RIVENDELL INTERSTATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
Westshire Elementary School – West Fairlee, VT
October 6, 2015 – 6:30 p.m.

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

Members Absent: Mark Avery and Grover Boutin (Fairlee)

Administration and Staff Present: Brenda Needham (Superintendent), Richard Paulson (CFO), Keri Gelenian (Head of Schools/RA Principal), Jan Cole (Director of Special Education), Gail Keiling (Head of Elementary/SME Principal), Tammy MacQueen (WES Principal), Kirsten Surprenant (RA Teacher), Christina Robison (RA Teacher), Michael Galli (RA Dean of Students)

Others Present: Cicely Richardson (JO), Cameron Day (Student Government President)

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

II. Agenda Revision/Time Allocation: None.

III. General Public Comments: None.

IV. Presentation:
   A. Global Classroom (K. Surprenant): Surprenant gave a presentation on her summerTeachers for Global Classroom trip to India for which she had been one of 80 selected from about 400 teachers in the United States. The trip was completely paid for by the Global Classroom organization. Some items Surprenant spoke of: goal for teachers to be global ambassadors, many program elements to the trip, visited a number of Indian schools, sightseeing (temples & museums), differences in Indian students and schools vs. American students and schools, observed various classes, conducted professional development seminars for Indian teachers, TGC capstone project, has compiled her website which is GlobalRoads. She said that Rivendell Academy has revamped their Global Studies courses some now. She also thanked the Board for allowing her this opportunity. Board thanked her for the presentation and sharing this wonderful educational adventure.

V. Consent Agenda
   A. Minutes
      1) Board – September 1, 2015
      2) Committee – September 24, 2015
      Action: Motion made to accept consent agenda, with change. Approved.

VI. Informational Reports (written)
   A. Head of Schools Report: Gelenian distributed prerequisites for extended, extracurricular school trips and 2015-16 RA Afterschool and Summer Programming Title I funding and reviewed briefly. Gelenian reiterated a few items from his written report. Cameron Day is the new President of Student Government and Day reported that they recently held their first meeting and are discussing fundraising, planning Winter Carnival and Spring Fling being run by Student Government and not the faculty.
   B. Elementary Principals Reports: MacQueen reported Westshire had held their all school hike and it was a great day with about 100 people. Hooke asked about Visions finances and Keiling said that parents are having to be charged more and there is less participation. She pointed out that the Visions Program previously had provided a lot of free scholarships before. Keiling stated that MacQueen, Gelenian and she were planning to apply for a 21st century grant again.
   C. Superintendent Report: Rineheimer asked about John Jakubens and Matt Joska starting and how they were doing. Needham said doing great and they attended their first Leadership Team meeting. Needham stated she was very pleased with these new hires. Dexter asked about skylights at Westshire and the leaking problem. Needham stated that Jakubens has been working
with the insurance company and it is in process. DeBois said Dexter, who knows and has experience with many vendors in the area, had offered to provide assistance to Jakubens regarding vendors and contacts, if Jakubens would like. Needham said she would speak to Jakubens and, perhaps, he would set up a meeting with Dexter.

VII. Ongoing Business
A. Auditor Appointment: Hooke mentioned that she wondered if Doug Tifft would be willing to be an auditor and DeBois asked that she contact Tifft.

B. Warren Transportation: Needham said that Warren had signed the tuition agreement but did not sign the transportation agreement ($5,000). Discussion ensued on why Warren was not signing the agreement. Needham said that she and Gelenian would do some research on this. DeBois suggested we send a letter to them about why not paying.

C. Head of Schools Evaluation Process: Gelenian briefly went over his ideas for his evaluation process (documents were part of Board packet). He stated that the example of Dean of Students’ evaluation was sent to all faculty and he is still in this process. DeBois asked for Board volunteers that want to head up the process. Hooke volunteered for after November 1st and process was tabled until next meeting regarding another volunteer. DeBois said he would like to have the Board review Gelenian’s suggestions and for the Board to come back to November meeting with some input.

D. Act 46 Meeting Review: DeBois thanked Ricker again for all the time he put into the presentation and he stated that Thetford Board would be getting back to him after their meeting tonight. A brief review of the meeting was held with discussion turning to talking to the District’s constituents to explain what the Board is doing and looking at regarding Act 46. Hooke suggested making it clear to our four towns that there are no incentives to Rivendell but what Rivendell does know could position RISD better down the road (cost saving and program additions) and explain how the cap on spending will affect RISD this year. DeBois suggest a public form sometime in mid-November, going through options and get some community feedback. Ricker said Board members should be talking to constituents at every opportunity. After discussion, it was decided that a public forum be held the same night as the November 2nd Board meeting from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. with the Board meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m. DeBois said Ricker would do a 15-20 minute presentation and then have public response.

E. FY16 Financial Report (D. Paulson): Needham stated that she had asked Paulson to give the Board information on the current budget status and other information so Board could begin the budget process for next year. Paulson said that he had a financial report for the first three months of FY16. Paulson then read a budget overview as of October 6, 2015, that he distributed to the Board (see attachment). Blanchard asked what was causing the Food Service costs concerns and Needham said a number of factors (enrollment, increase in food costs, government rules). Needham mentioned that in the past she has spoken about contracted food service, however, that cannot happen unless food service personnel are negotiated out of the Master Agreement. Needham stated that the bottom line is that the Board and administrators had a big challenge ahead for the 2015-2016 budget. Lyndes said that there would need to be cuts to professional staff and Board agreed.

VIII. New Business
A. Overnight Field Trips: Galli reported that Gelenian and he felt that if a student athlete misses a game or practice for an educational reason (such as attending a field trip), the student athlete should not be penalized (not allowed to play, etc.). DeBois stated strongly that he agreed and the remainder of the Board also agreed that a student is not to be penalized in sports for attending a school sanctioned educational trip.
1) Rivendell Academy:
   a) National Honor Society (Orford – Nov.)
   b) Canadian Studies (Quebec – April or May)
   c) French III Students (Montreal – Oct.)
   d) Senior Project (Guatemala – April)
   e) Media & Self Class (NYC – Oct. or Nov.) – November 17 & 18

Hooke stated that she hoped there was being fundraising for the trips so students can go
on these wonderful trips. Galli mentioned that the faculty said the community gets tired
of all the different groups fundraising and wondered if there could ever be a general pot
set up. MacDonald and Blanchard both knew of potential financial support and will
pursue these, as the different towns might have funds for students.

Action: Motion made to approve all the above RA overnight field trips. Approved.

2) Samuel Morey Elementary School:
   a) Hulbert 6th Grade Trip (May): Capstone experience or 6th graders – team building.

Action: Motion made to approve the Hulbert overnight field trip. Approved.

B. 2016-17 Budget Timeline/Budget Committee: Needham said the budget timeline had been
sent out to Administrators. Needham spoke regarding looking at program and personnel. She
said they will be discussion budget at November 3rd Leadership Team and would like to have
any budget Board reps attend then and at other meeting dates. Ricker and Smyth volunteered to
be the Budget Committee/Representatives. DeBois requested Perryman send out the Budget
Timeline to the Board.

C. RA’s RISE Program (K. Gelenian): Gelenian stated that he had been looking at the
afterschool program for years and now with no Visions program supported by 21st Century
Grant money, it was the time to design a specific program with a certain set of students in mind.
Gelenian said that Matthew Stuart has been contracted with to design and run the program and
Stuart will also work with Robert Bryant, another private contractor, to work on this program.
The hope is the program will be a real positive experience for these students and it is being
treated as a pilot program that may attract money in the future through grants. Gelenian stated
the program was being funded through the Academy budget and he had found little pockets of
money to pull out of other Academy lines. Gelenian said there will be about 6-7 students in
program at this time.

D. Correspondence: None.

IX. Future Agenda Items: Brief discussion regarding future agenda items, especially Strategic Plan.
Hooke suggested Act 46 public forum be changed to 6:00 to 6:45 p.m. with Board meeting at 6:45
p.m. and decision was to change to these times. It was requested that Perryman send out the final
Strategic Plan document to the Board. DeBois reported that Robert St. Pierre the Director of River
Bend Career and Technical Center wanted to be on the November agenda for approximately 15
minutes. Future Agenda Items are: Common Core, Crisis Response, Community Outreach, Policies
to be revised (ongoing), Student Presentations, Department Reports, Strategic Plan Review. (Nov),
World Language for Elementary (Nov.), RBC&TC (Nov.)

X. Executive Session, 1 VSA § 313
A. Personnel
   1) REA Negotiations (Teacher Unit)
   2) Personnel

Action: Motion made to go into Executive Session at 8:23 p.m. Approved.
Board came out of Executive Session at 9:05 p.m.

Action: Motion made to accept Brenda Needham’s retirement letter (last day January 15, 2016),
with thanks. Approved.

Action: Motion made to approve an unpaid 12 weeks leave of absence for Brittany Driscoll
Cray. Approved.

XI. Adjournment

Action: Motion made to adjourn. Approved. Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.