

## Surry School Board Special Public Meeting Minutes Thursday, November 20, 2025

Attending: Kim, John, Frank, Tim, Caroll (minutes)

Bruce Smith, Tim & Charlotte Small, Roger & Nancy Wilbur, Steve Goldsmith, Ron Profrazier, Kenny & Joann Maynard, David Lane, Katherine Richardson, Sharon Sweeney, Cindy Englehart, Jessica Howard, David Lawrence SVCS—Nicole Lackie, Lori Caron, a board member

7:00 PM Kim presented his PowerPoint history of Surry School and building needs assessment.

T Small—How many kids go to SVCS? How many are there from the beginning?

K Caron—We will get those figures for you.

Peloquin—We pay special education service at SVCS. Keene charges an average of \$40,000 for special education tuition. We are working with SVCS to avail charter school grants.

Goldsmith--\$50,000 affects the taxpayers a little. \$1.8m affects the taxpayers a lot. Could do some work each summer and not affect the taxpayers so much.

Peloquin—it's hard to pick a project that does not affect other parts of the school. Example—the old boiler affects the pipes.

T Small—Doing it all at once would be best. Where would students go during construction?

Peloquin—Work would be done on breaks, and one room at a time. Building safety is an issue. What are the kids breathing now?

Lothrop—No decisions have been made yet.

Goldsmith—Is there any money put aside?

Peloquin—There is about \$100,000 in the trust fund. We have to provide a safe environment. There is no ADA bathroom. Keene has very strict traffic controls, Surry has none. We need level transitions into the building. This project is being done for Surry. SVCS has saved Surry about \$2m in tuition for the past 10 years. We could not rent the building for that. The renovation benefits Surry and SVCS, it would keep SVCS viable.

K Maynard—How would we get the money back if there was no SVCS?

Peloquin—There could be a childcare center in the building. We need to prevent the building from degrading.

Howard—How many children are there?

Peloquin—There are 87 kids going to Keene. Surry has preference for spaces in SVCS.

Richardson—What are the projections for the future? NH is the 2<sup>nd</sup> oldest state, Cheshire is the oldest county.

Peloquin—Back in Covid, Surry had its highest birthrate. There are about 13-14 Surry student movements in/out of Keene schools per year. Keene tuition for elementary special education is \$59,000. If a child goes to SVCS that saves about \$59,000.

Lothrop—This year we have 31 regular elementary students in Keene and projecting two more during the year. We have 4 special elementary students in Keene and projecting 3 more.

Richardson—Will there be kids in SVCS in 10 years?

Lackie—We have students from Walpole, Hinsdale, Peterborough, Troy and Alstead.

Goldsmith—Healthcare costs for Keene are going up.

L Wilbur—

Lane—People from away are buyng in Surry.

Richardson—The hospital is projecting population to drop.

Profrazier—Renovations will improve the building, costs will go up.

Peloquin—Renovations will create projected cost savings. SVCS student health is important to us, and saves Surry about \$200,000 a year.

Profrazier—SVCS pays no lease, but Surry buys the \$200,000 renovation. Is that fair? There are so many changes in state funding. What is the viability for the charter system in 10 years?

Lackie—DOE anticipates all current programs to remain in place. SVCS costs about \$12,000/student, range is \$10-15,000. SVCS gets \$9,000 in state aid and also federal Title I & II funding (which has specific rules for use). The rest of the costs come from fundraising, grants and benefactors.

Proverazier—SVCS is tuition free.

Lackie—We don't get tax money.

K Maynard—What if there were no Surry kids at SVCS? Would remodeling help attract more kids?

Richardson—What about special education students?

Peloquin—Keene charges special education tuition. Fees for special education services at SVCS are billed to Surry by the time spent.

Lackie—If 2 students are sharing a special educator, the cost is split between the two students.

Peloquin—We met with Keene to ask for a tiered special education tuition. They said if they adjusted our tuition down, they would have to raise rates for other towns. They tried that before and the system ground to a halt.

Lane—If there was no SVCS, the kids would go somewhere else, and we would not be saving \$200,000/yr. We need to look 100 years ahead. Town should say what the town needs in 100 years. When we left Monadnock, our numbers of school age students went up. Even if we only had 10 kids in SVCS, it would still benefit the town.

Richardson—We will have chips in our heads in 100 years.

Englehart—When I moved here from MA 24 years ago, that town was spending \$25m to renovate their high school.

8:35 PM Motion to go into Non-Public: Tim, second: Carol, all voted in favor. Reflected on evening's discussion.

9:00 PM Motion to come out of Non-Public and adjourn: Frank, second: John, all voted in favor.