Members Present: Carol Sobetzer (at-large); Marc DeBois, Cicely Richardson (Orford); Sandra Smith-Ordway, Bruce Lyndes, Mark Avery (Fairlee); Jennifer Shatney (W. Fairlee); Jennifer Ricker, Kathy Hooke (Vershire)

Administrators and Staff Present: Brenda Needham (Superintendent), Keri Gelenian (Head of Schools/RA Principal), Michael Galli (Dean of Students), Richard Paulson (CFO), Gail Keiling (Head of Elementary Schools/Samuel Morey Principal), Bridget Fariel (Dean of Studies); Joan Holcombe (Westshire Principal) and Tiffany Russo (RA Counselor)

Others Present: Tori Hebb and John Milnes (Student Representatives), Gay-C Gahagan (Journal Opinion)

I. Call Meeting: Meeting was opened at 6:37 p.m.

II. Agenda Revision/Time Allocation: Action: Motion to move Budget ahead of Consent Agenda. Approved.

III. General Public Comments: None at this time.

IV. Presentation/Guests: None at this time.

V. Consent Agenda (Accept)
   A. Minutes (December 20, 2010 and January 4, 2011)
   B. Superintendent Report (written): Needham reported Efficiency Vermont rebate program will result in lighting upgrades and additional energy savings; she has attended RISD member Towns’ Selectboard meetings and stated it is important for the towns’ leadership representatives to know who she is and she’s been told the Selectboards appreciate the time she takes to meet with them. Board members commented they have heard positive comments in their respective towns regarding Needham’s attendance. Needham stated the Selectboards are the core of the communities and RISD respects what they do. Comment made that if it is possible it would be positive to have Needham meet the towns’ Road Crew Foremen.
   C. Head of Schools Report (written): Gelenian commented on data presented regarding students’ most recent grades. Discussions regarding reasons some students fail, mid-term grades, teachers’ recording of grades and availability of current grade/missed assignments, and final projects.
      (1) RA Student Representatives: Hebb presented Avery with poster thanking him in connection with Lake Morey Inn hosting Ice Jamz concert; reported on RA parking problem and project for solutions; Milnes reported on bullying project and high school representatives’ meeting with 6th graders on bullying on the busses and discussions with identified students regarding bullying behaviors. Also, reported on Winter Carnival. This year 7th and 8th graders will have separate events from 9th through 12th grades.
   D. Principal Reports (written): Holcombe reported Dartmouth students working with Westshire students on science, reading is going fabulously and the Everybody Wins mentoring program is up to 24 regular mentors coming in from the community and
reading with 24 students. Keiling reported she was notified by state of Vermont that Samuel Morey is one of 14 schools in Vermont that, as identified by new NECAP scores, is closing the poverty gap (75% of the students on free and reduced lunch program met the standard which is 10% above the State average). She is invited to press release at the Governor’s Office along with the principals of the other 13 schools.

Keiling requested tuition increase for preschool, based on survey of area preschools’ tuitions the increase is in-line and based on review of current breakdown of tuition (full and reduced) does not anticipate negative impact from increase; current full tuition is $26 per day and will increase to $30 per day. Action: Motion made to approve preschool tuition increase. Approved.

Action: Motion made to approve consent agenda with corrections to December 20, 2010 minutes. Approved.

VI. Ongoing Business (Deliberation & Possible Action)

A. Budget 2011-2012: Needham offered public thanks to Dick Paulson for his hard work on budget. Paulson discussed preparation of tax values for Annual Report, explained figures are up due to factors such as the CLA. He distributed a new draft with higher voc-tech numbers. Needham explained that contract negotiations are ongoing; budget figure does not include increases for staff, faculty or administrators. If this budget passes, the budget figure cannot be changed. Therefore, depending on contract negotiations, adjustments will have to Discussion regarding several line-items and the impact of potential changes within budget in response to contract agreement in ways that would not impact the quality of education. Sobetzer offered public thanks to Needham, Paulson, administrators and Finance Committee for their hard work, time and effort toward the best for the District students.

B. Collaboration Meeting Report: Smith-Ordway attended meeting at OESU and while the attendance was down at the meeting, there was a good exchange of ideas. The school districts’ Superintendents were charged with choosing a program to flesh out shared opportunities. Needham stated there have been discussions with OESU and Blue Mountain regarding joint purchasing, special education and plans for Principals and Special Education Directors to meet and explore staffing and programs.

C. Rivendell Academy Scheduling Discussion: Gelenian, Fariel and Russo presented plan for restructuring the Academy schedule; reviewed history of RISD’s schedule formats tried in past and said the new plan will afford students better immersion in core courses for longer durations without gaps; also geared to improve students’ preparation for NECAP, PSAT, and SAT testing. Discussion with Board regarding changes to be made for junior and senior year class requirements, graduation requirements, schedule changes, partnering with NH State College system and join the Running Start program in which qualified RA teachers can attain Adjunct Professor status and teach college level courses based at RA that would give high school credit and also college credit with additional tuition payment. Plan is also to have a chemistry requirement for junior year. Brief discussion regarding Profile of Graduate and assessment of rubrics connected to it. Fariel thanked the Board, District Office and administrators for support after the loss of her father. Sobetzer thanked Gelenian, Fariel and Russo for their work on scheduling. Gelenian will come back to Board with more structured discussion to include sample schedules of students’ courses through high school years.

D. Orford Academy Building Task Force re Annual Meeting Presentation: Task Force requests time to present at he District’s Annual Meeting in March.
VII. New Business (Receive Information & Possible Action)
A. Correspondence: Needham received and will respond to a parent letter of concern; Hetty Thomae, Elementary Counselor, submitted her letter of resignation for the end of this school year. Needham and the Board expressed thanks for Hetty’s work.
B. Announced Tuition for 2011-2012: Action: Motion to ratify tuition at $11,600 for elementary and $13,500 for secondary. Approved.
C. 2011-2012 School Calendar: Has been revised again and is very close to River Bend’s. Action: Motion to approve calendar for 2011-2012. Approved.

VIII. Future Agenda Items (Discussion)
Sixth Grade at Samuel Morey Elementary; Elementary Principals; TIPS Program; SummerScapes; Voc Tech Student Numbers.
Added: Strategic Plan; Administrators’ Roles and Responsibilities; Follow-up Regarding Food Service; Completed NEASC requirements for learning expectations; NECAP results; Long Range Plans to Address the Flux in Population; Global Language for 6th Grade; Technology; Math Curriculum in Elementary School; 7th-12th Grade Math; Teacher In-Service

IX. Anticipated Executive Session (Discussion & Possible Action), 1 VSA § 313
A. Contract Negotiations
B. Personnel re certifications, contract renewals, improvement plans.
Action: Motion made at 8:59 p.m. to enter into executive session. Approved.
Executive session ended at 9:35 p.m.

X. Adjournment (Action): Action: Motion made to adjourn at 9:35 p.m. Approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Sarazin, Recording Clerk