 p.m.

Jesse Tyler seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous

Motion passes

Respectfully Submitted by,

Kate O'Connor

School Board Secretary