MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE RIVENDELL INTERSTATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
Held on March 15, 2016

The Annual Meeting was held in the gymnasium of Rivendell Academy in Orford, NH. Voters of Orford, NH, Fairlee, West Fairlee and Vershire, VT met for the purpose of holding the Annual District Meeting of the Rivendell Interstate School District pursuant to Article IV.G of the New Hampshire-Vermont Interstate School Compact. Approximately 227 voters attended the Annual Meeting.

David Hooke, Moderator of the Rivendell Interstate School District, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Mr. Hooke asked that those present stand for the singing of the National Anthem by Lauren Hoyt, Rivendell Academy student, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by three students from Westshire Elementary School. Mr. Hooke read the Warrant, reviewed the procedures to follow during the meeting, and stated that the polls were opened at 6:00 p.m. and would remain open for one-half hour following the completion of business under the other articles. Mr. Hooke asked if there were any members of the press attending the meeting – Cicely Richardson, Journal Opinion, and Rob Wolfe, Valley News, were recognized.

Article 3: To hear reports from the School Board and others relating to the construction/renovation, educational, and financial issues facing the District.
The article was moved and seconded. Marc DeBois, Chair, thanked the staff and administration for their work in the school during the past school year. He recognized Gail Keiling who has served Rivendell in various positions as the Head of Elementary Schools, Principal of Samuel Morey and Superintendent for the past 20 years and will be retiring at the end of this school year. DeBois introduced several new staff members to the voters. DeBois discussed challenges the Board dealt with over the past year, including creating a budget that continues to deliver a high quality education while controlling costs, and changes that ACT 46 will bring to Rivendell. DeBois told the voters that Rivendell Academy was ranked #5 in the state of Vermont and Westshire Elementary was the #10 elementary school in Vermont. Bruce Lyndes spoke on the history of the budget. Over the past eight years, it has increased an average of 1.25%, including capital reserves. Kathy Hooke spoke on the current budget and gave an illustration of how taxes are determined from the two states and four towns. Paul Dalton, Orford, asked what the cost per student is over the past eight years. Rob O’Donnell, Orford, asked what the student count was over the past eight years – Mark Avery responded that the average daily membership in 2009 was 510 and 2016 it’s 478. An Orford resident asked the Board why the budget is higher when the student count is lower. DeBois responded that benefits and negotiated salary increases are higher than the 1.5 increase and they are the primary drivers for the overall increase. Keri Gelenian reported the discussions with Warren to try and have more tuition students come to Rivendell. John Adams, Orford, asked what the cut to the budget would have been if we had to comply with ACT 46 – DeBois said it was around $670,000 and having to make that kind of cut would have devastated the educational process and the Board would have had to decide to make the cuts or pay the penalty for over spending, like many other schools are doing. Anita Keeffe, Orford, stated that Rivendell spends the most of interstate districts – does this new budget mean we’ll be over $22,000 per student? Gelenian responded that the cost per student at Rivendell compared to other Upper Valley schools shows we are one of the lowest. Jim McGoff, Orford, asked why the tuition rate can’t be lower to attract more students from other towns. DeBois responded that the rate is set to be competitive with other towns and the Board has offered lower tuition rates in the past to be as competitive as possible. Laszlo Bardos, West Fairlee, stated that from 2012 to 2016 the student count is up by 4.4% per year at the elementary schools and feels that the better the education offered, the more students it will attract. Rick Shreve, Orford, asked what the student-teacher ratio is at Rivendell compared to the state of Vermont. Hooke indicated that the best comparison is 12.5 to 1. Keeffe said the state average is 10.5 to 1. Keiling indicated that the class size at the elementary schools is averaging 20.

Article 4: Shall the voters of the District raise and appropriate the sum of $10,132,797 for the operating budget for the District for the 2016-2017 fiscal year?
The article was moved and seconded. Mark Berger, Orford, stated that based on the historical interpretation of the Articles of Agreement, and based on when the ADM is applied, it has a direct impact on the percentages each town has to contribute to the budget. He requested a paper ballot for the vote and, if the article fails, it is not reconsidered, and requested that the voters defeat the budget. He wants the Board to have a candid conversation on the Articles of Agreement before moving forward with another budget. Paul Dalton, Orford, spoke about the capital reserves savings and taking that into consideration, the budget is actually up 2.2%. If the debt drops why can’t the budget also drop? Katherine Blanchard stated that with salary and benefit costs up, along with several expense increases, the Board was working from a deficit before it even started the process.
Jolene Vogelien, Orford, spoke about her decision to move to Orford, how helpful the administration and teachers have been and encouraged voters to approve the budget. Mark Blanchard encouraged community members to hold roundtable discussions around the Articles of Agreement and possibly figure out other possibilities for funding education, because we must pay for our children’s education. Gary Pillsbury, Orford, asked why teachers can get an increase in pay when his social security payments remain the same. Jim McGoff, Orford, stated his business income is less than \( \frac{1}{2} \) of what it was the prior year and feels that himself and many others in town can’t afford to pay their taxes. He added there needs to be a limit on the budget and this is the only time voters have a say on that. Tom Stekeee, Orford, called the question, seconded and passed by voice vote. Mark Berger had previously asked for a paper ballot for the budget vote. This was moved and seconded by more than 7 voters.
Total votes cast were 227, 123 for and 104 against. The article passed.

**Article 5:** Shall the voters of the District authorize the School Board to add the sum of $30,000 for future capital needs reserve fund?
The article was moved and seconded. Jim McGoff, Orford, stated that the Board just received over $10M for the budget, why do they need an additional $30,000. DeBois responded that it will go to increase the Capital Reserve to be used for major repairs to the schools. David Smith, Orford, asked what the reserve total is currently at. DeBois responded the balance is $221,521. Bob O’Leary, Fairlee, called the question, seconded and passed by voice vote.
The article passed by voice vote.

**Article 6:** Shall the voters of the District authorize the School Board to apply for, accept, and expend, without further action by the voters of the District, all money from any governmental or private source which becomes available during the 2016-2017 fiscal year?
The article was moved and seconded. With no discussion, the moderator asked if the voters were ready for the question.
The article passed by voice vote.

**Article 7:** To transact any other business which may lawfully properly come before the meeting.
There was no other business to discuss.

Motion made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed by voice vote.
The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Esther Dobbins-Marsh
District Clerk, RISD
March 20, 2016
Annual Meeting, March 15, 2016

Ballots were officially counted and tallied as below:

**Fairlee Board Member (3 year):**
- Margaret Gladstone – 24
- David Gagner - 6
- Write in candidates received the following: Robert O’Leary (1)
- Spoiled (1)
- Blank (2)
- Total Ballots – 34

**Orford Board Member (3 year):**
- Marc DeBois (111)
- Write in candidates received the following: Jim McGoff (2), Justin Adams (2), Peter Dooley (2), Ted Cooley (1), David Binford (1), Jennifer Carter (1), Annie Jines (1), Ron Taylor (1), David Bischoff (1), Tom Thomson (1), Kirsten Glass (1), Dave Ricker (1), Bruce Streeter (1)
- Blank (3)
- Total Ballots – 130

**West Fairlee Board Member (3 year):**
- Write in candidates received the following: Sarah Reinheimer (10), Doug Sonsalla (2), J. Patrone (1), Jen Shatney (1), Erin Cilley (1)
- Blank (11)
- Total Ballots – 26

Registered voters in West Fairlee 471

*Write in candidate needs 1% to win election – Sarah Reinheimer was elected*

**West Fairlee Board Member (2 year):**
- Kevin Dexter (21)
- Write in candidates received the following: Rebecca Wurdak (1), Sarah Reinheimer (1)
- Blank (3)
- Total Ballots – 26

**For At-Large Board Member, 1 year term:**
- Kathy Blanchard – 175
- Write in candidates received the following: Justin Adams (1), Margaret Gladstone (1), Sue Martin (1), Jennifer Carter (1), Joanne Brown (1), Ruth Hook (1), Mark Martel (1), Peter Dooley (1), Emmy Jones (1), Bill Wilson (1), Bryant Williams (1)
- Blank (27)
- Total Ballots – 213

**For Moderator, 1 Year Term:**
- David Hooke - 181
- Write in candidates received the following: Harrison Pease (4), Ruth Hook (1), Peter Dooley (1), Chase Kling (1)
- Blank (25)
- Total Ballots – 213

**For District Clerk, 1 Year Term:**
- Esther Dobbins-Marsh - 198
- Write in candidates received the following: Peter Dooley (1)
- Blank Ballots (14)
- Total Ballots – 213

**For Treasurer, 1 Year Term:**
- Esther Dobbins-Marsh - 200
- Write in candidates received the following: Peter Dooley (1)
- Blank Ballots (12)
- Total Ballots – 213

**For Auditor, 3 Year Term:**
- Paul Dalton - 198
- Spoiled (1)
- Blank (14)
- Total Ballots – 213
For Auditor, 2 Year Term:
Write in candidates received the following: Ken Stella (6), Tom Thomson (3), Mark Blanchard (3), Carl Castle (2),
Joe Arcolio (1), Shannon Wilson (1), Peter Dooley (1), Bob Palifka (1), Justin Adams (1), Jim McGoff (1),
Jennifer Carter (1), John Roy (1), Joanne Brown (1), Ruth Hook (1), Peter Berger (1), Mark Berger (1), Margeret
Gladstone (1), Annie Jones (1), Paul Dalton (1)
Spoiled (6)
Blank (178)
Total Ballots – 213
Registered voters in the District – 2541
Write in candidate needs 1% to win election – no write in received the percentage required – no one was elected.

For Auditor, 1 Year Term:
Write in candidates received the following: David Binford (2), Peter Doole (1), Justin Adams (1), John Roy (1),
Brown (1), Ruth Hook (1), Mark Brager (1), Emmy Jones (1), Paul Dalton (1), Lirda Woodward (1), Paul Carreiro
(1), Clyde Blake (1), Doug Tiff (1), Cameron Buster (1), Robert O'Leary (1)
Blank (195)
Total Ballots – 213
Registered voters in the District – 2541
Write in candidate needs 1% to win election – no write in received the percentage required – no one was elected.

All ballots and exit checklists are sealed and on file per request of the District Clerk at her office in Hanover, NH.

All write in votes are listed above as spelled by the voters on their actual ballots, regardless of whether spelling is correct or not.