

THETFORD TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Monday, August 1, 2016
Oxbow High School

APPROVED MINUTES

Shannon Darrah convened the meeting at 7:04 p.m.. The following were present: Charlie Buttrey, Shannon Darrah, Scott MacPhee, School Board; Kevin Petrone, TES Principal

PUBLIC PRESENT: Melanie Elliott (OESU)

AGENDA REVIEW: Agenda approved with amendments.

MINUTES REVIEW: MOTION: (Buttrey/MacPhee) moved/seconded to approve the minutes of the July 5, 2016 Board meeting (unanimous approval).

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF ORDERS: MOTION: (MacPhee/Buttrey) moved/seconded to approve accounts payable order # 5470 and payroll warrants # 5468, 5453, and 5457 (unanimous approval).

PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE: Buttrey's wife received an email from a Thetford resident, who said there are two children of school age who are living with him, but he has no legal rights to them. He would like the children to attend Thetford schools. Cobb responded to the resident explaining the law.

The Vermont Education Health Initiative (VEHI) oversees health insurance for Vermont educators and school employees. The VEHI Board wants to amend their bylaws. Current bylaws include representation from Vermont School Board Insurance Trust and the Vermont NEA. If amended, the bylaws would require a representative from the Vermont School Board Association and one VT NEA representative instead of two. VEHI wants school boards to vote on giving permission for the Superintendent to sign the petition. Elliott explained that every district and SU in the State is receiving this request.

MOTION: (Buttrey/MacPhee) moved/seconded to authorize Beth Cobb to sign the VEHI petition on behalf of TTSD (unanimous approval).

Elliott presented a contract for Anne Marie Coulter for para-educator. She is filling Wanda Vaughan's vacancy. Vaughan has accepted a Kindergarten teaching position at Bradford Elementary.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (Kevin Petrone): Summer has been busy at TES. Summer school and a three week music camp have just concluded. Custodians are now cleaning that part of the building. Teachers have started preparing classrooms. Petrone received confirmation on professional development funding. The Buck Institute for Education awarded TES a grant for project based learning, which will encompass 3 of the 4

professional development days before school begins. The goal is for teachers to conclude the training with a plan for a project and an overall better understanding of project based learning. It will be a busy start to the school year with limited time for team meetings and classroom set-up. Petrone is hopeful that with this advance notice and some creativity, there will be enough time; this may be why teachers are already returning to school.

There have been some additions to playground. The bicycle track has been installed close to the garage. 75 yards of dirt was spread by volunteers. Feedback from the children who attended summer camp is that the track is too short. There is enough space and dirt to make the track longer. EC Brown's has done some landscaping with 20 -25 hydrangeas along the gym wall and birch trees to shade the playground.

Ravenswood is an independent school starting in Thetford. They plan to offer programs that serve students one day per week, with specific grade levels attending on designated days. Petrone believes that originally the idea was to attract home schoolers, but Petrone has been getting inquiries from TES families about attending Ravenswood one day per week. Superintendent Cobb consulted with the AOE. Ravenswood is not an approved independent school. Students who miss school at TES would therefore be marked as truant, and TES may then have to take appropriate steps. Attending Ravenswood one day per week would add up to 20% of the school year.

Petrone will attend the three day Vermont Leadership Academy at Killington, to discuss project based learning, as well as attend a seminar about communication strategies with the community. Class placement letters will be mailed on August 9. Some students have moved in, but some move out. Enrollment is hovering at a little lower than 200. The tuition student was approved and will attend. The PTO is changing leadership. Sally Bugg is stepping down as Chair, and Pam Fein and Meg Darrow-Williams will be Co-Chairs.

DISCUSS REPAVING OF SCHOOL PARKING LOT PROJECT: Darrah explained that because Mimi's trail and the trail to TA are nearby, the TES parking lot qualifies as a trail head. Funding is available for repaving the TES parking lot. There are drainage issues. There could be opportunity to expand the parking lot, or add overflow parking without paving (creating an area that usually functions as playground but is developed to be able to physically support overflow parking during heavily attended school events). RFP's went out and three different engineering firms were interviewed. Darrah attended interviews. Stantech was unanimously chosen. They have worked on Town projects in the past. Next, Stantech will meet with the interested parties, which includes the school board and a select board representative. The permitting process will take time and there may be consideration needed for nearby wetlands. The culvert at the end of the driveway can also be evaluated. Darrah asked Petrone for any ideas for better parking lot flow, for example, student drop off. Darrah is aiming to begin the project next summer.

FINALIZE ARRANGEMENTS FOR RETREAT ON AUGUST 8: The retreat will be held at the Norwich Inn at 6 p.m. Board members will pay for their own meals. Potential topics were suggested. Buttrey would like to discuss if pre-K can be housed at TES. Petrone indicated space would be tight. There are two classrooms that are currently not being used as general classrooms. One classroom is new because of a reduction of a classroom, and will be used as a resource and special education room in the upper wing. In the lower wing, the second room is used as an extra book library for teachers, as well as a space for occupational therapy and outside counseling services. Buttrey pointed out that 15 years ago there were 300 children in the building. Discussion will continue at the retreat.

DISCUSS NON-RESIDENT TUITION STUDENT POLICY: Moved to the next meeting.

FINANCIAL REPORT - Janet Mitchell: Mitchell distributed the revenue and expenditures forms and explained how to read them. There is \$110,360 more than anticipated, but there are still encumbrances. Purchase orders need to be closed out for FY16. The actual unencumbered does include those figures. There is an approximate \$14,000 deficit on a budget of 8 million dollars. Once the \$50,000 from tuition reserve is transferred to the general fund, there will be a positive fund balance for the year of \$35,818. At the end of FY16 there should be a deficit of \$136,066. Conversation followed regarding the line item for secondary special education tuition to TA was approximately 40% over budget. Petrone did not have details about this expense because it is in the secondary budget. Discussion followed about the number of students graduating from TES each year and tuition to TA. This number is projected to decrease. Solar brought in a lot more money than anticipated.

ACT 46 UPDATE: Darrah relayed an update from Downey: The grant application submitted by Thetford, Strafford, Tunbridge, Sharon and Stockbridge was not approved. Notification was received from Brad James on July 1, and stated that "in the scope of work, the discussion is about alternative governance structures and how to achieve it, as well as possibly creating a new SU; none of that fits in with the enabling language of the grant." An act was cited. The grant has been resubmitted. The group will now wait to hear from the State. There will be further discussion about Act 46 at the retreat. Buttrey stated during the last five years, TTSD has approached approximately one dozen districts. It is still an option to stay with the reconfigured OESU.

ADJOURNMENT: MOTION: (Buttrey/MacPhee) moved/seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:59 p.m. (unanimous approval).

FUTURE MEETINGS:

8/8/16 Thetford School District Board Retreat, Norwich Inn	6:00 p.m.
8/23/16 Thetford Town School District Meeting	7:00 p.m.

Minutes Prepared By:
Amy Bosco, Minutes Clerk

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Julie Acker, Board Clerk