RIVENDELL INTERSTATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
District Office – Orford, NH
April 4, 2017 – 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Marc DeBois, David Ricker, Michael Smyth (Orford); Mark Avery, David Gagner, Bruce Lyndes (Fairlee); Kathy Hooke, Jean MacDonald (Vershire); Kevin Dexter (W. Fairlee); Kathy Blanchard (at-large)

Members Absent: Cory Austin (W. Fairlee)

Administration and Staff Present: Mike Harris (Superintendent); Keri Gelenian (Head of Schools/RA Principal); Michael Foxall (SME Principal); Jan Cole (Director of Special Education), Tammy MacQueen (WES Principal); John Jakubens (Director of Operations); Chris White (RA Teacher);

Public Present: Mark Burger, Kate Paxton (Orford); Cicely Richardson (JO); Robert Bryant (Thetford)

I. Call to Order: DeBois called meeting to order at 6:30 PM and stated that meeting was being recorded by Cicely Richardson, Journal Opinion, for her reporting purposes.

II. Agenda Revision/Time Allocation: DeBois informed the Board Update on Orford Academy Building Task Force would be added as VI. E.

III. General Public Comments: Galli asked about guns in school and DeBois stated that would be under later in agenda under Security Policy.

IV. Consent Agenda
A. Minutes
   1) Board – March 7, 2017
   2) Special Board – March 28, 2017

   Action: Motion made to accept the consent agenda as presented. (MacDonald, Avery).

   Approved.

V. Informational Reports
A. Superintendent Report: Harris added to his written report the following items - he was in Concord today regarding the NH Senate Bill 193 regarding school vouchers and gave a brief summary; the old Orford Academy building is moving ahead as there are contractors here working on removing mold from the basement; CFO Dick Paulson has reported that expenditures and finances are on target for 2016-17; and Nancy Manning, Jenn Chaffee and Penny Perryman have been working and training on the new software system for absence and substitute management, feels it will be beneficial, however, still have a dire need for substitutes and may need to explore strategies to increase this pool.

B. Head of Schools/RA Principal Report: Gelenian added that since his written report, the statistics for the second Tri grades were done, distributed the statistics in a document called “Is Mandatory Academic Support (MAS) Effective” and reviewed. Discussion on the mandatory support system (database, sending emails to parents weekly) and space (structured, quiet, no working in pairs, teachers checking work). Board wondered about students not having a quiet space to work a home. Gelenian also reviewed the attachments included in his written report (Three Spheres of Responsibility, Rivendell PK-12 Cultural Paradigm, and District Learning).

C. Elementary Principals Reports: Update from Foxall that he cancelled the 6th grade Hulbert trip and students and parents have taken on the fundraising and it has been very successful. VT Rural Partnership – ordering drums soon for our outside gardens. He then reiterated items in his written report regarding school gardens, SBAC testing vs NECAP testing results being beneficial. MacDonald reported that she had recently toured River Bend with Mr. St. Pierre and if area schools needed any building done, River Bend might be interested and able to help. Hooke spoke about the field trip cuts and how field trips have value in bringing parents and students together.
D. Capital Improvement Plan: Harris reported on the Capital Improvement Plan that John Jakubens, Rivendell’s Director of Operations, had put together. It is for the next seven years and just over one million dollars. Harris stated that Jakubens and he will strategize over the next month. Jakubens spoke briefly that there is a lot of items on list that have to be done and guide to let the Board know what needs to be done. Brief discussion ensued on the outdoor connector at Rivendell Academy. DeBois said this should be kept in mind for budgeting next year.

VI. Ongoing Business
A. Review of Annual District Meeting: DeBois thanked the administrators and Perryman for putting the meeting together. Discussion on meeting included: health care savings anticipated after January 1, 2018, Australian Ballot voting, why capital budget had been listed on warrant separately but ended up already included in the budget, attendance at meeting and to continue to try to encourage better attendance, helpfulness of having child care available and what a great job the students did with the child care.

B. Rivendell Planning Process 20th Anniversary: Blanchard feels something should be done for the 20 years, suggested tying it in with the Annual Meeting in 2018 to help attendance and perhaps a committee should be started. Lyndes thought the 20-year celebration should be from when there were first students in the Rivendell schools.

C. Tuition Rate for NH Students (Piermont & Warren): DeBois stated that this was voted on at the February meeting but had been voted on as $100 under Woodsville’s tuition rate and, in accordance with 2016-17 tuition rate set, it should have been $100 under the tuition rate that Woodsville will be charging Warren and Piermont. Harris said he has been notified that the figure for Warren from Woodsville and Piermont will be $13,929 for 2017-18. Action: Motion made to set Rivendell’s 2017-18 tuition rate for Piermont and Warren students at $100 under Woodsville’s tuition rate for said towns at $13,829. (Lyndes, Ricker) Approved.

D. Rivendell Review Committee: Gagner reported that the Committee met for the first time and chose a moderator (David Hooke) and a spokesperson (Gagner). Next meeting will be May 4th at Westshire and Paulson is preparing information for the meeting. DeBois read the charge for the Committee and said there are very experienced people on the Committee and thinks they will help Rivendell keep moving in the right direction. Burger thanked the Board for starting the Committee and feels the District will benefit in the end.

E. Update Orford Academy Building Task Force: Ricker gave brief update report including background, work on a community block grant, information table at the Orford Town Meeting, public meeting being held April 11th, other meetings with Orford Selectboard and local contractors also in April and May, and mold reclamation being done currently (money raised for this from grants and private funds). Gelenian suggested an old chalk board from the old building go to the Academy. Mark Burger suggested the Task Force reach out to the Orford Planning Board also.

VII. New Business
A. Appoint Local Auditor (Vermont): Harris said Ken Stella has been sent an email to see if he would be willing to be appointed again.

B. Proposed Change to 2017-18 School Calendar: Harris explained changes proposed due to the original use of half days for teachers would have increased their days over CBA stated teacher days and changing to more inservice days at beginning of school year, which changed the student return to school date. Action: Motion made to approve changed 2017-2018 school calendar as presented. (Ricker, Smyth) Approved.

C. Security Policy: Harris presented a draft policy on security at after school events as requested, however, he knows there needs to be talk to guns in school. This is about guns at Rivendell Academy (located in NH) and does not affect VT schools as VT has a different law regarding firearms. Discussion ensued on having VT police officers at Rivendell Academy events (Harris will look into), guns being carried by adults in NH school, a policy saying students cannot, policy for employees as a condition of workplace can’t carry gun, can employees decline to meet with a member of the public who is carrying a gun, Interstate Compact paragraph H
regarding undue harm to VT students, Galli’s visit to Concord legislature, and can policy regarding no guns include volunteers and chaperones DeBois stated that it was clear more work and research needs to be done on this subject. Galli informed the Board, if they didn’t already know, that Orford Police Chief Chris Kilmer had resigned. Harris requested that if Board members had any changes to the Security Policy draft to send to Perryman for the May meeting.

D. Personnel Updates: Harris reported that teacher contracts for 2017-18 were due out by April 15th, and there were no non-renewals at this time and requested Board permission to issue Teacher contracts. Action: Motion made to issue teacher contracts as recommended by the Superintendent. (Blanchard, Ricker) Approved.

E. Correspondence: Harris reported a letter had been received from VT AOE stating approval to hire Elaine Arbour as Superintendent.

VIII. Future Agenda Items: 20th RISD Anniversary, Orford Academy Building Task Force, Common Core, Crisis Response, Community Outreach, Policies to be Revised (ongoing), Department Reports, Vision for Food Service, Head of Schools Evaluation, Cooperation w/Thetford Academy

IX. Executive Session
A. Personnel
Action: Motion made to enter executive session at 8:00 PM. (Hooke and Smyth) Approved. The Board returned to public session at 8:55 PM.
Action: Motion to form committee to develop policies and measures regarding personnel evaluations and accountability (Blanchard, Lyndes) Approved.

X. Adjournment
Action: Motion made to adjourn. (Lyndes, Ricker) Approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Recorded by:
Michael Harris, Superintendent

Note: All Board votes were unanimous (Chair abstains) unless noted otherwise.