RIVENDELL INTERSTATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
District Office – Orford, NH
March 4, 2015 – 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Cicely Richardson, David Ricker (Orford); Mark Avery (Vice Chair), Bruce Lyndes (Fairlee); Kathy Hooke, Jean MacDonald (Vershire), Sarah Rinehimer (West Fairlee), Kathy Blanchard (at-large)

Members Absent: Marc DeBois (Chair) (Orford), Grover Boutin (Fairlee), Mike Fanizzi (W. Fairlee)

Administration and Staff Present: Brenda Needham (Superintendent), Keri Gelenian (Head of Schools/RA Principal), Gail Keiling (Head of Elementary Schools/SME Principal), Janet Cole (Director of Special Education), Richard Paulson (CFO), Tammy MacQueen (WES Principal)

Others Present: Charlie Buttrey (Thetford School Board member), David Corriou (Valley News)

I. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. Agenda Revision/Time Allocation: Needham requested the 6th grade Hulbert overnight field trip be added under new business.

III. General Public Comments: Charlie Buttrey introduced himself stating he is a member of the Thetford School Board and was there representing them. He gave some brief background regarding enrollments (past, present, projected) and the past relationship between the Rivendell towns and Thetford. He stated that the Thetford School Board is working with OESU in what feels like a forced marriage to them and they are interested in working on a relationship with Rivendell, due to proximity of locations and other factors. The Rivendell Board were receptive to the idea and a discussion ensued regarding a couple of Rivendell Board members attending the next Thetford School Board meeting.

IV. Presentation/ Guests: None.

V. Consent Agenda
   A. Minutes
      1) Board – February 3, 2015
         Action: Motion made to approve consent agenda. Approved.

VI. Informational Reports
   A. Elementary Reports: MacQueen reported Westshire had just held “We Love to Read” week with great activities each day, cumulating in a Dr. Seuss Winter Carnival on Friday.
   B. Superintendent Report: Needham announce that the District Annual Report had just arrived tonight and praised Perryman for her work on it, with special thanks to Sandra Smith-Ordway. Avery questioned putting off the hiring of a Trails Director and what affect that would have on the Rivendell Ramble and other activities. Needham said that she believed Rivendell Trails Association (RTA) was taking care of this. Hooke mentioned that RTA and Upper Valley Trails are looking at partnerships. Needham spoke regarding former Rivendell Trails Director, Andy Boyce, and how lucky Rivendell and RTA had been to find someone with his varied skillset, however, finding someone similar did not seem doable.
   C. Head of Schools Report: Gelenian reported on a number of items, among them were: RA Robotics Team won the state competition (Vermont/New Hampshire), the banner is hanging in the RA entryway, however, they will not be competing in the world competition because the coach and some of the team will be on the Southwest Trip Field Trip; RA student (interest in physics) selected to go to the Stennis Space Center in Mississippi for three days; Varsity Boys’ basketball team going to the tournament; have a complete list of the 9th grade laptops now and they are still under warranty (Gary Ackerman has been on top of this); and have done SBAC practice test, tried overloading system and test worked well. Gelenian then distributed a packet on SBAC including a letter he had posted regarding his views on SBAC, emails he received, a
letter from Vermont AOE Secretary Rebecca Holcombe and a letter written by Michael Galli. Gelenian said he is being very vocal about this, feels it is important to take a public stand, and he has questions that he can’t get answered, he wants transparency from the state and he is not getting it. Richardson felt Secretary Holcombe has some of the same questions he has. Gelenian spoke for some time on his views. Board comments varied from energy perhaps being put in wrong place, needing something more concrete for Board to review if they want to make a statement, the push not being against VT AOE but to Washington. Needham spoke on the importance of staying informed and invested and using your own voice. She commented that it is important that Gelenian is clear that he is speaking his personal views and is not the voice of Rivendell, as other administrators may not feel the same, as well as the Board, and she said she felt confident he has been doing this. Needham continued that this is a complicated issue and some states are further along, some states have developed protocols that are pretty good. Ricker suggested that Gelenian make a small list of things with verbiage around it for Board to look at. Lyndes stated that it is a federal problem and so work has to be done on the federal side. Ricker wondered about the impact on time and money. Gelenian said his conservative estimate is 123 hours for various people. Avery stopped discussion to move agenda along.

1) Student Government Report – None.

VII. Ongoing Business
A. Annual District Meeting Planning: Avery will do the finance aspect and tax rates presentation at the meeting, Rinehimer will do short presentation with pictures on some highlights from the schools (principals requested to send highlights to Perryman), Powerpoint presentation as in past, brief presentation regarding the Orford Academy building by Anne Duncan Cooley. Ricker will post on the town listservs the open board seats and auditors after Needham sends him the information. Needham stated that the budget flyer would be going out next week. Avery requested Needham have available all the regular data that voters usually request at the meeting.

B. Policy Review
1) Federal Child Nutrition Act/Wellness Policy, Code F21
   Action: Motion made to approve Federal Child Nutrition Act/Wellness Policy, Code F21, as presented. Approved.

C. Strategic Planning: Ricker stated about 102 responses were received through Survey Monkey and the committee needs to meet, review together and edit. Board discussed whether the Strategic Plan should be spoken about at the District meeting, suggested maybe DeBois mention it and that the last chance to fill out the survey is now and have some available in the back of room or in café. Avery will talk to DeBois about this. Needham suggested the committee meet on March 24th.

D. Superintendent Evaluation: Avery asked if there were any updates. Hoke and Blanchard asked if everyone had read it and some members said it looked good. Blanchard said that the draft needed to be approved. Action: Motion made to accept Superintendent evaluation form as presented at last meeting. Approved. Next step will be setting date to start gathering information from other staff on the various areas.

VIII. New Business
A. Correspondence

B. Hulbert Overnight Field Trip, 5/13-16, 6th grade – Action: Motion made to approve Hulbert Overnight Field Trip as presented. Approved.

IX. Future Agenda Items
Common Core, Crisis Response, Community Outreach, Policies to be Revised (ongoing), Student Presentations, Department Reports

X. Executive Session, 1 VSA 313
A. REA Negotiations
B. Personnel
Action: Motion made to go into Executive Session at 7:45 p.m. Approved.
Board came out of Executive Session at 8:28 p.m.
**Action:** Motion made to approve negotiated one-year agreement as proposed with REA (Teacher Unit) for 2015-2016. **Approved.**

XI. **Adjournment**
**Action:** Motion made to adjourn. **Approved.**
Meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Recorded by:
Penny Perryman, CEOE
Executive Assistant/HR Manager