RIVENDELL INTERSTATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
Westshire Elementary School – West Fairlee, VT
April 2, 2013 – 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Cicely Richardson, David Ricker, Marc DeBois (Orford); Grover Boutin, Bruce Lyndes, Mark Avery (Fairlee); Michael Fanizzi (W. Fairlee); Kathy Blanchard (at-large); Jean MacDonald, Jennifer Ricker (Vershire)

Members Absent: None.

Administration/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), Tracy Martel (SPED Teacher), Phillip Metayer (Para-SPED Asst.), Jennifer Ellis (RA Art Teacher), Michael Galli (RA Dean of Students)

Others Present: Christina Moreland (Student Rep)

I. Call to Order: Needham called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. (Note: All newly elected or re-elected members were sworn in prior to meeting.)

II. Board Reorganization: Needham asked for nominations for Chair. C. Richardson and M. DeBois were nominated and seconded. Paper ballot vote was taken. Vote was tied. J. MacDonald came in late and was sworn in and then another vote was taken. DeBois elected as Chair. As DeBois is a NH resident, the Vice Chair must be a VT resident. M. Avery and B. Lyndes were nominated for Vice Chair. Lyndes declined. Avery elected Vice Chair.

III. Agenda Revision/Time Allocation: None.

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

V. Presentation
   A. Special Olympics (T. Martel & P. Metayer): Martel and Metayer gave a presentation on Rivendell Special Olympics Team, showing a brief slide show, discussing unified teams, regional games, and state games. A Special Olympic budget was distributed and request was made that Special Olympics would like financial support and, perhaps, could be considered a RISD club. They would like to be able to buy uniforms, as the other teams they compete against all have. At this time they now have hats that were generously handmade for them. Avery said he felt that uniforms were a necessity. Needham stated that she would investigate for the Board and report back at next meeting.

VI. Consent Agenda (Accept)
   A. Minutes – March 5, 2013
      Action: Motion made to approve the consent agenda. Approved.

VII. Informational Reports (written):
   A. Elementary Reports: MacQueen thanked everyone for supporting her as WES Principal for 2013-2014 and for how well the Annual District Meeting went and that she felt it seemed very positive. Reported about letters from WES students that were published in the Journal Opinion recently. Discussed what was planned for SummerScapes in July and that the flyers would go home next week. Avery offered some Frisbee equipment. Keiling highlighted a few things from her report – e-cybermission with Sara Rose and that two of the teams are in the finals, also going to have e-cybermission afterschool at VISIONS. She stated that Robotics was going great thanks to wonderful Thayer School of Engineering students and that students are being brought from WES to SME for this program. Keiling reported that they have been reviewing names and numbers and appears that there are enough to run a second preschool at WES next year. They have checked with licensing and...
we can extend preschool hours for aftercare. Regarding staffing a full time Early Childhood teacher would be needed and that position has been posted.

**B. Superintendent Report:** Needham updated on plans for legislative meeting schedule for April 8 at Lake Morey Resort. She asked if Board wanted to reach out to invite any other school district or communities, which they did. Ads will be run in local newspapers and will be posted on website and listservs. Discussion ensued regarding how to have meeting run and decided that Avery will be moderator/facilitator and there will be question and answer session. Fanizzi suggested maybe have a list of definition of terms that are often used so everyone in attendance will understand.

**C. Head of Schools/RA Principal Report:** Gelenian distributed information on trimester 2 percentages regarding failing grades and honor roll, including trimester 2 failures by year of graduation. He also spoke about NECAP science testing dates, honor banquet, meeting with RA Special Education Director and teachers, PSAT, and PLAN (preACT), and student receiving Leonore Annenberg Scholarship.

1) **Student Representative:** Moreland added to her report that she spoke to a few teachers on summer reading and that as books get chosen, the plan is for student government to read the books first and then present to rest of the school to make final selections.

**VIII. Ongoing Business (Deliberation & Possible Action)**

**A. Old Orford Academy Building Task Force Update** (Anne Duncan Cooley & Andrew Winter, Twin Pines Housing Trust): A. Duncan Cooley and A. Winter did not attend as D. Ricker presented the proposal/motion to the Board that was unanimously approved by the Task Force and they recommended that the Board authorize the application at this meeting in order to meet important deadlines. Ricker read the proposal/motion and then a brief discussion ensued. **Action:** Motion made that the School Board authorize Twin Pines Housing Trust to apply for a Technical Assistance Grant from the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority on behalf of the Rivendell Interstate School District, for funding for the Old Orford Academy Redevelopment Project. **Approved.**

**B. Annual Meeting Review:** General Board feeling that meeting went well. Fanizzi stated he felt that the best presentation was by Gary Collins, Director of Operations. Fanizzi suggested that Board needs to be prepared to answer questions that are raised every year and be clear with answers (i.e., how many teachers, how many students, teacher/student ratio, etc.) As every year, wished for a bigger voter turnout. Suggested that District highlights more of the volunteer items and great things that are happening that are paid for by grants or other means so taxpayers know about instead of just parents. Boutin expressed his thanks for D. Paulson replying to a question from Paul Dalton the day after the meeting. Avery thanked Brenda and Keri for their leadership.

1) **Possible West Fairlee Board Position Appointment:** DeBois asked two West Fairlee parents but each declined as they did not have the time. He requested that the Board members think of candidates.

**IX. New Business (Receive Information & Possible Action)**

**A. Approve Teacher Contract Renewals for 2013-2014:** Moved to executive session.

**B. Board Dates for Remainder of 2012-2013 (May 7 & June 4):** Board confirmed.

**C. Policies – Second Reading:**

1. **D12 – Employee Harassment (revision)**
2. **E5 – School Property Disposition (new)**
3. **F1 – Student Conduct & Discipline (revision)**
4. **F6 – Education Records (revision)**

Needham reported that she had received suggestions on the policies from Richardson, however, Needham suggested that in regards to language on policies that it not be changed when using a policy drafted by VT School Board Association, as VSBA have already done the legal research for us. She explained that most VT schools use the VSBA policies. Brief discussion ensued.
**Action:** Motion made to approve all above policies. **Approved** (Fanizzi and J. Ricker abstained.)

**D. Correspondence:** An email was received from S. Smith-Ordway reminding the Board that a new Board member was needed to be on the River Bend Advisory Board and the next meeting would be April 10. J. Ricker volunteered. Read letter from Jim Harris (Fairlee). Lyndes explained that it was in reference to a public meeting held (not a Board or RISD meeting) regarding comments from a Newbury resident. No reply necessary. Regarding another subject, Lyndes requested that communication be sent to S. Smith-Ordway regarding the Fairlee Scholarship Committee so a date for a meeting can be set up. Richardson reported on attending the VSBA meeting for new Board meeting training and that she had spoken to a member of the Dresden Board and met her to discuss some items in common. Boutin stated that a Fairlee resident had asked him about who raises the flag at Rivendell Academy. Needham will investigate.

**X. Future Agenda Items** (Discussion)
- Strategic Plan Process (May), Community Outreach, Grants, Global Language for 6th grade, Policy Revisions (ongoing), Student Presentations (Field Trip Groups), Department Reports, Individualized Student Needs, Recruiting Process, NYC Art Trip (May)

**XI. Anticipated Executive Session:**

**A. Negotiations** – Motion made to enter Executive Session at 8:20 p.m. **Approved.**

Board came out of Executive Session at 8:50 p.m.

**Action:** Motion made to accept Kris Widmann’s resignation with regret. **Approved.**

**Action:** Motion made to authorize Superintendent to prepare renewal teacher contracts as discussed and presented in Executive Session. **Approved.**

**Action:** Motion made to authorize Superintendent to meet with REA representatives for purposes of reviewing and potentially modifying current Education Support Personnel salary scale. **Approved.**

**XII. Adjournment (Action)** – Motion made to adjourn meeting. **Approved.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Recorded by:

Penny Perryman