Members Present: Marc DeBois (Chair), Cicely Richardson, David Ricker, (Orford); Bruce Lyndes, Mark Avery (Vice Chair), Grover Boutin, (Fairlee); Jennifer Ricker (Vershire), Sarah Rinehimer (West Fairlee); Kathy Blanchard (at-large)

Members Absent: Mike Fanizzi (W. Fairlee); Kathy Hooke (Vershire)

Administration and Staff Present: Brenda Needham (Superintendent), Keri Gelenian (Head of Schools), Gail Keiling (Head of Elementary Schools/SME Principal), Michael Galli (Dean of Students), Hank Plaisted (Director of Info Technology), Kerry Browne (RA Teacher); Dick Paulson (CFO)

Others Present: Lillian Gahagan (JO), Joey and Kate Farley (Piermont)

I. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:36 p.m.

II. Agenda Revision/Time Allocation: None

III. General Public Comments (Listen and Defer Action to Future Mtg.): None.

IV. Presentation
   A. VSBA Update (C. Richardson): Richardson reported that Boutin, Blanchard, Avery, Needham and she attended the VSBA conference “Achieving a World Class Education for Every Child”. Needham discussed the conference in her written report and reported that book “Smarter Budgets, Smarter Schools” is available at the District Office if someone wants to borrow it. Boutin discussed reaching out to as many students as possible for strategic planning. He hopes that Rebecca Holcombe will be a valuable asset to Rivendell and other area schools in her role as Secretary of the VT Agency of Education. Richardson and Blanchard reported on workshops/seminars they had attended. In relation to a seminar with the focus on offering quality early education, Blanchard said she would like RISD to have options to offer parents such as free preschool (RISD currently offers a sliding scale rate) and find better ways to support community based preschools and home school children.

V. Consent Agenda (Accept):
   A. Minutes
      1. Board – October 1, 2013
      Action: Motion made to approve the consent agenda with noted changes. Approved.

VI. Informational Reports (written):
   A. Elementary Report (written): Keiling reported that the sixth grade students have been learning about philanthropy and community service as part of the Inspiring Kids project. Inspiring Kids is a nonprofit that helps to build awareness in students about helping their community and learning about the different nonprofits in the surrounding area. Students were voting for which nonprofit to donate to. Blanchard asked what non-profits were available. Keiling mentioned The Listen Center, RA Trails, The Haven and UV Land Trust, and The Humane Society. The culminating activity was a Community Day at both elementary schools where all students engaged in a community service project. The Humane Society received $470 on behalf of Samuel Morey students. Regarding the school hike, Richardson asked why they hiked Holt’s Ledge this year. Keiling said it was to accommodate all the students because the one section of the Cross-Rivendell Trail that might be able to accommodate over 200 people was busy with logging activity now.
B. Superintendent (written): Richardson asked if we will be replacing the Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA) position. Needham said they are currently looking for someone. Lyndes asked if the current RISD tuition rate was set too low. Needham is aware of the tuition concerns. They do have a 3% variance either way in Vermont.

C. Head of Schools (written): Gelenian discussed the RA class failure rate and feels that students are being held to a higher standard which may contribute to this. However, he feels the atmosphere is more positive and better organized than in the past. They continue to give support to these students. Approximately 50 Waits River 7th and 8th grade students visited the Academy. RA students did a great job presenting the school to them. Browne presented the NECAP science results for the class of 2014. He showed that the scores are higher than Vermont average in all categories. From 2009 – 2014, RA science scores are higher than the State average except for one year. Looking at the 8th grade NECAP scores, Vermont is second in the country, NH is third. Comparing to world-wide scores, Vermont is fourth and NH is seventh.


VII. Ongoing Business (Deliberation and Possible Action):
A. Orford Task Force: No update at this time.
B. FY 14 Budget Update (R. Paulson, Jr.): Paulson asked the Board if there were any questions on the FY 14 budget. Richardson asked why the SPED salaries were over budget. Paulson indicated that some services are being handled by employees and that the Services line item is lower because of this.
C. Strategic Plan Process/Retreat (G. Boutin): Boutin thanked the Board members for taking parts of the plan and reminded each Board member of the section of the plan they are responsible for.

VIII. New Business (Receive Information and Possible Action):
A. Hiring Updates:
Action: Motion made to accept the resignation of Mary Boyea, COTA. Approved.
Action: Motion made to approve the hiring of Jennifer Bottum as a Special Education Teacher at RA. Approved.

Needham asked the Board to accept the Robotics club as a co-curricular program. The ski club has not occurred for three years, so they would use this budgeted item to cover the cost of this club’s advisor. Blanchard asked what happens if students want the ski club this year. Needham indicated the Board would need to find some funds to cover an advisor.

Action: Motion made based on K. Gelenian’s recommendation to approve the addition of the Robotics Club as a co-curricular offering. Approved.

B. Policies
1. First Readings:
   - Code E1 – Tobacco Prohibition
   - Code F3 – Hazing
   - Code F26 – Participation of Home Stud Students in School Programs and Activities
   - Code F29 – Pupil Privacy Rights

2. Second Reading: Code H3 – Community Use of Facilities
Action: Motion made to accept revised Policy H3-Community Use of Facilities. Approved.

Needham indicated that she had received emails in support and non-support of allowing For Profit organizations use the facilities. The Board discussed the challenges of allowing this to occur. The Board voted 5-3 in favor of allowing For Profit business to use the facilities, following the process outlined in the Procedure for Community Use of School Facilities. Blanchard asked that the Board re-visit this procedure in six months to see how it’s working.

C. Correspondence: Richardson relayed to the Board that she has talked with Mike Fanizzi and he asked her to relay to the Board that he’d had back surgery and still can’t drive. Needham handed out correspondence to the Board that she’d received from Chris Crowley (Orford).
IX. Future Agenda Items (Discussion):
    - Visions, Individualized Student Needs, Crisis Response, Budget (Dec.), Community Outreach, Grants,
    - Global Language for 6th grade, Policies to be Revised (ongoing), Student Presentations, Department
    - Reports, Recruiting Process, Building Use Policy (revisit in May 2014)

X. Anticipated Executive Session (Discussion), 1 VSA 313 – The Board entered Executive Session
    at 8:29 p.m.
    A. Negotiations
       Board came out of executive session at 9:38 p.m.
    Action: Motion made to approve Education Support Personnel Unit Master Agreement as presented by
    Superintendent Needham. Approved unanimously.

XI. Adjournment (Action) –
    Action: Motion made to adjourn at 9:39 p.m. Approved.

Recoded by:

Esther Dobbins-Marsh
District Clerk/Treasurer