Members Present: Cicely Richardson, David Ricker, Marc DeBois (Orford); Sandra Smith-Ordway (Chair), Bruce Lyndes, Mark Avery (Fairlee); Jennifer Ricker, Jean MacDonald (Vershire), Kathy Blanchard (at-large)

Members Absent: Dawn Stever (W. Fairlee)

Administration and Staff Present: Keri Gelenian (Head of Schools/RA Principal), Gail Keiling (Head of Elementary Schools/SME & WES Principal), Tammy MacQueen (WES Asst. Principal), Brenda Needham (Superintendent), Michael Galli (RA Dean of Students), Gary Collins (Director of Operations), Dick Paulson (CFO)

Others Present: Christina Moreland (Student Rep), Gay-C Gahagan (Journal Opinion), Cameron Day (RA student), Sara Day (Orford), Hannah Tracy (Orford), Brandon Goodrich (RA student), Chris Goodrich (Vershire)

I. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:33 p.m.

II. Agenda Revision/Time Allocation: MacDonald requested to add an Orford Academy Building Task Force update under agenda item VI. Informational Reports.

III. General Public Comments (Listen & Defer Action to Future Mtg.): None.

IV. Presentation/Guests
   A. Fencing Club: Cameron Day, 9th grade student at RA, spoke about starting a Fencing Club. He reiterated items that were in the written report the Board received prior to the meeting such as, safety, equipment, and benefits of fencing. He also showed real fencing equipment which the Woodsville Fencing coach had lent for this presentation. Board was impressed with report and asked questions about interest in the Club and who would pay for equipment. Day and Galli said that members to the club will vary and no definite number yet as it hasn’t been “advertised” as they were waiting for approval. Galli expected some students would buy their own equipment, some from athletic budget, and they would do fundraising for some equipment. Needham stated that she knew of some possible funds. Galli introduced Hannah Tracy who has offered to be the fencing coach and has years of experience. Tracy spoke briefly regarding equipment and that college scholarships are also available to graduating fencing athletes. Needham said that as far as insurance was concerned it would be covered the same as any of other co-curricular sports. Board unanimously said to continue to pursue this club and thanked Day for the presentation.

V. Consent Agenda (Accept)
   A. Board Minutes – January 8, 2013
   B. Special District Meeting Minutes – January 24, 2013
   Action: Motion made to accept consent agenda, with changes to Board minutes. Approved.

VI. Informational Reports (written):
   A. Superintendent Report (written): No additions.
   B. Head of Schools Report (written): Gelenian spoke about the mandatory academic support and reasons why wasn’t working at first, the testing of the system, and changes made and how now there is a different tone and system. He added now he is waiting to see if those improvements will work. He added that the NECAP embargo lifts tomorrow and would talk about results at the next meeting. Needham added that she thought the Board will be pleased with results.
   1) Student Representative (written): Moreland added to her written report that she had spoken to Ms. Johnson, Food Service Director, about sandwiches being offered more often and found out that in the past Food Service had to dispose of many unpurchased sandwiches, but that Ms. Johnson would look into offering them again. It was pointed
out that sandwiches are premade. Richardson wondered about The Great American Opportunities fundraising and J. Ricker asked if there were any food fundraisers being done during lunch time (competing with lunch). Needham explained that as a school we cannot support/promote a company or one company over another, however, student groups and/or parent groups can do fundraising. Galli and Needham said no food fundraising is done during lunch. It was also mentioned that there is no student government page on the website and maybe there should be, although, fundraising items would need a disclaimer statement.

C. Elementary Reports (written): MacQueen informed the Board that Monday had been 100th day at the elementary schools and how they had celebrated at Westshire. Keiling spoke about the conversational Spanish possibility and there was a brief discussion on French versus Spanish. MacQueen also mentioned that Nicole Randall, VISIONS Director, is also doing some Japanese and German in afterschool program.

D. Orford Academy Building Task Force – MacDonald told the Board that the Task Force had found out that the funds from grant they were applying for are kept by the NH Housing Trust to disburse funds for expenses, so the Task Force will need to go back to the interested parties to discuss these terms.

VII. Ongoing Business (Deliberation & Possible Action)

A. 2013-2014 School Calendar: Needham stated that original 2013-2014 draft calendar in last month’s packet may need to be change, since OESU’s approved calendar had come out with their February recess date changed to a week later than planned. Needham explained that Rivendell was never consulted on the change until after the fact. There was a brief discussion regarding how the OESU calendar affects Rivendell students that attend River Bend. **Action:** Motion made to approve 2013-2014 School Year Calendar to coincide with February recess to match OESU (River Bend). Approved. Smith-Ordway will discuss Rivendell not being consulted at the next River Bend Advisory meeting.

B. 2013-2014 Proposed Budget: Needham stated that Paulson would be sharing information in regards to the budget and she hoped the Board would vote tonight on the budget to bring to the voters. She also stated that Collins was present to talk about the asbestos abatement. Paulson spoke about health insurance rate increases, a 5-6% increase in tax rate, and revenue remaining about the same and presented the initial budget amount of $9,413,788. A brief discussion was held on the $25,000 capital expense amount not keeping up with capital projects necessary and on whether an additional $80,000 (approximately) should be added to the proposed budget to cover negotiated salary increases. Needham thanked Collins for work he has been doing on the asbestos abatement, stated that he has estimates, and that the work will need to go out to bid. Collins distributed information to Board and went through the map of Memorial Hall Gym and area, explaining that it will need to be fixed or the gym and weight room area would need to be closed permanently. Discussion ensued on asbestos laws, synthetic floor vs. wood gym floors, pipes in ceiling areas, painting, and new tiles for floors. Collins did state that he had decided a synthetic floor was what should be used and Board agreed after some discussion. Smith-Ordway then informally polled the Board members regarding adding the amount for negotiations and the abatement. All were in favor of moving forward with the abatement and adding it to the warrant and felt it was important to present it to the public and explain why it is important to take care of. Board was originally split evenly on adding the approximate $80,000 for contract increases, however, one member changed their vote and the majority decision was in favor of adding it.

**Action:** Motion made to approve the 2013-2014 operating budget of $9,493,789 to be presented to the voters as a warrant article for the 2013 Annual District Meeting. Approved.

**Action:** Motion made to approve asbestos abatement project, with a synthetic gym floor, at a cost of no more than $495,000 to be presented as a separate warrant article for the 2013 Annual District Meeting. Approved.

**Action:** Motion made to approve capital improvement for $50,000 to be presented as a separate warrant article for the 2013 Annual District Meeting. Approved.
C. **Warrant Articles:** See above articles approved. Needham stated that she had received the proper language for the upcoming warrant articles from attorney. Also discussed that Board will want to be clear to the public what has to be done and what will happen if it does not get done. Discussion was held on a warrant article for changing the date of the annual meeting in the future. Board decided warrant article would be for the third Tuesday of March, beginning with the 2014 meeting, and although meeting will be held in the evening, there will be no mention of a set time in the article so it can be changed if needed.

VIII. **New Business (Receive Information & Possible Action)**
   A. **2011-2012 Audit:** Paulson reported the audit had been successful, with the exception of one item having to do with titles not being in the finance computer system. Board offered their thanks and congratulations to Paulson on a successful audit.
   B. **Correspondence:** Needham presented a nine year service award from the Vermont School Board Association to Smith-Ordway. The Board congratulated and thanked her. Smith-Ordway stated that she had sent an email to the West Fairlee list serv regarding the Board opening for a West Fairlee representative. She received a response from Mike Fanizzi. After a brief discussion, the Board came to the conclusion that since there was only one Board meeting remaining before the Annual District Meeting that they would not appoint Fanizzi but would encourage him to run for election to the Board and thank him for offering his services. Smith-Ordway will respond to him.

IX. **Future Agenda Items:**
   - Strategic Plan (Next Steps), Community Outreach, Grants, Global Language for 6th grade,
   - Policies to be Revised (ongoing), Student Presentations, Department Reports, Individualized Student Needs, Recruiting Process, NECAPs (March)

X. **Anticipated Executive Session:**
   A. **Negotiations – Action:** Motion made to enter Executive Session at 8:55 p.m. **Approved.**
      Board came out of Executive Session at 9:55 p.m.
      **Action:** Motion made to approve Tammy MacQueen as .5 Westshire Principal and .5 Literacy Consultant beginning July 1, 2013. **Approved.**

XI. **Adjournment:** **Action** – Motion made to adjourn meeting. **Approved.** Meeting adjourned at 9:56 p.m.

Recorded by:

Penny Perryman