

Surry School Board Minutes, Monday, January 19, 2025
Attending: Tim, Frank, John, Kim, Caroll (minutes), Bruce
Call to Order 7:00 PM

Secretary's Report – Approval of minutes: Moved Tim, Seconded John, all present voted in favor.

Treasurer's Report—Approval of \$36,422.61 manifest: Moved Caroll, Seconded Tim, all present voted in favor.

Budget Status Report—anticipate \$60,000 year end budget surplus, lower than expected due to an unanticipated out of district placement, \$101,935 Adequacy grant came

Public Comment--None

Old Business

i. 2026-2027 Budget Development—discussed '25-'26 expenditures and '26-'27 expenditures to date, need to include: \$15,000 for legal (have 2 potential issues), \$5,000 for bond counsel, tuition and transportation for summer school, \$5400 for insurance (may go down next year), \$2,000 for stenographer, \$7500 for audit (they require about 150 documents), STA transportation contract (they are on time, very responsive, 5-6% cost increase vs. First Student 20% increase)

ii. Warrant Articles—Board wants to put renovation costs into warrant articles rather than budget (only what we need)

iii. Surry School Renovation Project 2026-2027: need building repair: ADA compliance (entry way), parking lot safety, HVAC room by room, boiler room, custodial closet, Kim met with security company, may not need a new door, SSB thinks SVCS should pay for cameras, SVCS has ideas about safety

Surry School Renovation Project 2025-2026

i. 2025-2026 Building Compliance Budget (ADA Bathrooms)—renovate both student bathrooms (sinks, toilets, enclosed stalls, flooring), will cost more in the short run, Hutter is pricing it out, hope to do for \$60,000 or less, during April break.

ii. Hutter Construction—Barker prefers Hutter as construction manager, Tim moved, Frank seconded, all present approved to empower Superintendent to negotiate with Hutter for bathroom renovation for up to \$60,000.

iii. Next Special Meeting--to skip holding Feb special meeting, plan for late April/May, to show new bathrooms

SVCS Cleaning Project—SVCS paid Durling \$2000 for 8-9 hr deep cleaning, looks and smells better, Kim donated carpets at doorway, needs daily cleaning, SVCS knows it needs to make the building look better

Renovation Project Funding Research—Kim is keeping a log of inquiries, talked to Suzanne (county grant writer): community block grants go to towns not schools, need to have historic event tie-in, Kim to talk again to SWRP, asked charter school official at DoE to think of us if they have leftover funds, John to ask fire department for help with grant writing, Select Board may be able to get funds from Kingsbury Corp., SVCS Trustees on board with fundraising and setting up an endowment, Kim talked to their grant writer, they need to fund a grant writer for this project

RSA 189:76: Mandatory Report to Voters—needs to be posted in Sentinel & 2 places 7 days before annual meeting, formula: total of regular & special tuitions divided by number of number of students first semester, for ten years
Similar formula for administrative cost

Keene can provide some data, bookkeeper can get tuition bills, Caroll offered to do as she has the data

New Business

a. 2024-2025 Audit Summary—Kim sent the auditor's summary, auditor documents NH grants applied for and received. Audit says 2025-26 \$198,710 fund balance was returned to reduce taxes. Audit determines what our liabilities are to be sure we have it. DRA wants 5% of appropriation to be unreserved fund balance. Caroll Moved, Tim Seconded, all present approved the motion to accept the audit summary.

- b. Financial Safeguards—10-20% of total budget left in fund balance at year end means SSB finances in good shape, our safeguards: treasurer oversees bookkeeping, treasurer is independent of board, board reviews expenditures, Kim has developed a treasurer job description—to discuss with Becky at next meeting
- c. Some Policies and Minutes are missing from the town website—to discuss next time

Superintendent's Report--attached

Setting the Next Meeting Agenda: Meeting date: Monday, February 16, 2025 @ 7:00pm

Public Comment—The Surry equalized value figures have improved a little. There are 32 towns lower than ours.

9:10 PM Tim moved, Frank seconded, all present approved to go into Non-Public Session RSA 91-A:3
Discussed administration salaries for 2026-27 budget and out of district student placement.

9:35 PM John moved, Tim seconded and all present approved to end non-Public and adjourn.

Surry School Board
January 19, 2026 meeting
Superintendent's Report

To: Surry School Board

From: Kim Caron, Superintendent – Surry School District

The following is a general update of activities as of January 12th since the last Board meeting. Please note that the numbering on this report follows the school board agenda.

3. Treasurer's Report.

- 3a. The superintendent's review of the January 2026 manifest.
- 3b. The superintendent's review of the most recent budget status report.

5. Old Business.

- 5a. Budget Development 2026-2027. Planning and school board discussion. The team is looking at budget history, anticipated needs, as well as student enrollment data. Tuition rates have been received from SAU29. The school board should consider a target budget number to continue building renovation and compliance work. Consider adding a minute taker/stenographer to the 2026-27 budget for legal and policy compliance. Project special education expenses to be discussed in non-public session due to student confidentiality.

- 5b. Surry School Renovation Project 2025-2026.

o i. 2025-2026 Building Compliance Budget (ADA Bathroom). The superintendent met with Barker Architects and Hutter Construction at the Surry School Building on December 29th

. The purpose of the meeting was to review

renovation plans for the current school year - on site - and get Hutter's input. Hutter is a preferred contractor with Barker and involved in several local projects. The superintendent previously reviewed the building repair and compliance objectives in the current year, including ADA bathroom compliance and building code work in the current electrical and custodial closet - of course - pending expenses. Please see Attachment 1 for a summary of the meeting and the renovation/compliance budget. A breakdown of costs from Hutter Construction is coming soon. The school board previously voted to utilize a portion of the Surry Building Expendable Trust to address urgent compliance issues in the current year.

Building Security. Campus safety and security are important considerations and a priority of the school board and the SVCS Head. Installation of a simple security system at the main entry was discussed with Hutter. Hutter connected the superintendent with First Choice Communications, a preferred school security contractor, to explore options and cost. More to follow.

o ii. Hutter Construction. Board Motion/Vote. Barker Architects has identified Hutter Construction as a preferred contractor. Hutter has considerable experience with numerous school construction and renovation projects in NH, including the Nelson Elementary School. Hutter was most recently engaged in construction management in the Monadnock school district. Based upon the endorsement of Barker Architects, the superintendent requests the approval of the school board to execute a contract with Hutter to complete the ADA bathroom compliance and other renovation work within the scope of the of the approved building compliance budget for this year. The superintendent will consult with school board chair for final approval prior to executing the Hutter contract.

o iii. Next Special Meeting. The superintendent communicated with the school board via email on December 18th regarding tentatively scheduling additional special school board meetings for the purpose of inviting and informing Surry residents about the Surry School Renovation Project. Proposed dates were Saturday February 7th and Monday May 11th

. Due to timing and potential completion of the bathroom renovation project in the next few months, the superintendent suggests postponing the February special school board meeting until Spring.

- 5c. SVCS Cleaning Project. The school board was previously notified that the school board chair and superintendent implemented article 19f of the lease agreement regarding the failure to maintain a clean school environment. The superintendent met with ServPro and Durling Cleaners in November to acquire estimates for one-time deep cleaning services. The SVCS Board Chair was notified of this action as part a November meeting at the Surry campus. Durling was chosen due to SVCS cost considerations. A one-time, thorough cleaning of the Surry School Building was completed by Durling over the December vacation, including waxing the main hallway. The Durling invoice was forwarded to the SVCS Head for payment.

- 5d. Renovation Project Research. The superintendent provides an update on funding research renovation project including grant opportunities and public/private fundraising. The objective is to explore public and private funding opportunities for the renovation project to reduce the local expense as much as possible. See Attachment 2 for a record of work to date.

1- 5e. RSA 189:76 Mandatory Report to Voters. This is in follow-up to a recent change in the law that will impact the current budget season previously discussed with the school board. The statute prescribes that the district displays ten years of data illustrating “average per pupil cost”, “average teacher salary”, and “administrator salaries”. Lastly, a table titled top administrator salaries must be included showing the top three administrative salaries over ten years. The statute does not carve out any exceptions for sending districts such as Surry that educate resident students in other districts by tuition agreement. NHED does not maintain per pupil costs for sending districts such as Surry. The superintendent made a good faith effort to develop a method to compute the average per pupil cost for the district in agreement with the school board attorney. See Attachment 3 for the calculation process and attorney advice to comply with this statute. The superintendent requests the assistance of the school board in the collection and recording of the required data.

6. New Business.

- 6a. 2024-2025 Audit Summary. Vote to Accept. Per RSA 21-J:19, the school district is required to publish a summary of the audit report in the annual district report. See Attachment 4 for the Full Draft Audit Report with governance, management, and internal control letters included. See Attachment 5 for the audit summary report for school board vote to accept and include in the district annual report.

- 6b. Financial safeguards. The school board treasurer previously commented on the financial difficulties that have occurred in other school districts. The treasurer is appropriately focused on how the school board can do its due diligence to prevent similar issues. Safeguarding district finances include appropriate policies, procedures, and internal controls, transparent management including school board review of monthly manifests, and solid external audits. Surry currently has the basic financial policies and practices in place, including budget status reports, the school board consistently reviews monthly revenue and expenses, and the district undergoes an external audit on an annual basis. These are effective financial safeguards. The superintendent has additional suggestions for school board consideration in an effort to further strengthen financial safeguards. 1. Consider developing a policy statement outlining the specific steps of the school board treasurer in safeguarding district finances. See Attachment 6 for a policy example. 2. Schedule an audit review and summary as an annual school board agenda item. The superintendent requests school board consideration and vote on these suggestions.

- 6c. Policy and Minutes. The superintendent is concerned about the timeliness of posting approved school board minutes, policy, and other documents to the district website. This impacts our legal and policy requirements. The superintendent previously reported that SAU29 utilizes a stenographer for school board minutes. The school board discussed this as an option for Surry. In addition, please see attachment 7 for the status of school board policy that needs to be posted on the district website and for additional policy development.

7. Superintendent’s Report.

- Considerable time and effort since the December meeting remain focused on the Surry cleaning project, Surry School Renovation and Compliance Projects and work planned for the current year (ADA), further research on project grants, and SVCS partnership activities.

- The business administrator continues to work on the complexities of the Federal Maintenance of Effort for grant monitoring and works with the superintendent on the monthly budget status report.

- The special education and student services director continues to track our special education students with our receiving schools. The director continues to submit qualified expenses on a monthly basis for IDEA reimbursement.

Parking Lot.

- AREA agreement (k-5). As discussed at the October 2025 school board meeting, replacing the current tuition contract for grades K-5 with an AREA agreement could reduce tuition expenses. Holding pending school board discussion.
- Audit. The audit is essential to financial accountability, compliance to best practices, and verifying the accuracy of district financials. Best practice points to changing auditors every five years or so to ensure objectivity, an independent view, and for cost comparisons. The superintendent suggests placing an audit firm search on a future school board agenda for discussion. This item might be a relevant collaboration with the school board treasurer as it involves financial safeguards and oversight.
- Policy development and adoption. The school board has additional policy work to accomplish as well as continue to focus on the Surry School Renovation and Compliance Project.

Non-Public. The superintendent will provide the school board with confidential updates as allowed under RSA 91.

Thanks. Kim