

Grand Isle Supervisory Union  
**South Hero School District**  
School Board Regular Meeting  
**Thursday, June 17, 2021**, at 6 p.m.  
Location: Folsom Education & Community Center  
Google Meet: [meet.google.com/jcn-guaz-snh](https://meet.google.com/jcn-guaz-snh)

## MINUTES

### Call to Order

1. Call to order and introductions at 6:06 p.m. (B. Chutter)

In attendance:

-Board members: Tim Maxham, Bob Chutter, Nathaniel Kouns, Jen Lyon-Horne (joining at 6:30 p.m.). Absent: Bentley Vaughan.

-Staff: Michael Clark, Rob Gess, Julie Pidgeon

-Audience: Buddy Meilleur (LCATV)

2. Adjustment of Agenda

-B. Chutter added an update on a court ruling regarding tuition payments under Other.

3. Public Comments

-The Folsom staff sent a thank you card to South Hero Board members. Chutter read the card and expressed gratitude.

4. Consent Agenda (Action)

A. B. Chutter asked that the minutes be amended to correct the spelling of Erin Heslop. Chutter moved that the board approve the minutes from May 20, 2021, with the correction of the spelling of Erin Heslop in item 9. T. Maxham seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

B. Resignation: Heidi Coppolino, paraprofessional. Clark referred the board to Coppolino's resignation letter. The board thanked her for her service.

5. Reports

A. Financial (R. Gess) (Action): Gess referred the board to his report. He updated the board on the tax rate now that the Legislature has adjourned. He said that the final outcome in Montpelier resulted in a further reduction in the tax rate because of a reduction in the yield. The tax rate will be approximately \$1.6040 for FY2022, a 9-cent reduction.

The Legislature made a change to the small schools grant that allows schools offering free and reduced lunch to continue to receive the small schools grant. Gess also updated the board on changes to the requirements for facilities. The state is requiring a

facilities assessment and inventory. Each school or supervisory union is required to appoint someone to be in charge of facilities management and to have an employee certified in facilities oversight. Each district and supervisory union will need a capital improvement plan, and the law changed some of the requirements for bidding.

Gess said he anticipates the district will have a surplus because of the unbudgeted small schools grant and higher than expected tuition.

T. Maxham made a motion that the board received and reviewed the financial report 14531 of June 9, 2021. N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

B. Superintendent's (M. Clark): Clark shared that Folsom School ended the school year on Wednesday, June 16. He expressed appreciation to the community for all it did during the pandemic. The new protocols recommend one wear a mask at school if unvaccinated. Chutter asked if the superintendent would like feedback on his document about job responsibilities at GISU. The superintendent shared the history of the document and a plan to organize the information differently for future use. Maxham said the document was helpful. Maxham asked for an update on Rob Althoff's presentation to families. Clark said Althoff's presentation was 30 minutes and available on the GISU website. He gave a summary of Althoff's talk, which focused on how the pandemic may impact mental health. Clark also responded to a question about summer learning programs.

C. Principal's (S. McKelvie): The board reviewed Susan McKelvie's report. Julie Pidgeon shared that the learning kits were well received by students.

#### Board Business

6. Approval of Bills for Payment. B. Chutter made a motion to pay the bills in Batch #10188 totaling \$27,657.03. T. Maxham seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

7. Audit Presentation (Sullivan Powers): Presentation tabled until 6:45 p.m.

8. C25: Admission of Non-residential Students (B. Chutter)(Action). B. Chutter moved that the board accept the (C25) Admission of Non-residential Students as presented on its second reading. N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

9. E21: Distribution of Non-school sponsored Literature in Schools (B. Chutter)(Action). B. Chutter moved that the board accept (E21) Distribution of Non-school sponsored Literature in Schools, accepting Option A (distributing none), as presented on its second reading. N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

10. D21: Education Support System (B. Chutter)(Action). B. Chutter moved that the board accept (D21) Education Support System as presented on its second reading. N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

11. B20: Personnel Recruitment, Selection & Background Checks (B. Chutter)(Action). B. Chutter moved that the board accept (B20) Personnel Recruitment, Selection & Background Checks as presented on its second reading. N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

12. VMI Request (M. Clark)(Action): Jenny Degree has asked the board to approve additional coursework for the VMI (Vermont Mathematics Initiative) program. Clark said he will reach out to Degree to see if she can provide outreach to other teachers, receiving a stipend from VMI that might defray the cost. Degree is eligible for 9 credits, and Clark said he would like to discuss the request with Degree before action. Kouns moved the board table the request, and Maxham seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.

13. Sullivan Powers presentation of the FY20.

Fred Duplessis from Sullivan Powers & Co. joined the meeting at 6:45. He said the board receives three items, the bound audit, recommendations, and a letter to the board about the audit. Duplessis said the audit process was smooth. He referred the board to page 2 of the audit, the financial statements. He said the board's financial statements are in order, and the district is following all rules and requirements for accounting. He reviewed the recommendations and highlighted a change in accounting for local funds for FY21. Chutter asked about the management discussion section on page 2. Gess said the district has chosen not to write this narrative in the past due to delays in the audit. Maxham asked about the role of the school treasurer. Duplessis said one role is to authorize the signing of checks based on board authority. Another responsibility is to maintain a cash account balance. Maxham asked about the responsibility for private funds. Gess said the school treasurer maintains those funds. Duplessis said those funds also are audited. Chutter asked about page 19 and how the district is accounting for compensated absences and early retirement. Duplessis said these payments are charged as expenditures to the budget in the year they are paid. Chutter asked about page 30 retirement. Duplessis noted retirement funding comes from the state. Under accounting practices, the audit reports the theoretical amount of South Hero's pro rata share; however he said the state is responsible for the funding. Chutter noted the district does offer a retirement plan for non-union employees.

Chutter asked Gess to forward Sullivan Powers policy recommendations to board members. Gess said he will, and the district plans to make the policy recommendations in the upcoming year. Maxham noted the improvement in the audit process. Duplessis left the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

14. Future meeting structure (M. Clark)(Discussion): Clark said the board needs to have a physical meeting location now that the governor's emergency order for the pandemic has

ended. Clark recommends the board continue to offer a virtual option for future meetings in summer and fall.

15. Other

- A. Chutter shared an update on a lawsuit regarding tuition payments to parochial schools. The lawyers have advised the board is obligated to pay tuition for those in the lawsuit for spring 2021. Chutter said that for equity, he recommended the board pay tuition for the spring semester of 2021 to all residents who request it for a parochial school, not just those in the lawsuit. He noted the lawsuit is still in progress and not finalized. The board discussed the issue
- B. Board retreat: Chutter asked the board members to come to the July meeting with suggested dates and agenda items. Clark said that to include Megan Grube, director of curriculum, instruction and technology, the retreat would need to take place in August.

**Closure**

16. Setting the next agenda for July 15

-Board retreat

-Update on summer activities and preparation for the fall

17. Adjourn

The board adjourned at 7:26 PM. T. Maxham made a motion to adjourn. N. Kouns seconded the motion. Approved unanimously on a voice vote.