

Sullivan School Board

Public Meeting Minutes

January 10th, 2024

Present:

Board Members: Mike Brooks, Stephanie Milotte, William Thorndike, Paul Bolduc
Superintendent: Kim Caron
District Treasurer: Ann Gray
Malinda Sherpa: Arrived at 6:36 PM
Members of the Public: None
Absent: None

Call to Order:

Mike Brooks meeting Called to order at 6:30 PM

MINUTES

Motion Mike B. motioned to approve the minutes from **December 13th** Board's meeting.

Second by Will T.

Discussion: The final numbers on the manifest do not show the total payments due to the choice of the Board to pay partial to the Keene. \$187,291. The \$200,000 is reflected on the December manifest. Last year, we also faced the same problem of splitting the Invoices. It is reflected in the notes of the minutes but is not in the manifest via Numbers. It should be documented.

Motion to amend the minutes to strike the Adjusted Total Payment and Adjusted Total Payments by **Stephanie**.

Seconded by Paul.

Voice Vote All in favor to amend the minutes of December 13th as noted

Voice Vote: Unanimous

Motion so passes and the **December 13th, 2023**, Minutes are approved as amended.

Treasurer's Report - Appointed Treasurer Ann Gray

Ann Gray went over the manifest with the board.

- **Manifest:** The current manifest for this month is for the amount of **\$35,354.88**
 - The starting bank balance is **\$-216,565.33**
 - Total Deposits \$375,386.22
 - State of NH \$222,530.00 (Jan 2024 Adeq Ed)
 - Town of Sullivan \$132,816.63 (Dec 2023 Payment)
 - State of NH \$19,339.13 (Dec 2023 Project Reimburse)

Payments

\$210.00	Perfect Balance (Dec 2023)
\$121.50	Gathering Waters (Oct 2023)
\$7,976.00	Community House (Nov 2023)
\$15,644.88	First Student (Payment 5of10 Dec 2023)

\$637.50	Simplified Speech Solutions (Dec 2023)
\$4,050.00	Kim Caron (3 rd quarter 2023-24)
\$2500.00	Nathan Castle (3 rd quarter 2023-24)
\$4050.00	Juliet French (3 rd quarter 2023-24)
\$165.00	Terri Droque (Dec 2023 student services)

TOTAL PAYMENTS: \$35,354.88

Ending Bank Balance

\$123,466.01

Motion: Paul motioned to approve the **AMENDED** the manifest of **12.14.2023 – 1.10.2024**

Seconded by **Stephanie**

Discussion None

Voice Vote: Unanimous

Motion so passes and the **Dec/Jan** Manifest is approved and so accepted

Superintendent's Report - written by Kim Caron

The following is a general update of activities, as of **January 7th**, since the last Board meeting.

BFC and policy update. The district was required to submit corrective action plans (CAP) to the Bureau of Federal Compliance (BFC) to come into compliance with federal regulations, as the result of a state audit. The BFC required the following policies to close out the corrective action plans as submitted; Federal funds purchasing policy and Records retention procedure. The school board did a first reading of the required policies and procedures at the December meeting. A second reading and vote to adopt the Federal funds purchasing policy and Records retention procedure is scheduled for the January school board meeting. The policies and procedures are attached to this report.

Motion to Approve the BFC policy as per the second reading on 1/10/24 by Stephanie

Seconded by Malinda

Discussion: None

Voice Vote: Unanimous Motion was approved and the Board accepted the BFC Policy

Procurement Procedure

Kim discussed the Procurement Procedure and recommended that the Board accept this procedure as part of their policy.

Motion to Approve the Procurement Procedure by **Paul**

Seconded by Mike B

Discussion: None

Voice Vote: Unanimous. Motion was approved and the Board accepted the Procurement Procedure.

AREA Planning Committee. The AREA (Authorized Regional Enrollment Area) agreements with the Keene School District for grades 6-12 will expire in 2026. An AREA planning committee needs to begin a review of the current agreement by state statute. The following are immediate

tasks that need to be completed by the school board to move this process forward. December 2023; Identify the names of three school board members to be placed on a draft warrant article, authorizing them to serve on the AREA Planning Committee. January 2024; Prepare the warrant article to be used at the District Meeting authorizing our participation in the AREA planning committee. A draft warrant article has been reviewed by our attorney and attached to this report.

2024-2025 Budget Planning - 2024-2025 budget development is a topic for discussion at the January school board meeting. The special education director and superintendent have met several times to project the extra special education expenses for 2024-2025, beyond tuition costs for Keene and Nelson. Items such as special transportation, out of district tuition, paraprofessional support, psychology, speech/language, behavioral supports, etc., were discussed. These projected expenses were reviewed with the school board at the December meeting. These are the most variable expenses in the school budget. The projected expense is primarily due to an increased number of high needs resident students placed both in and out of the district. Another factor are referrals from the preschool arena and charters. The superintendent believes it is best to approach these expenses in a straightforward manner, compliant with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and in the best educational interest of children.

NH Education Funding

FYI. In November 2023, resulting from the ConVal School District case, the NH Superior Court found that state aid for education was unconstitutionally low. The State House Education Committee is currently working to address the inadequacies found in state education funding in New Hampshire. Please refer to the NH School Funding Fairness Project at fairfundingnh.org for more information.

Administration. Special education funding. The administration is working to better define how federal and state aid for special education works at the district level. Currently, the school district qualifies for two general types of special education funding.

The first type of funding is provided by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). These federal funds are managed by the State of NH and allocated to school districts based upon a formula established by federal regulations. Sullivan budgets for and receives approximately \$25,000 for the IDEA grant. These funds are applied for through the NH Education Department (NHED) grant management system to partially cover the cost of special education and related services. Our special education director reviews special education invoices monthly, determines expenses that qualify under the grant, and applies for these funds via the NHED grant management system. Once the expense activity has been approved by the NHED, the funds are dispersed to the school district in the current fiscal year.

The second type of funding is provided via **Special Education Aid**, otherwise known as catastrophic aid or excess cost aid. Essentially, this is reimbursement from the state when a student's special education costs exceed 3.5 times the estimated state average cost per pupil. For example, if you have a student whose special education program costs are greater than 3.5 times the state average cost per pupil during the current school year, then the state will

reimburse a portion of the funds in excess of 3.5 times the average cost per pupil. This reimbursement occurs during the subsequent fiscal year.

Audit

The superintendent contacted Vachon Clukay & Company PC to inquire about the status of our annual audit. Matthew Murray, CPA responded and said that the draft should be sent to the administration by January 15th. The audit was held up due to an unanticipated delay on the part of the auditors. The superintendent will forward the audit report to the board.

*The Board enquired about the State Adequacy Funding that should have been sent to the Town.

- Kim is wondering if the State's wording on distribution may have been applied to these years (2024)
- Ann noted that the State Adequacy Funding went from \$754,000 up from \$717,000. Based on this, it appears that it was indeed added and rolled over to this 2024 calendar year.

Non-public. The superintendent will update the Board on any pending confidential issues in non-public session.

Thanks. Kim

Please feel free to contact Kim with any questions.

NON-PUBLIC MEETING

Meeting:

Non-public. The superintendent will update the Board on student services and personnel contract updates in non-public session and budget forecast updates.

Motion to move the meeting into Non-Public at **7:24PM** to discuss student services, personnel updates and budget preparation by **Stephanie**.

Seconded by **Mike**

Roll Call Vote: Unanimous

Discussion: None

Motion so passes - Meeting moved into Non-Public at **7:24 PM** discuss student services, personnel updates and budget preparation.

Motion to leave the non-public meeting at **7:59 PM** and return to Public Meeting by **Stephanie**

Seconded by **Paul**

Discussion: None

Voice Vote: Unanimous

Motion so passes - Meeting moved back into Public at **7:59PM**

Budget:

The Board discussed their budget line by line to prepare for their presentation to the Sullivan Budget Committee Meeting scheduled for Jan 23rd.

- Kim suggested eliminating line 18 “Extraordinary Needs Grant” as listed on line item, currently is part of adequacy.
- Removed Data Manager as we no longer have this position.
- Revised Student enrollment based off of non-public session discussion
- Adjusted transportation rate to include gas one-time per year rate increase.

Warrant Articles -

- **Article 4** Expendable Trust is currently \$278,279.29. Given that there will probably not be a surplus, we should look to propose \$20,000.
- **Article 3** The Surplus Article will be kept at \$25,000 – to raise and appropriate to build the Expendable Trust fund up to the new goal of \$350,000
- **Article 5-** AREA planning committee – allow board to select the 3 members vs. listing them within the article.

Upcoming Meetings / Events / Issues

- **AREA Meetings will begin in April of 2024.**
 - Members will be decided when dates are set.
 - Article will reflect planning committee to be formed with no names on the warrant.
- **Next School Board Meeting February 14th @ 6:30 PM**
- **Secretary**
 - Paul Bolduc was selected to be the official Secretary of the Sullivan School as he already takes all meeting minutes and notes.
 - Mike Brooks motioned to appoint Paul as the secretary.

Adjournment:

Motion: Malinda. made a motion to adjourn.

Seconded by **Stephanie M** Voice Vote: Unanimous

Motion passes and the Meeting closed at 9:16 PM

