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

Members Absent: Kathy Blanchard, Michael Smyth (Orford)

Administration and Staff Present: Mike Harris (Superintendent); Keri Gelenian (Head of Schools/RA Principal); Michael Foxall (SME Principal); Jan Cole (Director of Special Education); Michael Galli (RA Dean of Students); Barbara Griffin (SME/WES Teacher); Carmen Winchester (SME Teacher)

Public Present: Mark Burger (Orford); Cicely Richardson (JO); Kate Paxton (Orford)

I. Call to Order: DeBois called meeting to order at 6:31 PM and stated that meeting was being recorded by Cicely Richardson, Journal Opinion, for her reporting purposes.

II. Agenda Revision/Time Allocation: Annual District Meeting minutes of March 17th would be added to IV. 2., add to VIII.F. authorization for Superintendent to hire in summer and under V III.G. add a new position.

III. General Public Comments: None.

IV. Presentation – NEASC Accreditation (K. Gelenian)
Gelenian spoke about not doing NEASC accreditation anymore, reviewed information he had distributed to Board on reasons why and about other schools in nation that are looking into doing this also, and his feelings that Rivendell Academy’s own standards are more important than external standards such as NEASC. Other schools are looking into this too, feels our own standards are more important than external standards such as NEASC. Gelenian also had received some letters from colleges and universities stating that NEASC accreditation is not required for student acceptance. He suggested writing a letter to drop out of the accreditation process for two years and then reapply if want. Board members questioned and spoke about whether without NEASC accreditation Rivendell would be able to attract international students and other tuition students, wanted to know which Vermont schools have and don’t have NEASC, seniors’ ability to apply to colleges/universities of their choice, deep history in Rivendell towns regarding accreditation, importance of being reviewed from an outside source and impact on Rivendell’s marketing effort and real estate. No action was taken and NEASC accreditation will be added to the July Board agenda.

V. Consent Agenda
A. Minutes
1) Board – May 2, 2017
2) Annual District Meeting – March 17, 2017
Action: Motion made to accept the consent agenda as presented, with changes to May 2, 2017 minutes. (Ricker, Lyndes). Approved.

VI. Informational Reports
A. Elementary Principals Reports: MacQueen spoke of events regarding the finishing of the year, SummerScapes enrollment (hope to have 60-80 participants). Foxall reiterated his written report and spoke of students being involved outdoors. He said the SME fourth grade class next year is very large and were planning to use a lottery to move some students to WES, however, first asked parents to volunteer to have their SME 4th grade child go to WES and a number of families came forward and volunteered. Foxall suggested the Board review the District’s class
size policy for more direction. Foxall also spoke of the success of Covered Wagon project and congratulations to Carmen Winchester, the teacher, on the success of the project.

B. Superintendent Report: Harris reported that he had received Penny Perryman’s letter of retirement from Rivendell effective the end of June. Harris thanked her for all her help which made his work possible; the new Superintendent Elaine Arbor had been in District on May 23rd and her first day in the office will be July 5th; CFO Paulson is optimistic about the end of FY17 budget at this point; presented substitute pay rates in the surrounding areas and recommended Rivendell increase the sub rate of pay which will be added to the July agenda; and meeting tomorrow on deed issue with Task Force regarding old Orford Academy building.

C. Head of Schools/RA Principal: Gelenian reiterated items from his written report and said he had forgotten to mention the student trips to the Southwest and France; distributed project reflections by students; met with HyperTherm regarding support/collaboration and he was hopeful. Galli reported on taking four seniors to NYC to hear an award winning journalist, visit United Nations and other sites. Hooke asked if any events for student transitions were planned for families and Foxall stated the WES 4th grade students were coming to SME next week. Hooke said she was thinking more of parents’ angst and suggested a meeting or event for parents.

VII. Ongoing Business
A. Personnel Policy Committee Update: Gelenian distributed items regarding evaluation and hiring. No action taken by Board at this time, however, Board members are to review and this will be added to the July agenda. DeBois requested Board members send and changes, edits, suggestions, etc. regarding the distributed items be sent to Perryman.

B. Security Policy: Harris suggested the draft policy be approved as presented and Board then consider how much further to go such as addressing guns in schools. Harris said he had received an initial legal opinion that supported the contention that school districts can set their own policies pertaining to gun possession in their schools and he expected to talk to Rivendell’s legal counsel to explore that possibility further, however, connecting has been difficult. Board consensually supported his efforts with that discussion and will expect to receive a report at the July meeting.

Action: Motion made to approve security policy as presented. (Gagner, Ricker) Approved.

C. Rivendell Review Committee Update: Gagner reported on items discussed at the May 18th meeting (i.e., ADM calculations and enrollment figures, questions to the Articles of Agreement in regards to whether it should be refined are continuing, Special Education apportionment and expenses, vocational tuition rates and how calculated. The next meeting is on June 14.

VIII. New Business
A. Capital Expense – SME Roof: Harris said SME roof basically over the administrative offices had to be repaired and John Jakubens, Director of Operations, and he are requesting a withdrawal of money from the capital reserve fund to fund this. Action: Motion made to withdraw up to $43,000 from the capital reserve fund for the SME roof project. (Ricker, Lyndes) Approved. DeBois requested an update in September.

B. Board Regular Meeting Dates for 2017-18: Action: Motion made to approve the Board’s regular meeting dates for 2017-18 as presented. (Dexter, Lyndes) Approved. DeBois requested Board members send dates they are available for a Board Retreat in August to Perryman.

C. Appoint Local Auditor (Vermont): Doug Tifft has volunteered to serve as our third auditor. Action: Motion made to appoint Doug Tifft as a Rivendell local auditor with term to end at the Annual District Meeting in March, 2018. (MacDonald, Ricker) Approved.

D. Personnel Updates:
Action: Motion made to accept Penny Perryman’s retirement/resignation with deep regret and thanks. (Blanchard, Lyndes) Approved.

E. Correspondence: DeBois stated that Burger had sent a letter to Board and Perryman had already replied back.
F. Action: Motion made to authorize Superintendent to hire prior to Board approval during summer 2017 and bring list of new hires to following Board meeting. (Hooke, Austin) Approved.

G. New Position: Gelenian said Nancy Hall had received a VSAC grant and there was approximately $9,000 that could be used for a part time, temporary, grant funded position for math tutoring at Rivendell Academy. Position would be a certified teacher position and .4 FTE for one year only. Action: Motion made to approve a .4 FTE Math Teacher position at Rivendell Academy, contingent on grant funding, one year only. (Lyndes, Ricker) Approved.

DeBois then spoke of this being the last Board meeting for Harris. DeBois and individual Board members thanked Harris for his service to Rivendell and presented him with a token of their appreciation. Griffin thanked Harris for the teachers. Harris said Rivendell was a wonderful place to finish up his career.

IX. Future Agenda Items: 20th RISD Anniversary; Orford Academy Building Task Force, Common Core, Crisis Response, Community Outreach/Marketing (re volunteer), Policies to be Revised (ongoing), Department Reports, Vision for Food Service, Head of Schools and Elementary Principals’ Evaluations, Cooperation w/Theftford Academy, Local Auditors Role; Report from Harris re Legal Counsel & Guns (July); Sub Rate (July); NEASC accreditation (July)

X. Executive Session
A. Personnel
Action: Motion made to go into Executive Session at 8:08 PM. (Avery, Lyndes) Approved. Board came out of Executive Session at 8:15 PM.
Action: Motion made to give authority to Chair DeBois and Vice Chair Avery to approve medical leave request (paid and unpaid leave) for Amanda Enright once Perryman gives them the correct number of days, allowing employee to remain on District’s health insurance with employee paying her portion of monthly premium during this time. (MacDonald, Ricker) Approved.

XI. Adjournment
Action: Motion made to adjourn. (Ricker, Avery) Approved.
The meeting adjourned 8:30 PM.

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

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