

# Sunapee School Board Meeting

## SCES Media Center

January 10, 2018

### 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 - Absent

### 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

### 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 December 6, 2017 school board meeting as presented

Jesse Tyler seconded the motion.

3 – Yes, 0 – No, 1 – Abstention (Brian Garland)

Motion passed.

### Agenda Review:

None

### Public Forum:

**Ray Porter**, Goshen resident, spoke against the policy change of BEDH – Public Participation at Public Meetings. He requested the Board add his full statement into the permanent record of tonight’s meeting.

**Dan Banks**, Woodlawn Rd., spoke against the policy change of BEDH, stating that the changes threaten the rights of the community. He requested the Board open a public hearing to discuss BEDH before a new policy is enacted.

Mr. Banks also noted that SCES was originally designed for 350 students and SMHS for 450 students. Currently the District’s student population stands at less than 400 students that originate from Sunapee.

**Jan Bettencourt**, Sunapee, stated that on January 5, 2018, she sent an email to the School Board; only Superintendent Holden responded. She did have a nice phone conversation with Chair Skarin. She noted that if the new policy is enacted, then there will only be five to six opportunities a year for public comment.

She noted that part of the Strategic Plan is to improve communication. She feels the School Board is using legal protection to not discuss issues and limit free speech.

**Ed Shisko**, Sunapee, stated that he believes the changes to policy BEDH are rubbish. He noted several court cases regarding free speech and school districts. He asked the Board not to approve the changes as written.

### SCED Educational/Facility Study Findings – Dan Bisson

Dan Bisson, Harriman Architects Engineers, gave the following presentation to the Board:

- His company comes out of Portsmouth, NH. His team did a facility analysis; reviewing the building.
- He presented floor plans showing the life/safety and educational deficiencies of the building, which can be found on the District website.
- He gave a history of the building. He noted that it is on a 7.1-acre site. The shell is old and holds very little insulation. The energy codes are not followed.
- The fire alarm system needs to be replaced and the telephone needs to be a separate system.
- The stage is not ADA compliant, but the rest of the school is ADA compliant.
- The roof is over 20 years old and is not as energy efficient as modern roofs.
- Classrooms have no storage as nooks are being used for teaching.

- The stairs do not have an egress path. At the bottom, in the basement, beams are exposed, which is a fire code issue. The cafeteria and third floor also have egress issues.
- The boiler is at capacity, as is the electrical system.
- The kitchen needs an exhaust hood over the stove. Also, the staff area on the first floors needs venting for the stove.
- He noted that the District has really picked away at issues over the years. The Sherburne Gymnasium is in great shape.
- The modular buildings are only meant to be temporary and are not ideal for students. It is difficult for the rest of the school to communicate with them and to go back and forth in the winter time.

Jesse Tyler asked what Dan sees as the top three to five most pressing issues. Dan responded that life safety issues take precedence. He also stated the fire alarm system, insulating the building, and fixing the capacity of the electrical and boiler are of top importance. He noted though, that the moment the District starts upgrading the building, the Department of Education will expect that all deficiencies be corrected.

Dan Bisson continued his presentation with educational deficiencies:

- He stated that the educational deficiencies component goes by the Department of Education RSA (laws) and guidelines.
- He and his team went through every room in the school and labeled it, which is now shown on the floor plans.
- The Department of Education requires all classrooms to be 900 sq. ft. Out of 13 classrooms, only one meets the requirement.
- Many areas are being used for dual purposes; storage and special education. This includes multiple teaching spaces that are under stairs and in nooks. There is overuse of all spaces, which causes interruptions for students while learning.
- Special education spaces are crowded, which is a problem.
- The occupational therapy area does not meet sq. ft. requirements.
- Students must go to the modular buildings for art, music, and special education.
- State statute dictates that there needs to be two means of egress onsite.
- He noted that his company is currently working on projects in Hopkinton, Stoddard, and Dover with many of the same issues. He enjoys working on schools the most.

Edward Andersen asked Dan what he feel is the most pressing under the educational deficiencies. Dan replied that special education is the most in need.

Jesse Tyler asked how much space the school is deficient for special education needs. Dan responded that it used to be that you needed to have 60 sq. ft. per student, but now it's subject

to the needs of the student, so it depends on the services provided, but you must provide the space by law.

Superintendent Holden told the Board that they would be asked to accept the proposed study tonight. The SCES Facility Committee will continue to meet and he noted that all SCES facility documents are posted to the website.

Student Representative Report:

Jackie Balch gave the following report to the Board:

- Auditions for the spring play are starting.
- Banner nights for fall sports teams was held.

SCES Good News:

Jodi Bergen gave the Board the following good news:

- The holiday concert was well-attended by families and community members. She thanked Leanne Beck, who was a long-term substitute music teacher, for her work with the students. She prepared the general music students as well as the band and chorus students.
- The Winter Activity Program starts tomorrow. Many students go to Mt. Sunapee for skiing and riding, but there are many others that take no-cost activities, like robotics, cooking, and construction. This year teachers have collaborated with Mr. Legendre at SMHS to develop woodworking projects.

SMHS Good News:

Sean Moynihan gave the Board the following good news:

- The middle school Geography Bee was held on Monday, January 8.
- Mr. Romein had his art students participate in the Scholastic Art Competition. One student won the gold key, and another won honorable mention.

Superintendent's Report:

Superintendent Holden gave the following report to the Board:

- Noted that the buildings are doing well in the cold weather. There were some frozen pipes in the modular, but they've been repaired. The boiler at SMHS also gave a little trouble.
- Sharon Parsons, SMHS teacher, was recognized by the Chamber of Commerce as Community Member of the Year.
- A Professional Development Day will be held on January 16, 2018.

### Strategic Plan Update:

Superintendent Holden stated that the committees will be working at both SCES and SMHS on the January 16, 2018 Professional Development Day and will have more to report to the Board at the February School Board meeting.

### Second Reading of Policy BEDH – Public Participation at Board Meetings:

Chair Skarin asked if the request to hold a hearing on this topic should be heard. Superintendent Holden stated that, per the District attorney, the Board meeting is not considered the correct venue. The Department of Education has no oversight of this policy, so it would not go before them for a hearing.

Superintendent Holden explained the history of policy BEDH. The Board had a policy in place that had public comment at the beginning to discuss agenda topics only and a public comment at the end that was considered “open”. The Board asked the District attorney and NHSBA to revisit the policy.

The attorney stated that the Board meeting is held in public, but the Board doesn’t have to hold a public forum. The attorney recommended that no public comment be held.

Chair Skarin noted that the Board wants there to be public comment; they want to honor free speech and honor the rights of the employees and students. The District attorney revised the policy with assistance from the ACLU and came back with a version that the Board approved a first reading on.

Superintendent Holden stated that he had more correspondence with the attorney after the holiday break. Mr. Giles of the ACLU contacted the attorney and discussed seven talking points. Amendments were made to the revised policy and have been brought forth tonight. He noted that the ACLU never approves policy, but sees no reason not to continue to move forward with the policy presented tonight.

Jesse Tyler stated that the Board has a responsibility to interact with the public and that they may need to change their behavior by at least responding to receiving the public's emails.

Jesse Tyler moved to accept, as second reading, the new proposed BEDH policy as presented. Edward Andersen seconded the motion.

Ray Porter, Goshen, called a Point of Order citing policy BFC. Superintendent Holden clarified that the policy noted doesn’t apply.

Edward Andersen and Brian Garland both expressed that they wanted to amend the revised policy to state that public comment would occur at every meeting and not every other meeting.

Brian Garland moved to change policy BEDH, as presented, by striking the line "Beginning with the August Board meeting each school year, and continuing every other month at the regularly scheduled Board meeting per Policy BEA," and starting the policy with the line "15 minutes will be set aside at the beginning and end of each meeting as a public comment period to allow citizens to address the Board."

Jesse Tyler seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Motion passed.

The Board then voted unanimously to approve the original motion made by Jesse Tyler to approve BEDH.

Motion passed.

#### Approval Proposed District Calendar 2018-2019:

Superintendent Holden stated that a change was made to hold only one PD Day at the end of June and add one in January.

He also explained that snow days are made up in June. Teachers are under contract until June 30. Early dismissals or delays count as full day of school.

Brian Garland moved to approve the 2018-2019 District calendar as presented.

Edward Andersen seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Motion passed.

#### Accept Proposed ABC Report:

Jesse Tyler moved to accept the proposed ABC report as presented.

Edward Andersen seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Motion passed.

Superintendent Holden said he will schedule a review meeting with the ABC in April.

#### Approve Proposed 2018-2019 Budget:

Jesse Tyler moved to approve the proposed 2018-2019 budget as presented.

Edward Andersen seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Motion passed.

Approve Proposed 2018-2019 Warrant Articles:

Superintendent Holden handed out a petition warrant article that was received, which will be put on the ballot. It will be listed as the last warrant article. It reads, "Should the contract negotiations between the Sunapee Teachers Association (i.e., the teacher's union) and the Sunapee school board be conducted in public session so that both the teachers and the taxpayers can observe how their interests are being represented?"

Jesse Tyler moved to support the 2018-2019 proposed warrant articles as presented.

Brian Garland seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Motion passed.

Approve Proposed 2018-2019 Default Budget:

Brian Garland moved to approve the proposed 2018-2019 default budget as presented.

Jesse Tyler seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Motion passed.

Accept Proposed Harriman Educational/Facility Study:

Brian Garland moved to accept the proposed Harriman Educational/Facility Study as presented.

Edward Andersen seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Motion passed.

NH DOE Approved Professional Development Master Plan:

Superintendent Holden stated that the State of NH Department of Education has accepted the plan. He thanked all those who worked on the document.

Sunapee Middle School Ski Meet of Champions – Feb. 14-15, 2018:

Superintendent Holden announced the ski meet coming up in February. There are approximately 30 students signed up.

### Manifests:

Brian Garland moved to approve A/P manifests:

- 2018-11 - \$144,173.35
- 2018-12 - \$102,059.18
- 2018-13 - \$48,709.47

Brian Garland moved to approve payroll manifests:

- 2018-13 - \$221,150.12

Edward Andersen seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Motion passed.

### Public Forum:

**Jan Bettencourt**, Sunapee resident, stated she has never seen the public talk about teachers or students at a Board meeting and doesn't think the Board needs to be concerned it will happen. She is concerned that the Superintendent and the lawyers developed the policy.

**Ray Porter**, Goshen, noted that the court cases Mr. Shisko brought up at the earlier public comment are on the NHSBA website. He doesn't believe that teachers and students are talked about at the meetings. He has seen bad behavior by Board members. He has spoken with the ACLU legal director who shared his concern that the Sunapee Board could cancel public comment at whim. He thanked the Board for keeping the monthly public comment. He would like to see the Board interact more with the public.

**Jody Manson**, Sunapee resident, noted that just because the Board can cancel public comment, doesn't mean that they should. She also stated that Board members need to respond to emails.

**Dan Banks**, Sunapee resident, stated he is glad the Board kept public comments at each monthly meeting.

**Shaun Carroll**, Sunapee resident, commended the Board for their work and noted that it's very tough.

### Agenda for February 7, 2018 at the SMHS Music Room:

- Audit Report
- Policy



Non-Public Session:

None

Adjournment:

Jesse Tyler moved to adjourn at 8:52 p.m.

Edward Andersen seconded the motion.

Vote unanimous.

Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Kate O'Connor

School Board Secretary