

## SOMERSWORTH SCHOOL BOARD

June 13<sup>th</sup> 2017

City Hall Chambers

7:00pm

1. **CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL - PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Austin called the meeting to order at 7:00pm upon call of the roll the following members were present: Rivers, Smith, Joanne Pepin, Austin, Hiller, Yoder, Hanlon, Brennan and Bolduc. Absent:
2. **Comments by Visitors:** Grace Fuller stated that she is not sure what the board is looking for beyond us taking what you have offered. Year after year we say ok because we want to be nice. This year we have decided to stand up for what is right for us. You say you don't hear from people and when you do hear from people you say it's not personal enough. We as a group collaborated on a statement and these were our thoughts as a group and that is what you received as emails. At this time we are asking you to stand up to what is right. Thank you. Michelle Nash stated that she knows that you got a lot of emails over the weekend from a lot of us and we wrote in collaboration on how we feel. If you got an email from somebody it was because they meant it. They sent it because they meant it. It is up to you to help us. We would like to end the year on a real positive note for all of us. They are not trying to be enemies or difficult just consider our request and we help us work this out. Kathy McNair stated that way back in September the SACA negotiating team met for the first time. They did their homework to come up with a suitable proposal to present to the school board. Taking into consideration the rate of inflation, the projected increases of insurance premiums and the percentage increases of other city and school employees. The response from the school board negotiating team was the proposal of 1% with a maximum dollar amount highlighted. SACA rejected this proposal indicating that we did not feel that this was an adequate amount for approximately 100 members and that has been our continued stance. When asked where the maximum dollar amount came from SACA was told that after the school board had met their contractual financial obligations and priorities that this was the amount leftover. Leftovers, for our school secretaries that are the faces of our schools they are the first person that the public encounters when they enter our building. At any given time on any given day you can find our secretaries answering the phone, answering the doorbells all the while assisting parents, students, and staff. Leftovers, for the 90 plus paraprofessionals the majority of which are one on one aides who support some of Somersworth's most vulnerable children sometimes up to 6.5 hours a day. We work side by side with classroom teachers, special Ed case managers to ensure that each student receives the education they need and deserve. We support our students on good days and bad days sometimes all within the first hour of the school day. On good days we share in their successes whether it is after months of hard work finally recognizing the letters in their first name or independently navigating the lunch line for the first time. On the bad days we may be kicked, punched, slapped and or bitten as we comfort a child who is in the middle of a meltdown because it is Tuesday and they want pizza for lunch and pizza day is three wake ups away. And a heartbreaking day as we cradle the head of a child in the middle of a medical emergency and pray that the nurse comes soon. This is our jobs, we are not leftovers and we do not deserve leftovers, we are worth 2%. Thank you. Tamara Hallee stated that she would like to thank St. John's United Methodist Church who donated a bunch of underwear for our students. In addition I would like to thank Las Palmas who donated the fixings to over 75 tacos for our kindergarten taco Tuesday celebration today. Lastly we are very excited to have five interns from UNH next year and they will be working in Kindergarten, grade 4 and grade 5. As always we look forward to our partnership with UNH.
3. **CONSENT CALENDAR:**
  - 3.1 **Removal of items from the consent calendar:** None

**3.2 Approval of Consent Calendar:** A motion made by Brennan seconded by Hanlon to approve the consent calendar as amended. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously. Approved were:

- May 23 2017- Minutes from the Somersworth School Board Meeting
- Somersworth HS/CTC Newsletter-June and coming events
- Enrollment-June

**4. ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Austin stated that Mr. Lagarde is here and going to do a brief presentation. Lagarde stated that this is the middle school select choir. The select choir performed two numbers. Vic Sokul stated that he provided the board with some information regarding the community service program that they developed. He stated that they implemented it second semester in the futures classes. He stated that he has given you a summary of the data over this year. He stated that the imperatives speak to being active and engaged citizens. He stated that we developed the program with the class of 2020 which is 123 students and the number of students earning hours was 73 and the number of students with 0 hours was 50. He stated that they wanted everyone to earn 10 hours. He stated that they had 18 students who earned ten or more and three students earned 20 or more. He stated that all 18 will be recognized during the academic assembly on Friday. He stated that the total number of hours earned was 417 hours. He stated that some of the feedback from the students was it is not a graduation requirement so why do it, don't have time, freshman can't drive, it helps the community, feeling of accomplishment and work experience. He stated that overall they had a good start but they can do a better job marketing the program to encourage freshman and their parents. He stated that we only have half a year of data so it is hard to say let's do this, we need another full year to gather data then we can make a recommendation on whether to make it a graduation requirement or a school expectation. He stated that he doesn't feel as if we have enough data to make a long term decision. He stated that next year we have two groups doing it, the incoming freshman and the freshman who will be sophomores so we hope to have more information next year. He stated that he attached the forms that they used and an explanation of what community service is and what we expect. Hiller asked if helping out a neighbor raking or painting count. Sokul stated that the key thing is that we like to have adult supervision when that occurs but yes we would accept it. Brennan stated thank you for doing this, I was a big advocate for teaching people to give back to their community so thank you. Sokul stated that the futures teachers deserve a pat on the back as well they did a good job. Scott Seeley stated that he is here tonight to see if the board will approve him taking National Honors Society students on a trip to Washington DC next January 25-29<sup>th</sup> to the NASSP league conference. He stated that it is a great opportunity for the students within NHS to take part in leadership seminars and ways to implement service in order to be leaders in community service within the high school to develop themselves and showcase them within the school. He stated that he looked into the itinerary and travel but he didn't want to progress further without permission from the board. Supt. Mosca stated that the trip would be \$330 per student and they will be working on fundraisers to bring the cost down to \$100-200 per student. Austin asked what happens if it snows. Seeley stated that he will reach out to NASSP to find out. Bolduc stated that he thinks this is a great idea but the time of year you never know but it will be great for the kids to do so he would support that. Hiller asked how many students. Seeley stated that they have 9 NHS students now but it will probably be 12 or a high end of 15. Austin stated that the board granted permission. Hilliard stated that in the advisory program which is the first 25 minutes of the day which is the staple and foundation of middle level education they have been doing STEAM based activities each day. He stated that one of the major activities that they do every three years is create a lip dub. Thank you to the high school for their collaboration and doing the video editing. He stated that it took three takes and took an hour so everyone did a great job. He played the video for the board. He stated that Senator Shaheen also visited the middle school and the Idlehurst 21<sup>st</sup> century program or SYC. He stated that we are very proud to have received the five year grant and Somersworth Middle school out of all the applicants ranked highest in the state for that grant. He stated that several weeks later President

Trump's budget was released and the secretary of education is not refunding the program under the current budget and the president's budget cuts SYC funding. He stated that we have funding for one year and we don't know after that if the budget passes, the program will be eliminated. He stated that she gathered information from her visit at Idlehurst and a former student shared a letter of which became the foundation of her testimony to the secretary of education. He stated that current students are hearing the influence they are having on national policy and Ray's voice echoed through the halls of Washington. He stated that the secretary of education didn't have a response to that. He stated that if this gets eliminated they will no longer have homework help or the enrichments and after school guidance, instead they will go to a house where parents are working. As you know we are two income community and a large population are struggling and doing everything as parents to make sure the students are successful. He thanked Ray and all of the board for their support of the program. He stated that hopefully we can change the voices in the US Senate and be able to acquire funding. He stated that his letter clearly had an impact and he hopes that their collaborative work with Senator Shaheen and congress that we will restore funding. He stated that he has reached out to the president and the US Secretary of Education on coming here to see the students and see that they will be affected and that we have something incredible in this community. Thank you for being the voice of reason and support for our students locally. Austin stated that he would like to recognize Tamara Hallee as this will be her last meeting as principal of Maple Wood and we wish her well. We have enjoyed your tenure here and we are sure you will do well in your new position. He stated that we recognized the retirees at the last meeting and we have one more to recognize. Jeni is finishing up her tenure here and she has been with us for seven years now and she has given us the knowledge of the way education works here in New Hampshire and it has been a journey. He stated that Jeni has earned her time off as a soon to be retiree and I will miss you personally and he knows that the board and community feel the same way. He stated that the community at large and the city governance all talk about the impact you have had on the city of Somersworth as a whole. As a small token of appreciation we have planted a tree at the SAU office in her honor. At the end of the meeting we will have refreshments to express our thanks to Jeni.

## 5. Discussion Items

### 5.1 Building, Grounds & Transportation: None

**Curriculum and Activities:** None

**Policy Committee:** None

**5.2 City Council Update:** Marty Pepin stated that they had a light agenda so there is nothing to report.

**5.3 Student Representative Report-Isis Orchard:** Orchard stated they had a meeting with the American Legion on girls and boys state and the following students will be attending: Emily Calahan and Isis Orchard. She stated that NHS will be having an ice cream social on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and student council will be having a barbecue on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

**5.4 Somersworth School District Seven Years in Review:** Supt. Mosca stated that we put together a slideshow of all the things we have accomplished over the last seven years. (See attached). She stated that a lot of what has happened is because of the staff and their support and willingness. Thank you to the SAU staff and the administration as they have made the difference. Austin stated that when the SAU board hired Jeni as a Superintendent their most significant concern was her ability to interact with the community and nobody doubts her ability to do that now.

## 6. ACTION ITEM

**6.1 Allow the Superintendent to do Summer Hiring:** A motion made by Hanlon seconded by hiller to allow the superintendent to do the summer hiring. Austin stated that every year we allow the superintendent to do the hiring during the summer with ratification at the next meeting following the hiring. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously.

## 7. NEW BUSINESS

## 8. OLD BUSINESS

## **8.1 Vision 20/20 Committee: None**

**8.2 Budget:** Austin stated that we have the budget that was handed out tonight. Supt. Mosca stated that they spent time looking at the budget and they are right down to the bottom. She stated that if we are short on the revenue side we have to make it up on the expense side. She stated that Medicaid is estimated that we will get another \$105,000 and she doesn't think that will be the final number and she knows that there will be a shortfall that we will need to make up on the expense side. She stated that we have \$100,000 in the reserve fund for special education and we may need to tap into that to finish this budget cycle which will leave us short next year. Bolduc asked if we know yet that the \$105,000 is not coming. Supt. Mosca stated that not all of it is coming but we are getting some we just don't have a final figure but we know it won't be the \$105,000. How much we are short we don't know yet because we are doing billing right up until the end of school. Bolduc stated that we won't know until July. Supt. Mosca stated that we may not know until mid-July. Bolduc asked why we don't take action until July. Austin stated that after encumbering everything there is \$3,000 left out of the budget and if the revenue comes in less than \$3,000 were in the hole. He stated that we can't end the year in a deficit and we have the opportunity to use the special education money to fund the special education expenses which is something that this board needs to consider. Bolduc stated that the timing of the \$105,000 number could affect the revenue so do we sit tight and wait because we don't know what the number is. Joanne Pepin stated that the plan was to take the \$100,000 out of the special education account next year and now we have to take it out this year, what is the balance. Austin stated that there is \$103,000 in that account. He stated that we don't know that we will need \$100,000 out of this year's budget and his recommendation is to consider spending half of the money if we need it in the current year. Hiller stated that my fear is that it leaves \$3,000 in that account and if we get inundated next year we are going to have a bigger problem next year. A motion made by Pepin seconded by Hanlon to take \$50,000 out of the special education reserve fund and if we have to take more in the future. Bolduc stated that he worries about timing, if I don't know what we are voting for I will vote no. He stated that we might be jumping the gun a little bit and he doesn't think that we have to do it at this time. Hanlon asked if we don't use it what happens. Austin stated that it would go back to the city. Bolduc stated that we should wait and see if we need it. At this point he can't vote for it, when it happens then you get my vote. He stated that he hopes they can wait until the time comes. Isis Orchard asked if we take the money what does it do to the staff and students. Supt. Mosca stated that we are ok with staff and students. She stated that the money has been in the account for seven years and we established it to help level off special education costs that fluctuate. She stated that we haven't had to dip into it but since the budget is tight now it is time to use it. She stated that we had appropriated it to the budget for next year. She stated that we had additional costs in special education transportation in the amount of \$53,000 so it would offset that cost. Joanne Pepin stated that now that they found out that it would go back to the general fund she will rescind her motion as she does not want it to go into the general fund. Hanlon stated that looking at the calendar we only have one meeting in July so we would be relying on scheduling a meeting or having an emergency meeting and that gets tricky so should we look at setting a date. Austin stated that we will be meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> so we will be close to having the final numbers. He asked Marie what her interpretation is of what happens to the money if we don't spend it. D'Agostino stated that we are meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup>, between now and then she will talk to Scott Smith to see if the wording needs to be put into the motion to go back into the fund. She stated that she needs clarification on that. Austin stated that in your opinion if no action is taken this evening what is the worst that could happen. D'Agostino stated we won't know the final numbers until August, even on the 27<sup>th</sup> we won't know the final numbers. We still have utilities, transportation, out of district tuition that we won't receive until after June 30<sup>th</sup>. June 27<sup>th</sup> will not be the final budget. Austin stated that if the board takes no action what is the worst thing that will happen. D'Agostino stated that we

will be more informed on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Austin stated that we have a projected budget that says \$3,000 to the good right now using all the best estimates to encumber funds, he understands all the caveats and he understands we can't end in a deficit position so if between now and the end of the fiscal year we put ourselves at risk of ending up in the red. D'Agostino stated at this point yes. Bolduc stated that the books don't close until August. He stated that the wrong thing to do is just guess and take the \$50,000. If we get surprised and Medicaid comes in we have extra money and you don't go to the emergency fund until we need it. If we find we have a shortfall in August we can go to that fund at that time. He stated that he doesn't think that we have to pull it out by June 30<sup>th</sup>. Hiller stated that she agrees with Ken. I don't mind if you call an extra meeting over the summer. She stated that she would like to find out how much we are getting in Medicaid before we appropriate money. She stated that we will start in the hole next year because we were counting on that money to pay for next year. We should wait for the correct number to appropriate it. Marty Pepin stated that he sponsored that fund and it is intended for lines being cut for special education. He stated that the writing on the resolution designated it for special education and you may have council members question it because it was started for special education. Austin stated that the reason this popped up is due to incoming special education students that were outplaced students. Supt. Mosca stated that it was a myriad of things and that was one piece. She stated that the big issue is the shortfall in revenue and Medicaid is directly related to our special education students. She stated that there will be a shortfall that we have to make up on the expense side. Hanlon stated that he will pull his second to the motion back. He stated that we need to make this a discussion item at the next meeting and be ready to answer some questions at the next meeting. Bolduc stated that on the expense sheet under SPED there is \$31,000 left in that. Austin stated that SPED transportation is \$54,000 in the hole. He stated that we will bring this back at the next meeting.

#### **9. MAYOR FORUM DATES:**

#### **10. FUTURE MEETING DATES/SUGGESTED AGENDA ITEMS:**

- **June 27 2017- Somersworth School Board Meeting**

#### **11. CLOSING COMMENTS**

##### **11.1 Visitors:** None

**11.2 Board Members:** Yoder stated that the district wide showcase was fantastic, her seven year old was obsessed with the robotics and it was great to see what the kids were doing. She stated that she has gone on a couple of field trips one with the 4<sup>th</sup> grade to UNH farm and with the 1<sup>st</sup> grade to York beach animal kingdom. She thanked Dana and Maureen for the presentation and she is proud of Senator Shaheen and Ray for their efforts made. Thank you to Mr. Lagarde and the choir it was beautiful. Hiller thanked Dana for the presentation it opened her eyes to the situation and she will pay more attention to it now. She thanked Mr. Lagarde and the choir you did an excellent job and she appreciates having music at our meetings. She stated that she was unable to attend graduation but congratulated the class of 2017. She stated that she will not be here at the June 27<sup>th</sup> meeting. Rivers stated that he would echo the comments and thank you to Dana, Maureen and the chorus. He wished Tamara the best of luck, it has been enjoyable having you around. He stated that he attended graduation and he was amazed at the size of the crowd. Smith stated that it was a great performance tonight and he enjoyed it. Joanne Pepin thanked Matt Lagarde, she can't get over the students we have in our community that are so talented. She stated that she is sorry that Tamara is leaving but happy that she is going on in her career. She stated that it is not good for us but great for you. She congratulated the 73 freshman who did community service it is really important for the educators to teach the kids that when you volunteer you get more back than you give. She stated that she extremely commends the middle school students who did the empathy project set up by their social studies teacher. They did projects and researched an issue and prepared a presentation and found out about various things such as suicide prevention, bullying, homeless veterans and vanishing

veterans. She stated that we all have to realize our veterans are falling under the cracks and we need to follow up on that. She stated that she commends the staff at the middle school they go above and beyond and she hopes that it stretches to the high school and elementary schools. She stated that what you do for the community is extremely commendable. Hanlon thanked Mr. Lagarde and the kids. He stated that they have seen more students come in and demonstrate their skills. He thanked Tamara and Jeni and wished them both well. He thanked all the staff for all their hard work and wished everyone a happy and safe summer vacation. Bolduc stated that he attended the HISET graduation for our struggling students that got their GED's and a bunch of people work with them and they do a fantastic job. He stated that they deserve more recognition, they work hard and get their GED and those people that work with them we shouldn't forget them. Austin stated that he handed out diplomas at graduation and it is the most humble thing he gets to do as a chairman to see the accomplishments of the senior class. He stated that the speeches were motivational and it was the best behaved class he has seen in a long time. Good luck to the graduates and he hopes you always bleed hilltopper blue. He thanked that SACA group for their hard work and dedication and we understand and we know. He stated that we recognize through the negotiation process that it has not been successful but we continue to value all the PARAS and secretaries and we hope to reach an agreement soon if we can come together and get it done.

**12. NON-PUBLIC:** A motion made by Hanlon seconded by Brennan to exit into nonpublic session in accordance with Chapter 91-A: 3 II (b) Personnel (c) matter, which if discussed in public would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person and (e) Negotiations. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously. Exited into nonpublic session at 8:42pm. A motion made by Brennan seconded by Hanlon to exit out of nonpublic session. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously. Exited out of nonpublic at 9:52pm.

A motion made by Joanne Pepin seconded by Brennan to accept the nomination of Victoria Russo. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously.

A motion made by Joanne Pepin seconded by Hiller to accept with regret the resignation of Holly Prudhomme. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously.

**13. ADJOURNMENT:** A motion made by Brennan seconded by Hanlon to adjourn. VOTE: motion passed, unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:55pm.

Katie Krauss  
Board Secretary

Pending Board Approval