Members Present: Carol Sobetzer, Marc DeBois (Orford); Margaret Gladstone, Doug Tifft, Sandra Smith-Ordway (Fairlee); Bruce Lyndes (at-large); Jennifer Ricker (Vershire)

Administrators and Staff Present: Gail Keiling (Head of Schools/Superintendent), Donna Valentine (HS Principal), Richard Paulson (Chief Financial Officer)

Others Present: Michael Gilbert, Ellen Gilbert, Leda Amanatidis, Cathy Eastburn, Jeff Winagle, Jill Larson, Tina Hebb, Jon Molesworth, Mark Martel, Tim Surprenant, Amanda Babcock, Kelly Carter, Robert O’Leary, Orford Police Chief Kilmer, Cicely Richardson (Journal Opinion) and Sheri Clifford

I. Call Meeting:
Meeting was opened at 6:30 pm.

II. Agenda Revision/Time Allocation:
None at this time.

III. General Public Comments
Carol recognized the parents present at the meeting and opened the floor to them. The following concerns were voiced:

- A 10% reduction in the budget which may mean a cut in staff
- Has the Long Range Plan been taken into consideration
- What if all that could be cut was done and the budget was 3% over last year
- Are lower fuel prices helping with the new budget
- Now that the District is almost 10 years old there will be building maintenance issues to be addressed.
- Are there any other grants, fundraising or other means to raise funds for the schools

Sobetzer stated that there was a letter asking for a 10% reduction. The Board has asked the staff to begin at zero and build a budget keeping in mind the number of students, books and supplies and explain in detail their budgets. Sobetzer went on to explain that the Board is responsible for the budget and assured that the best interest of the student’s academic growth is the first priority.

Keiling stated that the public will be able to view the budget on the website and encouraged them to attend the Public Hearings on the budget, they are also welcome to voice their opinions with both options. She also asked that if parents have a question or hear a rumor as to potential cuts to call her and simply ask. Keiling went on to explain that the School District was able to lock in on a fuel price in October and are keeping it within the budgeted amount. She and Gary Collins, Director of Operations, have discussed and reviewed his five year plan to maintain the buildings and they are investigating solutions for the gym roof at Samuel Morey School. The Board thanked the parents for attending the meeting and encouraged them once again to attend the public hearings and the Annual District meeting on March 28th.

Action: Motion made and seconded to hear from Chief Kilmer next and Principal Valentine to follow. Approved.
VI. Ongoing Business  
   A. Q & A with Orford Police Chief Kilmer  
   Keiling introduced Chief Kilmer to the Board and stated that he was present to answer any questions regarding the Memo of Understanding before it was signed. There was discussion on the interviewing of a student without a parent present. Kilmer explained that he would do everything necessary to be sure a parent was notified and would be willing to wait for the parent to get to the school before conducting an interview. He also explained that when possible he records interviews so there would be no misunderstandings as to what the procedure was.

IV. Student/Teacher Presentation & Recognition  
   A. High School Schedule Report (D. Valentine)  
   Valentine discussed with the Board the need to provide good academics for the students of Rivendell, looking at the building operation and where the students are academically. She asked the Board to consider changing the schedule to semesters versus trimesters. Valentine shared a handout highlighting:  
      • Offering .5 more upper house elective  
      • Classes can run all year long every other day  
      • Aligning schedules for students entering or exiting the District  
      • Better use of the MMS system of reporting  
      • Better prepared for college and interpreting transcripts  
   Tifft asked when a decision needed to be made in order to implement this change for next year. Valentine asked that a decision be made by April. The Board requested that Valentine attend the March meeting regarding this change.

V. Consent Agenda (Accept)  
   A. Minutes (November 26 & December 2, 2008) – Approved.  
   B. Finance Committee Report - There were no questions at this time.  
   C. Head of Schools (Superintendent) Report (written) – No comments.

VI. Ongoing Business (Deliberation & Possible Action)  
   B. Technology Committee Members  
   Action: Motion made and seconded to approve the following members for the Technology Committee. Hank Plaisted, Gabi Martino, Eloise Ginty, Crystal Larocque, Kimberly Poulin, Sandra Smith-Ordway, Seth Carter, Ray Coffin, Jon Molesworth and a representative from Vershire to be determined. Approved.

VII. New Business (Received Information & Possible Action)  
   A. Tuition 2009-2010  
   R. Paulson is working on the formula, but does not have all the necessary numbers yet. He will report to the Board at their next meeting.  
   B. Change in Location of Annual District Meeting  
   Action: Motion made and seconded to change the Annual District Meeting from Samuel Morey Elementary School to Rivendell Academy gym in order to accommodate the number of people expected at the meeting. Approved.  
   C. Correspondence - None

VIII. Strategic Action Plan  
   A. Update (G. Keiling) - Keiling briefly outlined that the core of work is to update the student profile and how can Rivendell prepare students for 21st century jobs. There will be a Community night and area businesses will be asked to participate and speak about
different jobs and skills necessary for such jobs. She discussed a time line, June & July: Focus area; “what will we be known for”, “who are we?” August; Board Retreat to work on developing what the administrative structure will look like.

X. Future Agenda Items (Discussion)
   Tuition, Dick Paulson - February meeting
   Semester versus Trimester, Donna Valentine – March
   Task Force for the Orford Academy Building - April

XI. Adjournment (Action) - The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheri Clifford
Board Clerk