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

Administration and Staff Present: Mike Harris (Superintendent); Keri Gelenian (Head of Schools/RA Principal); Gail Keiling (Head of Elementary/SME Principal); Tammy MacQueen (WES Principal); Mary Rizos (RA World Language Teacher); James Graham (RA Physical Education Teacher)

Others Present: Mark Burger (Orford), Cicely Richardson (Journal Opinion), Danny & Sally Coffin (Fairlee), RA students (Quenla Haehnel, Tali Gelenian, Max Haehnel, Melissa Eaton, Makayla Coffin, and Karina Ricker)

I. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m. DeBois informed everyone that the meeting was being recorded by Cicely Richardson for her reporting notes for the Journal Opinion.

II. Agenda Revision/Time Allocation: VIII. D. Summer Rivendell Fitness Center and E. Kickstarter – RA Fencing Club were moved to after the IV. Presentation.

III. General Public Comments: None.

IV. Presentation:
A. Guatemala Trip - RA: Rizos and students spoke of their trip from April 13-30th to Guatemala through “Where There Be Dragons” and thanked the Board for their support. Some of the items spoken about were: the “Where There Be Dragons” organization – highly recommend and was a seamless partnership, global citizenship, leadership skills, awareness of self, home stays, great experience, people were warm and welcoming, making fish ponds and planting watercress, Chico Mendes Reforestation Project, visiting a school, and finances/fundraising. DeBois thanked them for coming and presenting, as well as congratulated the seniors among the group on their upcoming graduation.

VIII. D. Summer Rivendell Fitness Center: Graham spoke about the former RA weight room and how now it was a fully functioning fitness center with no expense to the District and thanks impart to community members who donated fitness equipment. Graham has been opening it, chaperoning, and ensuring the proper use of equipment during the school year at 6:30 a.m. for students and, also, after school. He would like to keep it open during the summer to maintain the momentum, perhaps from 8 to 10 a.m. in the mornings initially for students and staff. Harris said Gelenian and he recommend this project, Graham has been doing a terrific job, and insurance is good with an additional rider for it. Suggestion is for a separate account for the Fitness Center be opened, with a fee of $15 per participant to cover insurance and pay for Graham’s time. MacDonald asked what coverage there would be if Graham wasn’t there. Graham said he doesn’t usually miss any days, but after 18 years of age students can be certified and he has been working and teaching some older students who are very good. Although Graham would like to open it up to the general community as it progresses, at this point, the Board were in agreement to proceed with it only in house (students and staff), as long as it is okay with insurance company.

E. Kickstarter – RA Fencing Club: Graham said he had inherited the Fencing Club as there was no one to coach it. He said he has been basically facilitating and developing the program, as he has no fencing experience and is learning with the students. He thanked Day for starting the whole club originally. Graham has been making contact with fencing groups in the area, in specific Dartmouth College and Upper Valley Fencing Club, who have been very supportive and encouraging, even doing some trainings/coaching with RA students. Graham reported RA should have 15 students participating by the beginning of the school year, should be able to compete soon, need proper
equipment for competing and he has gotten bids on equipment, he has contacted some other schools in area about maybe starting clubs also, thinking of trying to fund through KickStarter (online fund raiser) and/or private donations, without using school budget, needs approximately $4500 per an estimate from Dartmouth’s Fencing for the basic initial equipment, and changing it from a Club to one of RA’s sports teams. Graham said he has been basically facilitating and developing the program, as he has no fencing experience. DeBois said that the Board had allocated some funds to RaptorCon that were never received and RaptorCon hadn’t needed. He suggested that these funds be transferred to Fencing. Board agreed and Harris will notify Dick Paulson, CFO. Day said he had been told that after the Fencing Club ran for two years it could become a sport, so that would be 2017. Action: Motion made to authorize Graham to move forward with funding the Fencing Club with Kickstarter and other methods for this year. (Lyndes, Avery). Approved.

V. Consent Agenda
A. Minutes
   1) Board – May 3, 2016
      Action: Motion made to approve consent agenda. (Hooke, Lyndes) Approved.

VI. Informational Reports (written)
A. Head of Schools Report: Gelenian had no additions. Ricker referred to Gelenian’s written report and asked what Ray Chin had spoken about to the students. Gelenian said it was magnificent and about the brain and development of it, how it works and wove into stress management, fight and flight, anxiety, life and living, and each had an activity involved with it. Students were positive and teachers attended also. RA did have to pay for it but Nancy Hall had received some funds for RA that covered it. Ricker also noted that it sounded like Gelenian now has a vision and need to know how it can be effectively communicated to our community.
   1) Student Government Report: Day reported on RaptorCon - 60-70 people attended (not including artists and vendors), all artists and vendors want to come back, and after expenses made $500. Ricker had attended and said it was very well organized and a great event. Day is concerned, as he is graduating this year, that Student Government might not want to do it next year. He thought the event could be lucrative for the school. Day said he would be willing to help, along with his younger brother, and that he had documented everything he had done for the next RaptorCon leader. Board thanked Day for all his work on this successful event.

B. Elementary Schools Report: MacQueen reiterated from her written report the 4th graders goodbye from WES, and added the retirements of teachers, Linda Cook, Wendy Bergren and Kathleen Foltz, being a busy time of year, and the preparation of over 300 reading bags going home. SummerScapes flyers have gone out and MacQueen hopes to have 100 students this summer. She will do a presentation to the Board in the fall regarding SummerScapes. Keiling reported that SME is equally busy. She reiterated from her written report about the Vermont Rural Partnership Conference when 13 Vermont schools visited SME with SME students leading tours of SME’s outside gardens and classrooms. Keiling specifically thanked Lisa Avery, who had been amazing helping with the gardens and outside classrooms, along with other community/parent members. Keiling spoke about the Harvard Graduate School Visit to SME and how Secretary of Education, Rebecca Holcombe, had spoken to the Harvard students about the uniqueness of Rivendell and how special it is. MacQueen then reminded everyone that this was Keiling’s last Board meeting, as she retires at the end of June. DeBois thanked Keiling for the Board and the District, then various Board members offered their personal thank you. Hooke pointed out that Keiling has worked tirelessly right up to the last minute and the many things she has accomplished in the last couple of months. Keiling said it has been a total honor to work for Rivendell and to never forget the uniqueness of Rivendell. She added that the original Rivendell design team had been so progressive in their thinking and she hopes the design principles are kept alive. Keiling said that she has stayed because of the children and added that the Board has always been very supportive, especially during the years she was asked to be Superintendent. Keiling was then applauded by the Board and others in attendance. DeBois then presented Keiling with a plaque thanking her for all her work for the District.
C. Superintendent Report: Harris reiterated from his written report that he had spoken with Hooke regarding the Rivendell Trails and Abby Hood, RTA, and he were still trying to arrange a meeting with each other.

VII. Ongoing Business

A. Auditor Appointment: MacDonald reported she was still working on a possible suggestion.

B. Head of Schools Evaluation: DeBois reminded Board that this portion of agenda is on the evaluation process and discussion on the specific individual will be in executive session. Harris reported he had met with Gelenian and had a lengthy discussion that he thinks went well. Gelenian said he felt the process was good, there was a lot of information to shift through and that getting feedback helps you know what to do. Hooke said one goal of the evaluation is to set goals for the coming year. DeBois said the Board would be looking for superintendent feedback this coming fall or at the Board Retreat towards hiring a new superintendent for 2017-2018.

C. Administrative Hiring Process (Samuel Morey Principal): Harris said he is recommending to the Board the hire of Michael Foxall as the new SME Principal for 2016-2017. Harris informed the Board that he knew Foxall and had approached him regarding applying for the position, the search committee had unanimously recommended him, Foxall had visited SME to meet staff and feedback from that visit had been positive as well. Harris reiterated that he highly recommends Foxall and the search committee also does. Action: Motion made to approve Michael Foxall as Samuel Morey Elementary School Principal, effective July 1, 2016. (Hooke, Gladstone) Approved. Gladstone asked about a community “Meet the Principal” night and Harris said it would be worked on probably closer to the beginning of school in August.

D. Act 46 Update from Study Group: Harris reported that Brad James, VT AOE, had been called and a message was left regarding not using the Study Group grant, however, no word had been received in reply.

E. Board Retreat – Set Date & Agenda: DeBois reported that the Board Retreat would be held Tuesday, August 9, 2016, at Lake Morey Resort starting at 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Administrators (Harris, Gelenian, Cole, Foxall and MacQueen) would be invited to attend at the beginning. Harris and DeBois will work on an agenda. DeBois requested the Board members send any agenda item suggestions to Perryman.

VIII. New Business

A. RA Overnight Field Trip: Gelenian reported that the Class of 2017 wanted to have their Senior Class Trip at the beginning of the year in the fall of 2016 instead of at the end of their senior year, as a way to bring the seniors together and eliminate the problem of students not being able to go on the trip. Action: Motion made to approve the Class of 2017 Overnight Senior Trip as presented for September 2016 (Ricker, Blanchard) Approved.

B. Hiring/Resignation Updates: Harris reported that since the May Board meeting Kathleen Foltz, WES Early Childhood Program Teacher, and Karen Wilson, SME Elementary Teacher (5th/6th grade), had resigned. He then recommended for hire: Nick Pryer, Technical Support Specialist for the District; Paige Radney, RA World Language Teacher; Katherine Karch, SME Elementary Kindergarten Teacher; Emily Lloyd, WES Elementary 1st Grade Teacher; Caitlin Godfrey, WES Early Childhood Program Teacher; and Rachel McConnell, RA Title I Math Teacher (.43 FTE). Harris also recommended moving Kyle Limlaw, currently a Special Education teacher at SME, to WES, and the SME Special Education teacher position be changed from a full time to part time (.5 FTE) position. He noted that there is currently another SME Special Education teacher position that is full time, so this will make 1.5 FTE Special Education teachers at SME. Harris said this leaves still open an elementary teacher at SME (5/6th grade) and the Special Education teacher part time position at SME. Action: Motion made to hire all as recommended above. (Hooke, Lyndes) Approved. Action: Motion made to move Kyle Limlaw, Special Education Teacher, to Westshire and change open Special Education Teacher position at Samuel Morey to a .5 FTE position. (Hooke, Lyndes) Approved. Action: Motion made to accept resignation of Karen Wilson and retirement of Kathleen Foltz with great regret and thanks. (Hooke, Lyndes) Approved.

C. Community Outreach Position Proposal: Harris reported Gelenian and he have worked on this part time position and would like to recommend Mary Rizos for the position. Action:
Motion made to authorize Harris to hire a Mary Rizos as a Community Outreach Consultant for 2016-2017. (Ricker, Lyndes) Approved.

F. Authorization for Superintendent to Hire during Summer – Action: Motion to authorize the Superintendent to hire during the summer. (Hooke, Ricker). Approved. DeBois stated that he and Harris are meeting every couple of weeks and Harris will keep DeBois abreast of hiring.

G. Correspondence: Harris stated a request had been received from Sara Rose, SME Elementary Teacher, requesting additional leave of absence days (probably 8-10 days) after her FMLA 12 weeks leave runs out so that she can return to work on January 3, 2017, following the birth of her child, using her accumulated paid leave, if any. Action: Motion made to approve Rose’s request as stated above for return to work on January 3, 2017. (Lyndes, Hooke) Approved. DeBois stated, as the Board knew, Sara Rinehimer had resigned in May, 2016. He asked if anyone had suggestions for a Vershire residence to be appointed by the Board and added that Rinehimer has been attempting to find someone interested to replace her. Hooke said she had an idea and would contact the person. Action: Motion made to accept Sara Rinehimer’s resignation from the School Board, with regret. (MacDonald, Lyndes) Approved.

IX. Future Agenda Items
Common Core, Crisis Response, Community Outreach, Policies to be Revised (ongoing), Department Reports, Head of Schools Evaluation Process, Orford Task Force, Superintendent Search (Sept/Oct), Retreat (Aug.), SummerScapes Report (Sept/Oct)

X. Executive Session
Action: Motion made to move into Executive Session at 8:19 p.m. (MacDonald, Ricker) Approved.
Board came out of Executive Session at 8:45 p.m. DeBois explained the District’s past precedent of reimbursing an administrator’s accrued vacation time when the administrator retired and DeBois, along with Avery, recommended doing so for retiring SME Principal/Head of Elementary Schools, Gail Keiling. Action: Motion made to compensate Gail Keiling for remaining accrued vacation days in the amount of $11,443.50 upon her imminent retirement. Approved.

XI. Adjournment
Action: Motion made to adjourn. Approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

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

Note: All Board votes were unanimous unless noted otherwise.