Rivendell Interstate School District – Board Meeting Minutes  
Westshire Elementary School – West Fairlee, VT  
October 16, 2007

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

Administrators and Staff Present: Noelle Vitt (Head of Schools)

Others Present: Cicely Richardson (Journal Opinion), Jan Cole (Director, Special Education), Gail Keiling (Head of Elementary Schools), Joy Michelson (RA teacher), Kathleen Foltz (WES preschool teacher), Gabi Martino (Information Technology Specialist), Shirley Godfrey (WES Custodian), Rob Reade (SME preschool teacher), Kim White (SPED Para – ECP/EEE), Ray Proulx

I. Call Meeting: Carol Sobetzer called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

II. Approve Board Minutes of September 18, 2007: Action: Motion was made to approve the minutes of October 2, 2007. Approved.

III. Public Input: Joy Michelson, as a representative of the Rivendell Education Association, spoke to the Board about the difficulties in teacher negotiations and how discouraged the staff is feeling. Joy wanted to assure the Board that teachers are continuing to maintain positive relationships with students and will not let the negotiation difficulties affect their work quality.

IV. Communications and Reports:
   A. Report of the Chair: Carol spoke about the book discussions article in the Board handouts. Carol, Margaret and Allen met with Bob Sampson regarding the coaching issues and will discuss in detail later in the agenda.
   B. Report of Head of Schools: Noelle distributed a break out of the Special Olympics costs and suggested talking about it in more detail in November. She also provided a list of Senior Projects, which will be showcased on November 20. She spoke briefly about two of her reports provided in her packet to the Board, specifically the action plan and the pyramid of planning.
      1) Special Education (Jan Cole)  
         Jan updated the Board on SPED staff and spoke about how Special Education Assistants (SEAs) annual goals are driving professional development this year. She also updated the Board on SPED population numbers and the significant needs of these students. There was discussion about students that don’t qualify for SPED, but are lagging behind the average and how to address the needs of these students. The Finance Committee is requesting more data for the budgeting process. Negotiations Committee would like clarification why some SEAs have left their employment with the District and returned.
      2) Pre-School (K. Foltz & R. Reade)  
         Kathleen Foltz updated the Board with Pre-School enrollment numbers and referred to material in the packets that were prepared for the Board. Kathleen gave an overview of the Pre-School Program. Rob presented a PowerPoint, which featured slides of student activities corresponding to the VT Learning Standards.
   C. Reports of the Committee Chairs:
      1) Long Range Planning (D. Tifft)  
         Doug reported that the next objective is to plan a Futures Forum, tentatively the week after Thanksgiving. Sandra commented that public input she has received about the Public Forum was very positive.
      2) Negotiations (M. Emerson)  
         Mel reported that they have received a preliminary report of the fact finding. They are continuing to communicate with the REA with the goal of reaching a mutual agreement. Support staff has requested their negotiations begin and were instructed to submit a proposal to the Committee.

V. Business Requiring Discussion & Action:
A. Search for Head of Schools (Superintendent):
   1) Executive Session, as needed
      Action: Motion was made to move into Executive Session to further discuss the Search for Head of Schools at 7:38 p.m. Approved.
      Board came out of Executive Session at Board at 8:36 p.m.
   2) Next Steps in Search Process
      Action: Motion was made to direct Ray Proulx to pursue a transition process for moving Rivendell forward in the search process. Approved.

B. Personnel:
   1) Athletic Director & Assistant Athletic Director:
      Action: Motion was made to approve the amended job descriptions for the Athletic Director and Assistant Athletic Director. Approved.
   2) Coaching Positions:
      Action: Motion was made to accept the nomination of Russ Wilcox for Girls’ Varsity Basketball Coach and Junior Varsity Boys’ Basketball Coach. Approved.
      Action: Motion was made to accept the nomination of Steve Colby for Boys’ Varsity Basketball Coach. Approved.
      Action: Motion was made to accept the nomination of Shawn Clough for Junior Varsity Girls’ Basketball Coach. Approved.
      Action: Motion was made to award Dustin Burnett a $500.00 honorarium in recognition for exemplary service in helping to build the Rivendell soccer program. There was discussion about the fact that we have a number of people who volunteer and give a lot of their time. While there was agreement that there is a great appreciation for what Dustin has done, we don’t want to start a precedent of giving honorariums. Board members discussed the difference between volunteers and people who are doing something for which they should be receiving compensation through the budget. Motion failed. Board directed the Board Chair to write to Bob Sampson about including money in his athletic budget for this type of work.

C. First Reading of Policies:
   1) Life Threatening Allergies & Chronic Illnesses in School
      Action: Motion was made to approve first reading of Life Threatening Allergies & Chronic Illnesses in School. Approved.
   2) Prevention of Harassment of Students, Code F23 (Revision)
      Action: Motion was made to approve first reading of Prevention of Harassment of Students, Code F23. Approved.

VI. Business Requiring Discussion Only:
A. Board Size: Carol Sobetzer raised the issue of board size and explained the process for amending the Articles of Agreement. Juliette suggested that we have this discussion as part of the strategic planning process. Other Board members agreed.
   1) Topics:
      a) November 6 - VISIONS

VII. Adjourn: Action: Motion was made to adjourn. Approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Gray
District Clerk/Treasurer