RIVENDELL INTERSTATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
Westshire Elementary School – West Fairlee, VT
December 4, 2012 – 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Marc DeBois, Cicely Richardson, David Ricker (Orford); Sandra Smith-Ordway (Chair), Bruce Lyndes, Mark Avery (Fairlee); Jean MacDonald, Jennifer Ricker, (Vershire), Kathy Blanchard (at-large); Dawn Stever (W. Fairlee)

Members Absent: None.

Administration and Staff Present: Keri Gelenian (Head of Schools/RA Principal), Brenda Needham (Superintendent), Tammy MacQueen (WES Asst. Principal), Michael Galli (Dean of Students), Kerry Browne (RA Science Teacher)

Others Present: Christina Moreland (Student Government Representative)

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

II. Agenda Revision/Time Allocation: Smith-Ordway said that after “Correspondence” the subject of future Board leadership needs to be added, as well as some other items.

III. General Public Comments: None.

IV. Presentation/Guests
A. RA Science Field Trip Proposal (K. Browne): Browne reviewed his written proposal, stated that the trip is centering on Zion National Park, Joshua Tree National Park and Mojave National Preserve, and the originally planned short mandatory trip prior to the southwestern trip will now consist of a couple of day hikes. In reply to questions, he reported that 12 students are interested so far and at least half will want some financial help. A discussion ensued re: possible sources of financial help for the students and request made that if anyone had suggestions, they email Browne or Gelenian. D. Ricker raised concern that 10 days of backpacking is ambitious, however, Browne explained that they are not full days of backpacking. Safety plans and managing risk factors will be part of the planning.

Action: Motion made to approve the RA overnight science field trip to the Southwestern National Parks. Approved.

V. Consent Agenda: The intent of a consent agenda was explained briefly.
A. Minutes (November 6, 2012): – Changes were noted.

B. Superintendent Report (written): In reply to questions Richardson had emailed, Needham stated that Rivendell was in Vermont southeastern region as that was set up by State in beginning, District Office has had no response on a local auditor and the planning for a special District meeting is being worked on.

C. Head of Schools Report (written): In regards to questions raised, Gelenian gave more detail on math improvement plan, including that Teacher K. McGowan is working with all the math teachers on common core; explained failure statistics chart sent to Board in more detail, pointing out 91 students made honor roll; and regarding technology explained that there are not really grants any more for hardware with things changing so quickly. Brief discussion ensued regarding a fencing club with comments from Board that other schools in area have or have had fencing clubs (Oxbow, Woodsville and Blue Mountain), so might be able to get help on equipment. Needham stated that the insurance company had said no to insurance coverage for this club.

Needham replied to some other questions raised by Richardson, reporting that the electronic sign had cost $12,467 which came from unexpended funds in local budget; regarding the technology specialist position there are no plans to fill it at this time, instead
have contracted with All Access at this point; and reported that she hoped the independent audit report for 2011-2012 would be received in January.

1) **Student Government Report (written):** Moreland reviewed her written report and added that they also plan the last day before holiday break a small party that includes performances by students and staff and student government giving out gifts to the student body. She stated that at their next meeting they will be going over what they think needs to be happening.

D. **Principal Reports (written):** No additional.

**Action:** Motion made to approve the consent agenda with changes to the minutes. Approved.

**V. Ongoing Business:**

A. **School Improvement Update & NEAS&C (K. Gelenian):** Needham said the Academy is doing effective work beyond requirements of the School Improvement Plan. Gelenian spoke about rubrics and student understanding of rubrics. He also spoke about having teachers present to staff what they are doing in class to meet the learning expectations.

B. **Policy Reading/Adoption/Revision:** Needham briefly reviewed the list of policies and explained which ones were mandated.

1) **Possible Adoption**
   a. Policy Development, Code A1
   b. Policy Dissemination, Administration & Review, Code A3
   c. Board Member Education, Code B1
   e. Board Meetings, Code C5
   f. Board Commitment to Non-Discrimination, Code C9

**Action:** Motion made to approve revisions to Code A1, A3, C5 and C9 and to eliminate B1 and B2. Approved.

2) **First Reading Only**
   b. Education Records, Code F6
   c. Limited English Proficiency Students, Code F31
   d. Parental Involvement, Code H2 – Some discussion, questions and suggestions including being tied to mission statement.

**VI. New Business:**

A. **Long Range Planning**

1) **Elementary Schools:** Proposal distributed. Gelenian stated that proposal is to move the Westshire 5th and 6th graders to Samuel Morey as a permanent change, then adding an additional preschool program at Westshire and Westshire becoming a preK through grade 4 school. Proposal was reviewed in detail and discussion ensued regarding cost, preK, pros and cons. Overall, Board felt it was a quality education proposal and wondered how and when it would be introduced to parents. Gelenian stated that if Board gave the go ahead then he would be meeting the 5th and 6th grade teachers tomorrow and then parents within a week. At request of Board, Needham will research preK in regards to cost or offering it free. Board gave Administration the go ahead to continue on their course.

2) **Strategic Plan Update:** Distributed an update that Keiling put together with Gelenian for Board to review, if Board has any questions to send email to P. Perryman for the January meeting.

**VII. Overnight Field Trips:** Approved above.

**VIII. Correspondence** – Smith-Ordway reported that she received an email from J. Shatney October 24, 2012, tendering her resignation from the Board.

**Action:** Motion made to accept Shatney’s resignation with regret. Approved.

Stever reported that Shatney had emailed her some information regarding adding on to the existing playground equipment. Information was given to Needham.
Brief discussion regarding the committee formerly named Concerned Citizens of Orford were holding an informational meeting tomorrow in the basement of the Orford Social Library.

D. Ricker gave a brief update on the Orford Academy Task Force stating they have three potential partners, need a partner to apply for the planning grant, once grant secured would do feasibility study, move ahead after Board approved. Ricker requested Task Force be on agenda for the Special Board Meeting on December 11th, in case Task Force is ready to present.

Future Board Leadership – Smith-Ordway reported that Board needed to be thinking about this, as the terms of both DeBois (vice chair) and Smith-Ordway (chair) will be over and they are not planning to run for re-election at this time. Richardson has offered to step up as the NH rep. Per the NH-VT Interstate School Compact, the chair and vice chair must be from different states. Also, reminded Board that a West Fairlee resident is needed to fill Shatney’s former position.

Budget & December 11th Meeting – Needham stated that the Leadership Team looked at budget today and it is essentially level funded. She reported that the Leadership Team wants to highlight and bullet things in their section at the start of meeting. Needham will do a brief overview for Board and then the individual members of Leadership Team will speak on their sections. Needham and Paulson will do a written summary sheet for the Board. Board requested they get the proposed budget before the meeting.

IX. Future Agenda Items
   Strategic Plan (Next Steps), Community Outreach, Grants, Global Language for 6th grade, Policies to be Revised (ongoing), Student Presentations, Department Reports, Vision Program, Long Range Financial Plan, Individualized Student Needs (per Gelenian)

X. Anticipated Executive Session:
   A. Negotiations
      Action: Motion made to go into Executive Session at 8:15 p.m. Approved. Board came out of Executive Session at 8:42 p.m. No action taken.

XI. Adjournment:
   Action: Motion made to adjourn. Approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Recoded by: Penny Perryman