Members Present: Margaret Gladstone, Juliette Bianco, Doug Tifft (at-large), Carol Sobetzer (Orford), Mel Emerson (Orford), Beverly Ash (West Fairlee), Trevor Law (Vershire), Heather Fahy (West Fairlee), Harry Black (Vershire), Sandra Smith-Ordway (Fairlee)

Administrators and Staff Present: Noelle Vitt (Head of Schools), Robert Sampson (Head of HS), Paul Fassler (Head of MS), Mary Bronga (Principal Westshire), Gail Keiling (Head of Elementary Schools)

Others Present: Cicely Richardson (Journal Opinion), Cassie Pike (student), Dale Ricker, Georgette Ludwig, Dan Ludwig, Barb Griffin, Eric Picconi, Cole Stever (student), Gail Keefer, Megan Perkins (student), Dawn Stever

I. Call Meeting: Carol Sobetzer called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

II. Board Reorganization New Board members were sworn in by moderator, David Hooke. Mel briefly commanded the meeting and called for a motion. Action: Doug nominated Carol Sobetzer as chair and Margaret Gladstone as vice-chair; seconded by Beverly Ash. No discussion. Approved.

III. Approve Board Minutes of February 6, March 6, March 20 & March 28, 2007: Action: Motion was made to approve the minutes of February 6, March 6, March 20 & March 28, 2007. Approved. Sandra wanted the March 6 minutes, under the hiring of coaches, to include the approval is also based on a completed season. Noelle Vitt asked if this could be an inquiry so she could get back to the Board about what the contractual agreement is.

IV. Public Input: None

V. Communications and Reports: A. Report of the Chair: 1) Recap of Annual District Meeting: Carol thanked Noelle for all her help over the past year and preparation for annual meeting. She also thanked Penny Randall, Brenda Gray, faculty and staff. Mel said he received some suggestions about formatting of the annual report and was ready to ask whether Sandra had accepted her write-in nomination. Sandra just arrived and had accepted and been sworn in by David Hooke. Doug thought that the audience should be alerted when community members post information at the annual meeting, including that the information isn’t necessarily verified by the Board and also felt posters should be posted outside the polling area. Noelle reported that the calculation on pg. 8 of the annual report (revenue minus expenses) appeared to be an error. The correct calculations were entered in the tax rates. She handed out backup documentation of the corrected information. Barb Griffin said she thought it was difficult to hear at the meeting because of the microphone. Carol mentioned that David Hooke presented to her a proposal to always have the meeting at Rivendell Academy and if that were to happen it would need to be added to the articles of agreement. A warned special meeting would also need to be held. Sandra suggested having David stay after the meeting to swear in new Board members. David suggested changing voting to ½ hour before and after the meeting instead of one hour. B. Report of Head of Schools: 1) Westshire 5th Grade Student Presentation Noelle was approached about strategic planning/enrollment and some concerns from the Academy staff in particular about job security. Noelle suggested that the Board have a discussion with the Academy faculty and Carol thought it was important at the elementary levels as well. Doug suggested having some link between the faculty in the strategic planning process. Noelle turned the floor over to the
Westshire students. Mary Bronga spoke about the quality of student work and then Barb Griffin introduced the students and their project (a graphed survey of what the student’s favorite subjects in school are at WES.) There was some discussion following the presentation. 2) World Language (G. Keefer/E. Picconi) Gail Keefer and Eric Picconi presented a PowerPoint of the world language curriculum, which corresponds to the handout distributed to the Board. Noelle asked Gail whether she thought grades 7/8 are prepared to move up to a true Level II language. Gail responded that she felt it has gotten very close. Margaret asked Gail about the trips that French students have been able to take and asked if it might alternate with Spanish. It was originally set up to be like this and is moving toward this direction again. Margaret asked about the email chat session success. Gail and Eric Picconi said they are interesting and rich, (freeing and spontaneous for the students), but also felt them to be cumbersome and with technical challenges. There was some discussion about foreign exchange programs, abroad and Quebec.

Eric offered an invitation to all to visit the classroom. Noelle also said the website curriculum section hosts the curriculum documents as well. 3) High School Schedule Proposal (R. Sampson) Bob spoke after Cassie’s presentation. Bob distributed a schedule proposal. The major points to address: all students to attend advisory, no radical changes from 06-7 schedule, minimize conflicts with River Bend Schedule, minimize band & chorus conflicts with core academic subjects, more fluid middle school & high school adult movement patterns, structure freshman schedule, create flexible academic lab periods. Bob spoke about how the current schedule operates. He then distributed a more updated copy of the 07-08 schedule than what was distributed at the prior meeting. There was discussion about the changes proposed, specifically the effect on the RiverBend students being able to attend advisory for the academic check in piece. Discussion centered on the importance of all students attending advisory and the schedule made to accommodate that. Bob spoke about the lab period being a combination of clubs and study halls. This is where chorus/band would fall to earn a credit. Mel asked about teacher FTE. Doug responded that the lab period/advisory would contribute to teacher FTE. Dale Ricker asked about the number of junior and senior student involved in River Bend. Next year’s total number will be thirty-two, including pre-voc. PIC will be looking at the proposed schedule and Noelle suggested that after feedback from PIC this be discussed again. Geogette Ludwig asked about money that was passed in the budget for chemistry courses. She does not see it proposed. Bob spoke about prior science programs at the Academy in last year’s budget. Bob spoke about the chemistry offerings that will be in place 07-08 and spoke of the difficulty of interweaving them with the current science course offerings. (i.e., course sequences that don’t exist now). Dan Ludwig asked if Bob thought the kids would be better prepared and if transcripts will reflect the required science courses. Bob spoke about how chemistry is currently embedded in science course offerings that we now have. Noelle suggested that we publicly support an evening that the science department will be presenting in June. Geogette is concerned that no progress has been made. Carol said the Board is planning on moving forward. Doug recommended that CEC identify the people that have this concern and address them so they know that this is being followed through. Noelle asked the Board if they would like her to do a box ad with the hot topic agenda for this meeting and post on the website, newsletter. Sandra asked about the list that was built after the first meeting. 4) Middle School Schedule Proposal (P. Fassler) Paul spoke about 5/6 transition after Bob’s presentation. He reported that he has been to SME and WES. This Thursday the 6th grade teacher and 5th grade teachers at SME and WES will meet. Mary said she feels this has been the best transition in her time here. She has received very good feedback, less anxiety. Paul distributed a draft of the Middle School schedule. Paul spoke about foreign language/PE/Art/Music rotations. He spoke about core subject times. The schedule is a work in progress and he is working with Bob to create a fluid schedule. Carol thanked both administrators for taking into account all suggestions. Noelle assured feedback from PIC and that negotiations would be necessary. 5) High School Student Representative Update a) School Pennant Project Cassie spoke about how the Student Council is trying to get the student body more involved. She spoke about Brian Campbell and his role in involving students. Student
government felt that school pennants from the colleges of previous students would be welcoming as you entered into the high school, but they are rather expensive. Student government has not had much response from colleges. b) **Overview of Winter Carnival (100% student run)** Challenging without Mr. Campbell. Responsibilities fell entirely to the student government. c) **Planning for Spring Fling** Student government is in the process of planning. Margaret asked if student council was running the weekly school assembly and Cassie responded that they are. Mr. Linge is the student government advisor. Student announcements are read by a student in the morning. Doug asked if administrators are asking student government for their input regarding issues facing the school. Rivendell SADD Group is hosting High Voltage April 10 at 7 p.m. C. **Reports of the Committee Chairs:** 1) **Long-range planning (Doug Tifft):** Next meeting April 24 6:30 p.m. in the Rivendell Academy library to meet candidates for strategic planning/executive search firms. Doug named the four groups that will be presenting for thirty minutes each. At the end of the meeting the committee hopes to have decided on a group so that the strategic planning could begin by the end of May or beginning of June. Doug is concerned that we need to tap more resources. He asked if Patricia Crawford and her husband or others he might target could sit in on the process. Doug asked if people should be invited in the audience arena and Margaret asked if maybe Gail Keiling should be involved as an administrative representative. The interview process will be in the public setting, but only Board members will be allowed to ask questions. Doug suggested that we listen to each group’s presentation for 20 minutes, then have 10 minutes to ask questions. Not scripted questions because the groups are presenting what they feel they would be expert focusing on and/or which piece they might be interested in. If Doug receives written presentation from the groups Penny Randall could photocopy and distribute to the Board members prior to the interview meeting. Please forward any questions/comments to Doug. Carol then asked for Board members to email her with the committees that are interested in being on. Carol apologized for not welcoming Trevor at the beginning of the meeting, and took a moment to welcome him. Carol will assign him a mentor.

**VI. Business Requiring Discussion & Action:**

A. **Board Meeting Dates for 2007-2008** Carol referred to Board handout. **Action:** A motion was made to approve the Board meeting dates for 2007-2008. **Approved.**

B. **8th Grade Trip to NY/CT (June 12-14)** Noelle spoke about the trip and the fundraising that has earned $4900. This is a three day trip with two overnights. **Action:** Motion was made to approve the 8th grade trip to NY/CT on June 12-14, contingent on an increased number of chaperones. **Approved.**

Noelle spoke about the May 22-27 OM trip to East Lansing, MI. Money will be raised by the OM teams. There will be a dinner/presentation on April 26 at the Academy. **Action:** Motion was made to approve the Odyssey of the Mind trip to East Lansing, MI. **Approved.**

**VII. Business Requiring Discussion Only:**

A. **Policy: Community Use of Facilities:** Noelle distributed a list of challenges with total open access. **Action:** A motion was made to table to discussion to the May meeting. **Approved.**

B. **Personnel (Teacher Requests):** **Action:** Motion was made to move to after item D (executive session). **Approved.** Coaches approved: Justin Bonnett, Development Golf Coach; Derek Smith, Varsity Golf Coach; Bryan Hodgdon, Middle School Baseball Coach; Sandra Wurtz, Middle School Softball Coach; Suzette Pratt, Assistant Softball (HS) Coach

C. **Future Agenda Items**

1) May – Policies:

a. Second Readings – Admission of Non-Resident Students, Code F20; Curriculum Development, Code G1; Tobacco Prohibition, Code E1 – Revision

b. Revisions: Participation of Home Study Students in School Programs

Sandra suggested two meetings in May as opposed to one. 2) Presentations:

a. Music Curriculum & Odyssey of the Mind - May

b. Adult Basic Education (B. Emerson) – May

Noelle suggested sending a draft agenda to Board prior to the meeting to determine what items will be discussed at each meeting. c. **Science - June Action:** **Approved.**

**Action:** Motion was made to adjourn and move to executive session at 9:07 p.m. **Approved.** Board came out of Executive Session at 9:50 p.m.
VII. **Adjourn:** Action: Motion was made to adjourn. **Approved.** The meeting adjourned at 9:53 p.m.

Special Board meeting on Thursday, April 5, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. in the RA library
Special Board meeting on Tuesday, April 23, 2007 at 6:30 p.m. in the RA library

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Gray  
District Clerk/Treasurer