RIVENDELL INTERSTATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
District Office – Orford, NH
April 2, 2019 – 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Jon Lester, Jason Knowles (Fairlee); Kathy Hooke, Maria Koehler (Vershire); Marc DeBois, David Ricker, Vanessa DeSimone (Orford); Kevin Dexter, Rebecca Wurdak (West Fairlee); Kathy Blanchard (at-large)

Members Absent: None

Administration and Staff Present: Bill Little (CFO), Jan Cole (Special Education Director), Keri Gelenian (Head of Schools), Rachael Weber (Elementary Teacher), Maggie Stoudnor (Trails Coordinator), Tracy Martel (Special Education Teacher)

Public Present: Chris Bills, Jeff MacQueen, Mark Burger, Samantha Perry, Shaye Perry, Erika Gray, Tami Sullivan (Orford); Nancy Thatcher, David Gagner (Fairlee); Cicely Richardson (Journal Opinion)

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

II. Agenda Revision/Time Allocation: None

III. General Public Comments: Nancy Thatcher expressed concern about the lack of recognition of Veteran’s Day and Memorial Day in our schools and provided some examples of how we could achieve this. She will provide the board a copy of her suggestions. There was additional conversation about removal of the Pledge of Allegiance from the schools. Samantha Perry asked if the board had received correspondence that was submitted on Friday and Marc DeBois acknowledged it had been received and would be shared with members of the board.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Minutes

1) Board – March 5, 2019
Action: Motion made to approve consent agenda (Ricker/Hooke) Approved.

2) Annual Meeting – March 19, 2019
Action: Motion made to approve the annual meeting minutes from March 19, 2019 (Hooke/Ricker) Approved.

3) Special Board Meeting – March 26, 2019
Action: Motion made to approve the special board meeting minutes from March 26, 2019 (Koehler/Ricker) Approved.

V. Informational Reports (written)

A. Superintendent Report: Elaine Arbour provided an update on the Orford Academy project and said she had spoken to Mike Claflin who suggested it might make sense to move forward again with the project. He will work on a report to the board and other interested parties and Arbour will confirm when that will be available. The next proposal deadline is in July.

B. Head of Schools Report: Keri Gelenian reviewed his written report and highlighted the meeting with Extended Learning Opportunities at Lebanon High School, the development of the Academy Mentoring Program, and second trimester grades. There was conversation about communication, especially to 9th grade parents during course selection and outlining high school expectations.

C. Elementary Schools Report: Send Brenda Gray any questions regarding the elementary schools report.

VI. Ongoing Business

A. Monthly Finance Update: Bill Little reported that the fiscal year audit report is almost complete and the contract auditor will be incorporating some feedback into the document. The contract auditors would like to present FY17 and FY18 audit to the board at the May meeting.
He added that the last two payrolls have gone through ADP, but they have not returned data back to our system – we are 4-6 weeks out of date. The eFinancePlus cut over is July 1st.

B. Update on Superintendent Search: Dave Ricker said a letter went out to the entire community with an update on the search and the committee has interviewed several candidates; one candidate rose to the top. Kathy Hooke reviewed the schedule for the candidate and said the committee will make a decision on 4/10 if they want to advance the candidate to the board. The committee is continuing to receive applications at this time.

C. Orford Field Agreement: Arbour said the draft MOU in the board packet was given to us by the town, but the RISD board had not acted on this. The town had wanted to wait until after their town meeting and that made sense. Arbour says does not reflect any changes we wanted and does not recommend signing. There is a very old agreement and terms were changed considerably and not in favor of the district. Arbour will work with getting the attorneys together and will bring it back to the board in May.

VII. New Business
A. Appointment of Fairlee Board Member, District Clerk, Auditor: DeBois said David Gagner is interested in filling the Fairlee vacancy and his appointment would go until the next district meeting. Action: Motion was made to appoint David Gagner as the Fairlee board member taking the place of Bruce Lyndes (Ricker/Lester) Approved. No one has expressed in interest in the District Clerk/Treasurer position or the one-year auditor term (must be a VT resident).

B. Approve Superintendent Job Description: Action: Motion was made to approve the Superintendent of Schools job description as submitted (Koehler/Ricker) Approved.

C. REA Union Contract(s) Approval: Action: Motion was made to approve the REA contract between the teacher union and the board (Dexter/Koehler) Approved.

D. Accept Resignations: Action: Motion was made to accept the resignations of Gordon Christie-Maples and Laszlo Bardos with regret and gratitude (Blanchard/Koehler) Approved.

E. Teacher Contract Nominations SY19-20: Action: Motion was made to approve the teacher contract nominations as submitted (Ricker/Koehler) Approved.

F. Form Principal Search Committee: Action: Motion was made to establish Principal Search committee. (Hooke/Wurdak) Approved. There was discussion about the appropriate number of people for the committee. Action: Motion was made to approve an eleven member principals search committee (Dexter/Koehler) Approved. Additional conversation about the make-up of the committee and about whether to change the number of members to thirteen. Action: Motion was made to change the number of committee members from eleven to thirteen (DeSimone/Blanchard) Approved. The committee will consist of three board members (Dave Ricker, Kathy Hooke and Rebecca Wurdak), three parents/community members, four teachers, Keri Gelenian, Brenda Gray and the new superintendent. Gray will send out a surveys to teaching staff and the community to solicit interest.

G. SummerScapes Program: Arbour stated that Julie Donahue has put out feelers to staff that might be interested in working in SummerScapes and there has been very limited interest and does not believe we will have enough staff to run the program. There was concern raised about not having the program this summer and the possibility of parent volunteers. Arbour will work on it.

H. Accessible Trails – RTA: Maggie Stoudnor said she is working with Upper Valley Trails Alliance to put in a section of accessible trail on the Rivendell trail behind the Academy to Townshed Road, approximately one mile. The work will be funded by grants. Action: Motion was made to approve the preliminary plan and estimated cost for accessible trails (Wurdak/Ricker) Approved. RTA will update bi-monthly.

I. Rivendell Door Security Upgrade Bid Approval: Arbour reported receiving three bids for the door security upgrade at the Academy – The Royal Group ($25,560), Current Concepts ($19,736) and Tasco ($14,435). The grant reimburses up to 80% with a cap of $12,000. Royal Group stood out because they did the most complete walkthrough with the most accurate bid proposal. This would require access to additional funds from the capital reserve fund with $12,000 being reimbursed. Arbour provided a breakdown of the bid. Action: Motion was made to approve $25,500 to be taken out of the capital fund for The Royal Group to upgrade the
door security as discussed (Dexter/Lester) Approved by show of hands – 5 yes, 1 no, 3 abstained.

David Hooke, Moderator, swore in David Gagner via Skype.

J. Substitute Pay: Arbour described often having a lack of subs, in particular school nurses. Currently, the nurse substitutes rate is $100/day. There was discussion about raising the rate for both nurse and teacher subs. Arbour will do some additional research on what other districts are paying teacher subs. Action: Motion was made to approve $200 per day for the substitute nurse position (DeSimone/Koehler) Approved.

K. Correspondence: DeBois received some correspondence regarding personnel and will discuss during Executive Session.

VIII. Future Agenda Items
20th Anniversary, Crisis Response, Community Outreach, Department Reports, Vision for Food Service, Cooperation w/Thetford Academy, Electronic Devices, Elected Local Auditors’ Role, ALICE – Active Shooter Response Training, Keys and Access to Buildings, Flag of Compassion Discussion, Orford Field Lease Agreement, School Board Training, Facilities Use/Rental, Quebec Bike Trip Presentation, Facilities Presentation, Orford Academy Update (May)

IX. Executive Session – (Discussion), 1 VSA § 313
A. Negotiations, 1 VSA § 313(a)(1)
B. Personnel, 1 VSA § 313(a)(6)
Action: Motion made to move into Executive Session at 8:55 p.m. (Gagner/Hooke) Approved.
Action: Motion was made to come out of Executive Session at 10:15 p.m. (Dexter/Hooke) Approved.

Action: Motion was made to approve the Superintendent of School search committee to work with the superintendent candidate with respects to licensing and legal counsel (Hooke/Ricker) Approved.

X. Action: Motion was made to adjourn (Hooke/Lester) Approved.
Meeting adjourned at 10:16 p.m.

Recorded by:
Brenda Gray
Executive Assistant/HR Manager

Note: All Board votes were unanimous unless noted otherwise.