

SAU 41 GOVERNING BOARD
DECEMBER 15, 2022
MEETING MINUTES

A regular meeting of the SAU 41 Governing Board was conducted on Thursday, December 15, 2022 at 6:07 p.m. at the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy, Brookline, NH.

Krista Whalen, Chairman, presided:

Members of the Board Present: Amy Kellner, Vice Chairman
 Karen Jew, Treasurer
 Holly Deurloo Babcock, Chairman, COOP School Board
 Tom Enright, COOP School Board
 Tammy Fareed, Secretary, Hollis School Board
 Kenneth Haag, Chairman, Brookline School Board
 Robert Mann, Hollis School Board
 Alison Marsano, Brookline School Board
 Carryl Roy, Vice Chairman, Hollis School Board
 Tom Solon, Vice Chairman, COOP School Board (arrived at 6:11 p.m.)
 Kate Stoll, Secretary, COOP School Board
 Cindy VanCoughnett, COOP School Board
 Kelly Zakar, Brookline School Board

Members of the Board Absent: Brooke Arthur, Hollis School Board
 Colleen Micavich, Secretary
 Beth Janine Williams, COOP School Board

Also in Attendance: Andrew Corey, Superintendent
 Gina Bergskaug, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
 Kelly Seeley, Business Administrator

APPOINTMENT OF PROCESS OBSERVER

Chairman Whalen appointed Holly Deurloo Babcock to serve as Process Observer.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS - None

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

SAU 41 Governing Board [October 13, 2022](#)

The following amendment was offered:

- Page 8, Line 7; replace “are” with “is”
- Page 9, Line 38: replace "conferences" with "consultants"
- Page 10, Line 3: replace "subset" with "subject"

**MOTION BY MEMBER ROY TO APPROVE, AS AMENDED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER KELLNER**

MOTION CARRIED

9-0-2

Members Marsano and Stoll Abstained

SAU 41 Governing Board - **Public Hearing** [October 13, 2022](#)

MOTION BY MEMBER ROY TO APPROVE, AS PRESENTED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER KELLNER

MOTION CARRIED

9-0-2

Members Marsano and Stoll Abstained

SAU 41 Governing Board - **Non-Public** [October 13, 2022](#)

MOTION BY MEMBER ROY TO APPROVE, AS PRESENTED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HAAG

MOTION CARRIED

9-0-2

Members Marsano and Stoll Abstained

There being no objection, the Board went out of the regular order of business to take up discussion of the FY23 Revenue and Expense Report.

- FY23 SAU Revenue/Expense Report

As of 11-28-22, on the expense side of the ledger, the balance is \$95,532, primarily due to an unfilled position. The belief is the position will be filled at the start of the new calendar year. An update will be provided the Board likely via email as well as at the individual district board meetings.

On the revenue side, there is a reduction in the amount anticipated of \$51,712 resulting in a budget balance of \$43,820.

The beginning balance (7-1-22) was \$260,385 and the FY23 reduction in anticipated revenue \$43,820, which results in an anticipated fund balance (as of 6-20-23) of \$304,205. Superintendent Corey noted the likelihood those projections will change with hirings, etc. that will occur during the spring semester.

The Board returned to the regular order of business.

PUBLIC HEARING

Fiscal Year 2023-2024 SAU Budget Presentation

MOTION BY MEMBER ROY THAT THE BOARD RECESS UNTIL THE CONCLUSION OF THE

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE SAU 41 PROPOSED FY24 BUDGET

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ZAKAR

MOTION CARRIED

9-0

The Board recessed at 6:16 p.m.
The Board reconvened at 6:30 p.m.

PUBLIC INPUT

Chairman Whalen stated the period for public input would remain open until 7:00 p.m. should members of the public arrive and wish to provide input.

Superintendent Corey commented the spirit and intent of the law is to provide opportunities for the public to participate in meetings. He believes the method the Chair has selected to leave the period for public input open for half an hour is appropriate and follows what has occurred at district level meetings.

DISCUSSION

- Board Discussion on the Proposed SAU Budget

Member Solon commented on input from the public received alluding to a rapid acceleration and increase of headcount at the SAU, and how he was not hearing that to be the case. He questioned if that is the belief. Superintendent Corey stated his opinion it is not. During his tenure there has been the addition of one (1) Assistant Business Manager, which was done by eliminating the Senior Secretary position. Last year the voters approved the addition of the Compliance and Communications Specialist position. The Facilities Director position was added, which is a position that had been in place previously. When he arrived, the headcount at the SAU was 16. The number of positions has increased by 2.5 over a 10-year period.

Member VanCoughnett noted both the Facilities Director and Compliance and Communications positions were presented to the voters who approved budgets including those positions.

Member Solon requested it be put into context, the salary ranges that this budget covers for SAU staff in comparison to the other neighboring and equivalent districts, which were benchmarked prior to the proposal. It is important to convey this information because what was discussed when this was prepared was the fact that we were well below our peers and as a result there was significant risk. The information communicated to the Board was the desire to get up into the range of equivalency to be competitive.

Superintendent Corey highlighted a few positions that would show that; Accounting Specialists were receiving \$23.50/hour where surrounding districts surveyed (Milford, Windham, Bedford, Amherst, and Oyster River) range from a low of \$25 to a high of \$31.20. In terms of the H.R. Specialist, we pay our specialist \$19.67/hour. Those same five districts had a low of \$21 and a high of \$27.06. Our Facilities Director was at a salary of \$81,494 and those same 5 districts had a low of \$85,000 and a high of \$115,655. That is why the adjustments that were made were recommended. The idea was to put the range in the middle of the surrounding/comparable districts.

Member Fareed spoke of the UFB, which is currently projected to be at 11.5%. It bothers her to see the budgets at the district and SAU level describing monies unspent on unfilled positions as savings. The opportunity cost is substantial. She questioned the percentage of the UFB related to the unfilled positions. Superintendent Corey stated his belief the vast majority of monies that have accumulated over the years in the UFB are the result of unfilled positions. It was very common when he arrived in the district. A lot of work has been done to end the in/out cycle. The Business Administrator has established a great business office that has been very stable, and the same thing has been done in H.R. Most recently the I.T. area has been revamped and a push

made into a one-to-one school environment. The SAU has streamlined the curriculum and professional development process, course work, and evaluation systems. We are not seeing those huge chunks of money. This year there is a significant dollar amount, but that is directly related to an unfilled position.

Superintendent Corey noted efforts made to identify one-time items when utilizing the UFB. If used to offset the budget, there is an artificial increase in the budget the following year.

Member Solon spoke of two possible uses identified during the last meeting; travel for upcoming conference and funding an external resource for work related to H.R., e.g., salary surveys. Superintendent Corey commented looking for outside expert expertise is a great avenue to take. A similar effort was undertaken some 7-8 years prior when a municipal expert was brought in. They went through the SAU and provided a roadmap of what the Business Office and H.R. Department should look like. That was followed and has led us to a great place. That is an opportunity where we can look to this spring to identify what areas of efficiencies we want to review. That is an excellent example of how the UFB could be utilized.

Member Solon commented the difference between the projection and target maximum is only \$27,000. It is quite possible that between now and the end of the year some items may bring that amount back into the target range. To anticipate forcing it down artificially, in his opinion, would be a mistake.

Superintendent Corey stated his belief there is the potential for a need to conduct another review of facilities. If enrollments continue to grow as projected, our elementary schools will be bursting at the seams in a few years.

DELIBERATION

- To see what action the SAU Governing Board will take regarding the 2023-2024 SAU 41 Proposed Budget

MOTION BY MEMBER ROY TO APPROVE THE FY24 BUDGET IN THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF TWO MILLION TWO HUNDRED SIXTY FOUR THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED SEVENTY FOUR DOLLARS (\$2,264,374)

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER KELLNER

ON THE QUESTION

Member Solon questioned if the Board was approving or recommending. Superintendent Corey clarified the Board was approving the proposed budget to be placed on the warrant.

9-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Policy **BBBH** -Organization and Operation of SAU Governing Board
 - 1st Reading 2-4-20
 - 2nd Reading 10-13-22 (as amended)

Given its 3rd Reading;

MOTION BY MEMBER ROY TO ACCEPT THE THIRD READING AND ADOPT POLICY BBBH – ORGANIZATION AND OPERATING OF SAU 41 GOVERNING BOARD, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER KELLNER

ON THE QUESTION

Following the last meeting, the Policy Committee sought guidance from the New Hampshire School Boards Association (NHSBA) regarding whether there is the need for inclusion of the actual language from State RSA concerning the weighted voting calculation. The recommendation from NHSBA was to retain the language.

Proposed changes were identified as page 3; removal of “The Board shall perform its self-evaluation” and changing the date of October 15th to October 1st and December 15th to December 20th and amending the last sentence to read “This meeting may also include a formative mid-year evaluation of the Superintendent.

MOTION CARRIED

9-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Policy **BDD – Board-Superintendent Relationship** and **BDD-R – Board-Superintendent Relations**

Given its 1st Reading;

**MOTION BY MEMBER ROY TO AMEND POLICY BDD BY IDENTIFYING THE CATEGORY OF RECOMMENDED, INSERTING “AND” FOLLOWING “PROGRAMS” IN THE LAST PARAGRAPH AND REMOVING REFERENCE TO BDD-F AND STATUTORY REGULATORY REFERENCES, AND ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY BDD – BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP AND BDD-R – BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONS, AS AMENDED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ZAKAR**

ON THE QUESTION

Vice Chairman Kellner noted the changes to be a matter of housekeeping for the sake of consistency. There have been no significant changes in the updates provided by the NHSBA.

MOTION CARRIED

9-0

MOTION BY MEMBER ROY TO WAIVE THE SECOND AND THIRD READINGS AND ADOPT POLICIES BDD – BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP AND BDD-R – BOARD-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONS

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER VANCOUGHNETT

ON THE QUESTION

Member Fareed noted it would be reasonable to do so as the changes are so minimal. Vice Chairman Kellner noted these past few policies close out the review of all of the existing policies at the Governing Board level and will put the next Policy Committee in a good position for considering the adoption of new policies.

MOTION CARRIED

8.25–0.75

Member Haag voted in opposition

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Policy **BDB** – Board Officers

Given its 1st Reading;

MOTION BY MEMBER ROY TO AMEND POLICY BDB – BOARD OFFICERS, IN ITS ENTIRETY, BY REPLACING IT WITH THE COPY PROVIDED WITH THE AGENDA AND ACCEPT THE FIRST READING, AS AMENDED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER KELLNER

ON THE QUESTION

The policy was amended for the sake of consistency and a few clarifying sentences that were included in the most recent draft from the NHSBA; clarifying that officers remain in their offices until successors are elected, if the Chairperson resigned the Vice Chairperson would become Chairperson, the Superintendent is a non-voting member, and allows the flexibility for the Treasurer to possibly present the SAU budget at the budget hearing.

Member Solon questioned if the position of the Superintendent as a member of the Board is intended to indicate of this Board and was told that is the case.

He questioned why the requirement of being responsible for the public hearing on the budget was removed from the duties of the Treasurer. The response provided was that past practice has had the Superintendent presenting the budget. Member Solon stated his understanding that is what has occurred although not something he has been particularly supportive of because it sort of appears to take away from the Board's understanding, comprehension, and involvement. From a perception standpoint as well as a perspective, we had a lot of value when it was being presented by a Board member, and it added to the credibility of it in terms of dealing with the public. It was not as if we were rubber stamping things. He would like the language to remain "shall" and start going by that practice.

Members Fareed and Mann stated support for the viewpoint expressed. Member Mann reiterated the budget is that of the Board and the Board should be promoting it to our community and taking ownership. Otherwise it puts too much on the Superintendent. This is an opportunity for us to own it, present it, and defend it.

Member Solon commented on seeing great value in the Superintendent's participation but believes there is value in a presentation coming from the Board for something that the Board owns. He would welcome the Superintendent's viewpoint on whether he believes it would be a positive or negative impact to the SAU as a whole to revert back to that prior practice.

The question was asked of whether it would pose an issue if the language reverted back to "shall" and the Treasurer was unable to make the presentation. Member Roy questioned if the language could state "Treasurer or their designee from the Governing Board shall". Member Fareed recalled there was an instance where a Treasurer was unable to attend the presentation one year, and staff presented the presentation. There is the need to take such an instance into account. She stated she would not want to support any suggestion that the Superintendent presenting in any fashion undermines the veracity or integrity of the presentation. Having been the Treasurer previously, she and other prior members holding that position have felt there is a quality of teaching the Board by having one member become the student and really grasp the nuances of the budget and able to answer the questions. That speaks to our voters in a way that a staff member or administrator cannot.

Member Solon noted the Board should be writing a policy that is not individual dependent. We happen to have a Superintendent who is extremely understanding of the budget and adept. That has not always been the case

for the SAU as far as the ability to present it in a manner that was clear to understand. Superintendent Corey has made the budget process an absolute priority for him. It shows up in his reviews; all aspects of his involvement in budgeting have been exemplary. But it is not categorically true of all superintendents. When you put the language as “may” it has the ambiguity of will that decision be made and by whom. If wanting to allow for the possibility of deferring that responsibility, he would like to have the wording suggest that the Board makes the decision.

Several members of the Board expressed being pleased with the suggestion.

Member Fareed commented the one problem with that is what happened in a prior situation where it was due to a contingency that came up the day before or that night. Time would not have permitted the Board to make that decision.

Vice Chairman Kellner remarked the input provided has been heard and will be considered by the Policy Committee.

MOTION CARRIED

9-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Policy **CB** – School Superintendent and **CB-R** – Duties of the Superintendent

Given its 1st Reading;

MOTION BY MEMBER ROY TO AMEND POLICY CB – SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT BY IDENTIFYING THE CATEGORY OF RECOMMENDED AND ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICIES CB - SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT AND CB-R – DUTIES OF THE SUPERINTENDENT, AS AMENDED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER KELLNER

ON THE QUESTION

Vice Chairman Kellner stated the changes are housekeeping nature.

MOTION CARRIED

9-0

SUPERINTENDENT’S EVALUATION PROCESS

- Timeline, confirm assignments, explain process

Vice Chairman Kellner stated each individual Board member should have received a link to the Google form for completing the Superintendent’s evaluation. Asked is that those be completed by December 31st. At that point, the Chairs or their designee will compile a consolidated, district level evaluation that will be discussed in a non-public session during each individual board’s January meeting.

The approved district-level evaluations will be forwarded to the Vice Chairman who will put together a consolidated evaluation. The Superintendent Performance Evaluation Committee (SPEC) will meet, discuss the input, and bring forward a consolidated evaluation for the February Governing Board meeting. The evaluation will be ratified at that meeting. The SPEC will present it to Superintendent Corey before the end of February.

Feedback will be solicited from building level administrators as well as senior staff at the SAU.

Member Haag noted mention made earlier concerning the February 2, 2023 date. Superintendent Corey noted the school calendars shows February 2nd as a school day. What is being done is an adjustment to the calendar so that students and staff return from the December break on February 3, 2023.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

MOTION BY MEMBER ROY THAT THE BOARD, BY ROLL CALL, GO INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION PURSUANT TO RSA 91-A:3 II (a) THE DISMISSAL, PROMOTION OR COMPENSATION OF ANY PUBLIC EMPLOYEE AND (c) TO DISCUSS A MATTER, WHICH IF DISCUSSED IN PUBLIC, WOULD LIKELY AFFECT ADVERSELY THE REPUTATION OF A PERSON, OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF THE BODY OR AGENCY ITSELF
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER KELLNER

A Viva Voce Roll Call Vote was taken, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Tom Solon, Cindy VanCoughnett, Kate Stoll, Holly Deurloo Babcock, Tom Enright, Robert Mann, Krista Whalen, Amy Kellner, Carryl Roy, Kelly Zakar, Karen Jew, Kenneth Haag, Tammy Fareed, Alison Marsano

14

Nay:

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MOTION CARRIED

The Board entered non-public session at 7:07 p.m.

The Board came out of non-public session at 8:10 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY MEMBER ROY TO ADJOURN
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MARSANO
MOTION CARRIED

9-0

The December 15, 2022 meeting of the SAU 41 Governing Board was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Date _____

Signed _____